

## Violence against Women in Antalya: Communication, Cooperation and Struggle

### *Antalya’da Kadına Yönelik Şiddet: İletişim, İşbirliği ve Mücadele*

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**Abstract:** To combat violence against women, a project has been prepared with the coordination of Governorship of Antalya. In the scope of this project, the number of women exposed to violence and asking for help was primarily determined to explore the current situation. The purpose of this paper was to investigate the studies aiming at the struggle to stop violence against women in Antalya. The tasks and responsibilities of the related institutions concerning the prevention of violence, the struggle against violence and then proposed solutions were firstly discussed and then possible solutions were implemented. As a result in this paper, communication and cooperation amongst the related institutions in Antalya and the resultant gains in terms of combating violence against women are discussed in detail.

**Keywords:** Gender, violence, cooperation, struggle

**Özet:** Kadına yönelik şiddetle mücadele etmek için Antalya Valiliği koordinasyonunda bir proje hazırlanmıştır. Proje, kadına yönelik şiddetle ilgili tüm kuruluşların birbirleriyle iletişime geçmeleri ve şiddetle mücadele etmelerine olanak vermiştir. Bu makalenin amacı, Antalya’da kadına yönelik şiddetle mücadele amacıyla yapılan bu çalışmalarını incelemektir. Proje kapsamında öncelikle şiddete uğradığı için yardım isteyen kadın sayısı tespit edilerek mevcut durum ortaya konmaya çalışılmıştır. Daha sonra şiddeti önleme, şiddetle mücadele ve çözüm önerileri konusunda ilgili kurumların neler yapmakta olduğu ve olası çözümler irdelenmektedir. Sonuç olarak makalede, kadına yönelik şiddetle mücadele amacıyla Antalya’da gerçekleştirilen kurumlar arası iletişim, işbirliği ve sonucunda elde edilen kazanımlar ayrıntılı olarak tartışılmaktadır.

**Anahtar Sözcükler:** Toplumsal cinsiyet, şiddet, işbirliği, mücadele

Following the Prime Minister’s Circular published in 2006 concerning the fight against violence against women (<http://www.resmi-gazete.org> 12.8.2011), the Governorate of Antalya initiated a series of activities on this subject. The subject of this paper is the activities carried out by the provincial coordination committee on the “*Prevention of Violence against Women and Children and Custom and Honor Killings*”, which has been chaired by Vice Governor Mehmet Seyman, in Antalya since 2008. The project aims to improve cooperation and communication between official bodies and civil society organizations that are active in the fight against violence against women, and to develop effective methods to prevent violence against women. Seyman summarizes the aims of the project as follows:

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*...To create social consciousness and individual awareness for an effective fight against violence against women and custom and honor killings, to train and motivate the personnel employed in the relevant bodies and organizations, to help victims of violence enjoy their rights and carry out their duties and to inform them about the legal and regulatory processes, to take measures to help public and private organizations act swiftly in support of victims so that they can deal with violence, and to create a network of solidarity and cooperation among official bodies, civil society organizations and volunteers... (Seyman, 2008).*

The article is organized into three parts. In the first part, violence against women and the issue of the struggle against it are analyzed through the available literature available. Studies concerning this issue which were carried out in Turkey and Antalya are evaluated. Secondly, communication, collaboration and the struggle in Antalya over the issue of violence against women are studied. The article concludes with some ideas concerning the future of this problem.

### **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THE FIGHT AGAINST VIOLENCE**

Violence against women is widespread in most of the world, regardless of geographical boundaries, levels of economic development or education (Garcia-Moreno, *et alii*, 2006; Johnson, & Ferraro 2000; Lewinson, 1990). In most societies, developed or underdeveloped, many women suffer from various types of violence. Violence against women is an important problem that is present under all conditions and in all places, public or private, and it needs to be prevented. Violence against women, in terms of its causes and consequences, is not only a personal trouble but also a social issue closely connected with social structures and dynamics, and it concerns the whole society. Defining it as a social problem is crucial in the struggle against violence against women.

The United Nations treats violence against women as a social problem that all societies need to deal with, as it is observed at various levels in all societies, developed or underdeveloped. In the *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women*, the United Nations defines violence as “*any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life*” (United Nations, 1993). As this definition suggests, violence against women is a multidimensional phenomenon with physical, emotional, verbal, sexual, and economic aspects, among others. Thus, the fight against this problem needs to take all of these dimensions into consideration.

#### **The Struggle against Violence Against Women in Turkey**

The first studies on domestic violence and violence against women were conducted in the 1980s, which also marked the beginning of the women’s movement in Turkey. In the 1990s, there was an effort to institutionalize, and the General Directorate of the Status of Women was established under the Prime Ministry.

Following the 2<sup>nd</sup> World Women's Conference, *CEDAW* was opened for signature by the member states on March 1, 1980, it was signed by Turkey in 1985, and went into effect on January 19, 1986 (<http://www.ksgm.gov.tr> 3.7.2011).

The women’s movement, which gained momentum in the 1980s, maintains its efforts to make sure that “*a female perspective is adopted*” on all women’s issue. In Turkey, which is a signatory to *CEDAW*, the General Directorate of the Status of Women, which was founded in 1990 as a national mechanism for developing women’s policies, is working effectively to bring

various issues to the attention of parliament and to lobby for women. In addition, the General Directorate of the Status of Women conducts legal studies, cooperates with other institutions, runs projects and campaigns, holds meetings, conferences, and seminars, and contributes to the work of other organizations and institutions (<http://www.ksgm.gov.tr/> 3.7.2011).

The “*No beating*” march held on May 17, 1987 was the first collective action women took against violence against women. The women’s movement gained momentum after this march, which was followed by other protests against the battering of women.

Altınay and Arat summarize the development of the efforts in Turkey in the struggle against violence against women as follows:

*Through a process that had many inputs, women started to make their voices heard in the public sphere in the 1980s, formed their own civil society organizations in the 1990s, and tried to transform the state by activating state-level mechanisms in the fight against violence against women. In this process, the dimensions and forms of the struggle have become varied and more widespread. Women rejected any cooperation with the state in the 1980s, employing an anti-state discourse, and started to develop a common discourse in the 1990s against violence against women using state institutions and mechanisms as well (Altınay, & Arat, 2008, 17).*

Many women’s associations ceased their activities in the 1990s. Yet, there was a trend towards institutionalization in women’s movement. Mor Çatı (Purple Roof) Women’s Shelter Foundation was founded in 1990 as a product of the fight against violence against women. This foundation aims to provide shelter for women who have been victims of domestic or other violence, and to give them professional training. In 1993, the Foundation for Women’s Solidarity opened the first independent shelter for women in Turkey, by means of the support of Altındağ Municipality, with the purpose of providing counselling for female victims of violence.

The fact that Turkish women served as chairpersons of *CEDAW* and as *UN* Special Reporters’ on Violence against Women is sufficient evidence of the fact that the Turkish women’s movement is closely integrated with the world women’s movement. In 1994, a position for a Special Reporter on Violence against Women was created under the Human Rights Commission as a control mechanism (On August 1, 2003, Prof. Dr. Yakın Ertürk from Turkey was appointed to this position) (Kocacık, 2004).

Another important legal milestone in the struggle against violence against women was the adoption of the “*Law on the Protection of the Family*” No. 4320 in 1998. This was the first time the concept of “domestic violence” was used in a legislative document in Turkey. According to this law, in case of violence against one of the spouses or children or other family members residing in the same house, the judge of the family court takes one of the measures provided in the law, taking the circumstances and specifics of the case into account. However, there is a requirement that either the victims make a complaint or the Office of the Prosecution file an indictment about the incident (Çakıcı, 2009, 98).

In 2005, as part of the *EU* harmonization process, metropolitan municipalities and municipalities that had a population in excess of 50.000 were required to have “*shelter homes for women and children*” by the Law on Municipalities No. 5293.

In 2005, a Parliamentary Research Commission was set up to Inquire into the Reasons for Custom and Honor Killings and Violence against Women and Children and Identification of the Measures to be taken. This Commission prepared a report, which was discussed in the plenary session of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, and following this discussion, the Prime

Minister's Circular No. 2006/17 was published, which is a clear indicator of the fact that gender equality, protection and the development of the human rights of women, strengthening the position of women in all areas of life, and the prevention of violence against women became government policy (<http://www.ksgm.gov.tr/> 3.7.2011).

### **Studies on Violence against Women in Turkey**

The study conducted by the Prime Ministry Family Research Council in 1994 with the participation of 4287 households (3112 of them women) from five regions is among the first studies on violence against women in Turkey. Among the findings of this study was that 53.47% of women reported being victims of verbal violence, 29.59% of women reported having been beaten, and 34.04% of men reported beating their wives (Aile içi şiddetin sebep ve sonuçları, 1995, 205).

In another study conducted by the Family Research Council with the participation of 6480 people from 18 provinces, it was found that 71.9% of women experienced a “low” level of violence, and 25.0% experienced a “high” level of violence (Aile İçinde ve Toplumsal Alanda Şiddet, 1998).

Ayşe Gül Altınay and Yeşim Arat's study (2008, 111) entitled *Violence against Women in Turkey*, conducted in 2006-2007, examines the development of the fight against domestic violence against women in Turkey since the “*March of Solidarity against Beatings*” held in 1987, the views of married women on violence, and their experiences. Altınay and Arat conducted interviews with 150 women and representatives of around 50 women's organizations in 27 provinces, and conducted a field study with the participation of a total of 1800 married women from 56 provinces. The findings of this comprehensive study show that one in every three women in Turkey has experienced physical violence. An interesting finding of the study was that when women earned more income than their husbands, they were at least twice as likely to be beaten, and that two out of three women who earned more income than their husbands had been victims of physical violence.

The most comprehensive and contemporary study that tries to answer the question “*What are the sources and types of violence against women?*” supported by the European Union, was titled “*A Study on Domestic Violence against Women*” (Türkiye’de Kadına Yönelik Şiddet, 2009). The beneficiary of this study was the General Directorate of the Status of Women, and interviews were made with a total of 12795 women aged 15 to 59, from 24048 households in 51 provinces. Some of the more interesting findings from this study were as follows:

Of the married women in Turkey,

- 39 percent have been victims of physical violence,
- 15 percent have been victims of sexual violence,
- 54 percent have been victims of physical or sexual violence,
- 44 percent have been victims of emotional violence/abuse by their husbands or partners at some point in their lives.
- In cities, 38% of women have been victims of violence, and in rural areas, 43% of women have been victim of violence.
- 25% of women suffered injuries as a result of the physical violence they have experienced.
- Of the women who have been victims of physical or sexual violence at least once, 55.7% had no formal education, and 27% were high school graduates or had a higher level of education.
- A total of 14.2% of the women agreed with the statement “Men can sometimes beat their wives”.
- 48.5% of the women had not told anyone about the violence they had experienced.

- Women who have been victims of violence are at least twice as likely to have health problems and to consider or attempt suicide.
- One in every 10 women experienced violence during pregnancy.
- In many cases, sexual violence accompanies physical violence; 54 percent of the women stated that they had been victims of physical or sexual violence.
- Women with low levels of education are not the only victims of violence. Among women with higher levels of education, 3 in 10 report being victims of physical or sexual violence by their husbands.
- Married women are at the highest risk of violence by their husbands.
- Seven percent of the women reported that they were victims of sexual abuse during childhood (prior to the age of 15).

In addition to the studies that cover all of Turkey, there are studies that focus on violence against women in specific provinces, regions and localities. The following reviews some of these studies.

In a study conducted with the participation of 1070 married women from Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir, who were selected to represent three different economic strata, it was found that “*women working outside the house*” and “*husbands preventing their wives from seeing their families*” topped the list of reasons for disputes between spouses (İçli, 1994). In another study, interviews were conducted with 695 women randomly selected from the provincial center and suburbs of Sivas, Adıyaman, Denizli and Kırıkkale (Kocacık, *et alii*, 2007). Another study examined the demographics of women who applied to law enforcement and who were judicial bodies in the provincial center of Eskişehir due to violence by their husbands and face to face interviews were conducted with 79 women who were referred due to spousal violence (Toka, *et alii*, 2009). In provincial center, of the Elazığ face to face interviews were conducted in 2002 with 44 women who had been victims of violence by their husbands and referred to the Forensic Medicine Branch Office for evidence (Tokdemir, & Deveci, 2003). In Istanbul, consecutive interviews were held with 146 women who applied to the Dudullu Health Center to receive family planning and immunization services (Hidroğlu, *et alii*, 2006). In Sivas, interviews were held with 162 married women who resided in Alibaba Neighborhood and who were in the 15-49 age groups (Güler, *et alii*, 2005). In a descriptive cross-sectional study, interviews were held in provincial center of the Aydın 2005 with 291 women selected via non-probability sampling (Karaçam, *et alii*, 2006). In Ankara, 370 married women who were over the age of 15 and who resided in the Ankara Castle neighborhood were sampled (Efe, & Ayaz, 2010). In Diyarbakır, interviews were conducted with 164 women who applied to KA-MER Women’s Shelter due to domestic violence (Erkan, & Bozgöz, 2004). In Antalya, data were collected on women who applied to Antalya Center for Women’s Counselling and Solidarity, and in-depth interviews were conducted with ten women.

In sum, many studies have been conducted on domestic violence since the 1990s, particularly on domestic violence against women. The most comprehensive among them was the 2008 Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Turkey.

### **Violence against Women in Antalya**

The province of Antalya, the subject of this paper, is located in southwestern Turkey, on the Mediterranean coastline. It is the largest city in the Western Mediterranean Region, which consists of the provinces of Antalya, Burdur and Isparta, and is the center of the region. Antalya is a coastal city rich in natural, cultural, historical and environmental resources, known as the “*capital of tourism*” in Turkey. According to the 2010 Address Based Population Registration System, Antalya has a population of 1,978,333 people. Of this population, 1,392,974 live in

urban areas, and 585,359 live in small cities or rural areas; with an urban to rural ratio of 70% to 30%. According to the results of the same census, the city center has a population of 1,001,318 and population density in the province is 95 people per km<sup>2</sup>. The largest counties of the province, in terms of population, are Muratpaşa, Kepez, Konyaaltı, Alanya and Manavgat. Antalya is called the “*Turkish Riviera*”, a reference to the archeological and natural treasures it contains. Antalya has one of the most beautiful and cleanest coastlines in Turkey, and brings sea, sun, history and nature together in a magical blend (<http://www.tuik.gov.tr>). Because of the assets mentioned above, Antalya tops the list of most preferred destinations for migration in Turkey. Together with people from different regions of Turkey, different traditions, customs and ethnography also migrate to Antalya. Thus, due to this diversity problems of violence in Antalya are more subtle and, might hurt deeper. The number of studies on violence against women in Antalya is limited.

Findings of the 2008 Study on Violence against Women in Turkey show that in the Mediterranean region, of which Antalya is a part;

- 16.9% of women are victims of physical violence. The region comes third in Turkey in terms of physical violence.
- 4.2% of women are victims of sexual violence. The region comes first in Turkey in terms of sexual violence.
- 47.1% of women are victims of emotional violence. The region comes second in Turkey in terms of psychological violence.

These findings show that many women in the Mediterranean region have been victims of sexual violence. Although it was not covered in this study, economic violence is also very widespread in the region. Economically, women are exploited in tourism facilities in urban areas, and in the agricultural sector in rural areas. In both of these sectors, women are employed in low-status, low-wage jobs. Yet, many of these women are not aware of the economic violence they face. Violence is usually narrowly associated with physical violence, and other forms of violence are not recognized as violence (Yörük, 2010).

#### **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN ANTALYA AND THE STRUGGLE, COOPERATION AND COMMUNICATION AGAINST VIOLENCE**

In this part of the article, research carried out by the provincial coordination committee on the “*Prevention of Violence against Women and Children and Custom and Honor Killings*”, chaired by from 2008 Vice Governor Mehmet Seyman in Antalya are discussed.

The committee had its first meeting on March 7, 2008, and first, the following organizations were identified as the desired partners in cooperation and communication.

Governorate of Antalya (coordinating organization)

- Antalya Metropolitan Municipality
- Akdeniz University
- Bar Association of Antalya
- Antalya Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundation
- Antalya Journalists’ Association
- Representatives of the Antalya Civil Society Organizations Cooperation Platform

The provincial coordination committee held meetings every three months, examined the current situation concerning violence against women, and made an effort to identify strategies for preventing violence and to implement them. The committee decided, considering the current situation needs to be monitored and examined, that the number of female victims of violence

needed to be recorded. Frequency of incidents of violence over the years, as recorded in the files of official bodies, is reported in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Violence against women in Antalya.

	2008	2009	2010
	N	N	N
Provincial Police Department*	602	1425	2093
Provincial Command of Gendarmerie	602	720	611
TOTAL	1204	2145	2704

Source: Data was gathered from the Antalya Provincial Police Department and from the Antalya Provincial Gendarmerie Command.

\*Data from the Provincial Police Department is based on the number of incidents.

The number of women who applied to the Gendarmerie, which keeps records of incidents in rural areas, remained more or less stable over the years, whereas the number of women who applied to the Police Department in the city center of Antalya increased. There can be two explanations for this observation. Firstly, there may actually be an increase in the number of incidents concerning violence against women, the reasons for which need to be examined in detailed studies. Among the possible reasons, we can cite the volume of migration to and the rapid rate of urbanization in Antalya. A second explanation may be that more victims seek institutional help as a consequence of educational and awareness forming activities. The number of female victims of violence in rural areas who applied to the Gendarmerie remains more or less stable.

**Table 2.** Reasons for Applying to the Antalya Women's Guesthouse between 2008 and 2010.

	2008	2009	2010
	N	N	N
Physical Violence	112	87	109
Emotional Violence	6	24	19
Sexual Violence	13	7	9
Non-marital Pregnancy	3	15	14
Customs	1	3	1
Forced Marriage	0	2	1
Socio-economic Deprivation	57	76	52
Newly Released from Jail	0	2	1
Total	192	216	206

Source: Data were gathered from Antalya SHÇEK Women's Shelter.

Women who apply to these institutions and seek help are sheltered in Women's Guesthouses. Table 2 lists the reasons cited by the residents of the guesthouses for applying to these institutions. Physical violence tops the list.

The most important reason why women leave the guesthouses is that they find a job with the help of the organizations, which is very significant. In Turkey, many women do not work at paid

jobs (as of May 2011, only 29% of women participate in the labor force) (<http://www.tuik.gov.tr> 17.08.2011 ) and they have to put up with violence because they do not have an income to rely on or to take care of themselves and their children. Another important reason why women leave the guesthouses is that they go back to live with their parents.

Some of the women sheltered in the guesthouses left without giving any information. In addition, some women were transferred to other shelters because the perpetrators of violence had discovered their whereabouts.

**Table 3.** Reasons given for Leaving the Antalya Women's Guesthouse between 2008 and 2010.

	2008	2009	2010
	N	N	N
Employment	52	53	67
Live with parents	49	55	51
Left on own will	7	11	27
Made up with her husband	26	28	23
Rented Another Place	18	38	17
Left the Organization	32	20	13
Transfer to another guesthouse	10	10	7
Protection order cancelled by the Court	0	0	1
Death*	0	0	1
Asked to leave**	1	4	0
Went to Jail	0	1	0

Source: Data were gathered from Antalya SHÇEK Women's Shelter.

\* The cause of death was a heart attack.

\*\* Asked to leave because they did not comply with the rules of the guesthouse.

In sum, the number of women who have been victims of violence increased, whereas the number of women who received institutional support remained the same. The most important reason for this is that there is only one guesthouse in Antalya, and it has a limited capacity.

Now that the current situation concerning violence against women is examined, activities conducted to prevent violence against women in Antalya are given below. These activities can be classified under three headings: Education and awareness activities, development of instruments for prevention, and the improvement of institutional support offered to the victims.

### **EDUCATION AND AWARENESS ACTIVITIES**

One of the most effective ways to ensure the active participation of women in social life and to help them fight violence is education. The education that is provided aims to create an awareness concerning violence amongst all segments of society, so that violence can be prevented and the victims of violence can deal with this process, with the least damage to the victims. Three forms of education were planned as part of these activities: First, the education of personnel, second, the education of the educators, and third, education to develop individual awareness.

#### **Education of Personnel**

The education of the personnel that process the demands and applications of women who have been victims of violence and custom and honor attacks is one of the major goals of the fight



against violence against women. Thus, plans were made to educate the professionals that come into contact with victims of violence, from health workers employed in hospitals' emergency service to the police. Between 2008 and 2010, many educational activities were conducted in Antalya with this purpose, which can be summarized as follows:

- The Bar Association of Antalya gave seminars on domestic violence to all police officers (320 people) employed in the Police Department of the County of Muratpaşa.
- The Bar Association of Antalya gave seminars concerning violence against women to the directors of police stations in Uncalı.
- In a series of seminars entitled, "*The Role of the Police in Preventing Violence against Women and the Procedures to be followed*", which were held in 2008 in the city center and counties of Antalya, employees of all Central Police Stations (a total of 597 employees) were informed about the subject. Since then, many personnel left or arrived at Antalya due to inter-provincial assignments, and now the number of personnel who took these seminars is currently 1098.
- In 2010, 71 employees of the Children's Department at the provincial center and Children's Bureaus in the counties received a seminar on the Role of the Police in the Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Procedures to be followed.
- A seminar was given to the employees of the police department by the Antalya Police Department and the Family Counselling Center in collaboration, entitled, "*The psychological effects of domestic violence and social work*".
- In 2010, 68 employees of the Central Police Stations received seminars on Ending Domestic Violence, offered jointly by the Department of Education and the Department of Public Security.
- All employees of the 112 Emergency Call Center (30 people) were trained in how to respond to female victims of violence.
- A total of 2201 first and second stage Emergency health workers received the seminar series entitled, "*The Role of the Health Personnel in the Prevention of Domestic Violence and the Procedures to be Followed*", in 2009 and 2010.
- Antalya Women's Counseling and Solidarity Center ran the project entitled, "*Antalya in the Fight against Human Trafficking*", supported by the International Organization for Migration. As part of the project, taxi drivers, village and neighborhood headmen and guidance counselors received training.

Law enforcement officers, employees of the 112 Emergency Call Center, health personnel and members of various professions likely to encounter women who have been the victims of violence, such as taxi drivers, headmen and guidance counselors were given training on responding to the victims of violence.

Through these training sessions, meetings and conferences, the capacities of the official bodies and civil society organizations in Antalya which offer various services to women who have been victims of violence or who are at risk were improved, the cooperation and communication between relevant stakeholders were strengthened through joint activities, and social awareness and sensitivity were increased.

### **Training of the Trainers**

Antalya was one of the provinces covered in the "*Project for Women's Shelters*", ran in eight provinces with the support of the United Nations to provide a sufficient level of protection to women who have been victims of violence. As part of this project, a Trainer's Training on the Fight against Violence against Women was offered in Antalya. Also, a trainers' training workshop was held as part of the project, to identify local training needs.

### **Training to Create Social Consciousness, Develop Individual Awareness and Improve Advocacy Awareness among the Victims**

With the cooperation of the governorate, university, the Bar Association and civil society organizations in Antalya, many training sessions and conferences were held in proper places in neighborhoods, to create social consciousness, develop individual awareness and improve advocacy awareness among the victims. Some of these were as follows:

- During family week in 2010, the Family Counseling Center and the Aksu Police Department jointly organized a conference concerning “*Domestic Violence*” for county residents.
- Family Counseling Center gave seminars separately to male and female inmates in Antalya L type prison, on, “*violence against women*”.
- A total of 14.339 parents attended 177 seminars on the “*prevention of violence*” offered by the Provincial Directorate of National Education.
- In Public Education Centers, 21 seminars on “*Sexual abuse*” (attended by 455 people) and 22 seminars on “*Women’s Rights*” (attended by 445 people) were given.
- A total of 109 teachers and 543 parents attended 15 seminars on “*Women’s Rights*”, offered by the Provincial Directorate of National Education.
- 50 participants from the counties of Kepez and Muratpaşa received training on “*Human Trafficking*”, planned and coordinated by Antalya Women's Counseling and Solidarity Association.
- Social Services and Child Protection Agency, the Bar Association of Antalya, and women’s Counseling and Solidarity Center gave seminars on the human rights of women at community centers in Antalya run by the Social Services and Child Protection Agency.
- Akdeniz University, Social Services and Child Protection Agency and Women’s Counseling and Solidarity Center jointly offered a 16-week training program to female students of Akdeniz University, entitled “*Human Rights of Women*”, for half a day each week. The training program was attended by different students each academic year, and will be continued to be offered.
- A total of 139 women received training on the human rights of women at the facilities of the Women’s Council in the City Council.
- The Governorate of Antalya and Akdeniz University jointly organized a conference in the squatter district of Kepez on “*Women’s and Children’s Rights and Violence against Women and Children*”.

A main component of the struggle against violence against women is that women develop an awareness concerning the violence they are subjected to and are empowered, thus purging their lives and social environments of violence. Numerous meetings and conferences were organized by different organizations that cooperated to develop awareness and sensitivity about the subject.

### **DEVELOPMENT OF INSTRUMENTS FOR PREVENTION**

#### **Emergency Help and Support Line**

Antalya provincial coordination committee on the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children and Custom and Honor Killings decided that the establishment of a 24-hour Emergency Help and Support Line to be staffed by specially trained expert personnel such as social work experts, psychologists and sociologists to serve women who have been victims of violence would be an important strategy in the fight against violence. Following consultations with the relevant organizations and preparatory work, an “*Emergency Help, Support and Guidance*”

*Center*” was founded by Antalya Women’s Counseling and Solidarity Center. In addition, a violence support line was founded by Antalya Metropolitan Municipality.

From 2009, domestic violence registration forms began to be filled for women who applied to Health Institutions for violence-related reasons, and they were offered psychological guidance and information and guidance on their social rights.

- A total of 172 women in 2009
- A total of 443 women in 2010
- A total of 232 women in the first 6 months of 2011 applied to health institutions due to violence-related reasons, registration forms were filled in for them, and they were provided with the necessary information and guidance.

### **Panels and Conferences**

Akdeniz University held five public conferences open to the participation of university students and residents of Antalya, on women, honor and violence, attended by scholars who have conducted valuable research on these subjects.

A public panel was held on the many dimensions of violence against women, attended by representatives from the Governorate of Antalya, Antalya Metropolitan Municipality, Association of Female University Graduates, Social Services and Child Protection Agency, and the Medical Association, organizations that cooperate and communicate to prevent violence against women, and strategies were discussed for the solution of the problem.

### **Posters, Brochures and Documents**

Various organizations, the first among them being Antalya Women’s Counseling and Solidarity Center, have prepared posters on violence against women. Antalya Metropolitan Municipality publicized its violence support line via ads on billboards. The Center for Women and Gender Studies at Akdeniz University also makes regular announcements on the subject and provides useful links.

## **IMPROVEMENT IN INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT OFFERED TO THE VICTIMS**

### **Cooperation with National and International Bodies and Organizations**

Violence against women is a multi-dimensional and universal problem observed in many developed and underdeveloped societies in various forms. Thus, numerous international conventions have been prepared to combat this problem, and international organizations conduct various activities to this purpose. Antalya-based organizations also engaged in national and international cooperation in the fight against violence.

Antalya Women’s Counseling and Solidarity Center, which is a civil society organization, organized a two-day festival for women’s movies in cooperation with Film-Mor. Antalya Women’s Counseling and Solidarity Center also ran a project titled “*Antalya in the Fight Against Human Trafficking*”, supported by the International Organization for Migration.

Antalya Metropolitan Municipality participated in the “*Project for Women’s Shelters*”, ran in eight provinces with the support of the United Nations and endorsed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and led the efforts to build a modern women’s guesthouse in Antalya.

### **Increasing the Number of Safe Shelters for Victims**

Women’s guesthouses were established to protect women against violence, to empower women and to help them move on with their lives. Family members who have been victims of violence need to receive counseling, emergency help and finally security and support.

*...Women's guesthouses, which are residential social service facilities that temporarily shelter women and their children who have been victims of physical, sexual, emotional or economic violence during the solution of their psychosocial and economic problems, operate on the basis of the "Regulation on Women's Guesthouses Run by the Social Services and Child Protection Agency", which went into effect after publication in the Official Gazette dated July 12, 1998, issue no. 23400... Women who left their houses or who left due to conflicts with their husbands and thus are in need of help, women who have been victims of physical, sexual, emotional or economic violence, women who are in economic and social deprivation as a result of divorce or death of their husbands, women who are forced into marriages they do not want, women who became pregnant or had children out of wedlock and were rejected by their families, women who had drug or alcohol addiction, received treatment and got rid of their addiction, women who were recently released from jail and are in need of help and support, and women who are in economic and social deprivation due to environmental reasons that are not under their control benefit from women's guesthouses...*  
(<http://www.shcek.gov.tr> 19.8.2011).

Antalya, which has a population of 1,392,974 people, had only one women's guesthouse run by the Social Services and Child Protection Agency, and a second women's guesthouse that can accommodate 40 people (20 women and 20 children) was opened by Antalya Metropolitan Municipality on April 19, 2011. One of the main goals of Antalya provincial coordination committee on the Prevention of Violence against Women and Children and Custom and Honor Killings was to increase the number of women's guesthouses in the province. Antalya is one of the provinces that participated in the "Project for Women's Shelters", run in eight provinces with the support of the United Nations. The new women's guesthouse run by the Metropolitan Municipality was opened as part of this project, to which members of the provincial coordination contributed in their various capacities.

### **Provision of Free Legal Support**

Providing counseling services for women who have been or are under the risk of being victims of violence and who need support is another important mechanism in the fight against violence against women. The women's rights committee of the Bar Association of Antalya provides free counseling services to women on women's rights, the Civil Law, violence and how and where to apply in case of violence. In addition, the committee provides free legal and counseling services to female victims of violence who cannot afford to pay for these legal services.

### **TOWARDS A BETTER FUTURE**

Turkey places its signature on international conventions to prevent violence against women. According to Karadağ Turkey accepts that domestic violence is a sub dimension of violence against women, the principle aim of the convention is to prevent all forms of discrimination against women and to protect them and it is a right of status positive for a woman to ask for the prevention of acts of violence towards herself pursuant to *CEDAW*. Turkey ratified The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) and incorporated it into Turkish Domestic Law. With this convention, Turkey aims to protect women from all kinds of violence and plan a comprehensive frame, policies and precautions to prevent violence against women and domestic violence. When Turkey accomplishes its responsibilities which arise from the convention, it guarantees to

carry out an integrated struggle against violence against women and pursue a gender perspective. In this sense, it makes a commitment to include the issue in teaching materials in the official curriculum and every grade in the process of education in compliance with developmental capacities of students (Karadağ, <http://www.hayatadokun.net> 09.12.2012).

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women considered the sixth periodic report of Turkey on 21<sup>st</sup> of July 2010:

*The Committee notes with appreciation the measures taken to combat violence against women, such as the amendments to the Turkish Penal Code, the issuance of a Prime Ministry Circular outlining the measures to be taken and the responsible institutions, the establishment of a Monitoring Committee for Violence against Women, the adoption of the National Action Plan for Combating Domestic Violence against Women, as well as various awareness-raising and training programmes. .... In line with its previous concluding observations of 2005, the Committee recommends the expansion of training activities and programmes for public officials, the judiciary, law enforcement personnel and health-service providers in order to ensure that they can address and combat all forms of violence against women and can provide adequate support to victims. It also recommends the continuation of public awareness-raising campaigns on all forms of violence against women and girls. The Committee further recommends that the State party establish additional counseling and other support services for victims of violence, including additional shelters, and ensure that adequate resources are allocated in order to implement the necessary measures in this regard. The Committee requests the State party to enhance its cooperation with non-governmental organizations working in the area of violence against women... (<http://www.un.org> 09.12.2012).*

These developments emphasize the fact that there are no serious legal problems; yet there is a necessity to implement and convert these decisions into practice. Within this context, the studies regarding the struggle against violence against women carried out in Antalya give hope for the future.

The most important achievement of the provincial coordination committee on the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Custom and Honor Killings was to bring together and facilitate communication between representatives of the official bodies and civil society organizations in Antalya that are active in the struggle against violence against women. As a result, these organizations cooperated on many issues and in many instances, and it became possible to conduct the activities detailed above. This cooperation made the struggle against violence against women more comprehensive and more effective.

Violence against women is an important problem in Antalya as it is all over the world, and data for the years 2008 to 2010 indicate that violence against women in Antalya is on the increase. However, the reasons behind this increase have not been the subject of a detailed study. Thus, a detailed and multi-dimensional study on violence against women in Antalya, which receives many migrants each year and is experiencing a rapid process of urbanization, is an urgent need.

The increase in violence against women in Antalya also increases the need for more women's guesthouses. The Law on Municipalities no. 5393 already requires Metropolitan Municipalities and those municipalities with a population in excess of 50.000 to have "shelters

for women and children". However, there have been problems with the implementation of this law. A total of 1,392,974 people reside in Antalya city center, but Antalya Metropolitan Municipality has only one guesthouse, which was opened in 2011. Increasing the number of guesthouses should be one of the priorities of the provincial coordination committee, which succeeded in facilitating cooperation and communication, and efforts need to be made to create more shelters for women who have been victims of violence. In addition, posters, brochures and panels should be used to develop instruments for the prevention of violence, and educational activities should be continued.

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