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Annex 2

to the

Commission Implementing Decision on the financing of the annual action plan in favour of Turkey for 2021

## ACTION DOCUMENT

### 1. SYNOPSIS

#### 1.1. Action Summary Table

<b>Title</b>	IPA III Annual Action Plan in favour of Turkey for 2021 Action # 2 - Civil Society			
<b>OPSYS</b> CRIS encoding (OPSYS equivalent)	OSPYS business reference IPA/2021/043673/2 CRIS encoding (OPSYS equivalent)			
<b>Basic Act</b>	Financed under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III)			
<b>Team Europe Initiative</b>	No			
<b>Zone benefiting from the action</b>	The action shall be carried out in Turkey			
<b>Programming document</b>	IPA III Programming Framework			
<b>PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION</b>				
<b>Window and thematic priority</b>	Window 1 - Rule of law, fundamental rights and democracy Thematic Priority 7 - Civil Society			
<b>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>	Main SDG: SDG 17 - Partnership For the Goals Other significant SDGs: SDG 5: Gender Equality SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure SDG 13: Climate Action			
<b>DAC code(s)</b>	15150 Democratic participation and civil society			
<b>Main Delivery Channel</b>	Central Government - 12001 UNFPA – 41119			
<b>Markers (from DAC form)</b>	<b>General policy objective</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Aid to environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Trade development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Internal markers</b>	<b>Policy objectives</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Principal objective</b>
	Digitalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Migration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Covid-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>BUDGET INFORMATION</b>				
<b>Amounts concerned</b>	<p>Budget line: 15.02 01 01.01</p> <p>Total estimated cost: EUR 11 020 000</p> <p>Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 11 000 000 of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- EUR 2 500 000 for indirect management with IPA III beneficiary</li> <li>- EUR 3 500 000 for direct management</li> <li>- EUR 5 000 000 for indirect management with an entrusted entity</li> </ul> <p>This action is co-financed in joint co-financing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for an amount of EUR 8 170</li> <li>- Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT) for an amount of EUR 11 830</li> </ul>			
<b>MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION</b>				
<b>Type of financing and method(s) of implementation</b>	<p>Project Modality:  Area of Support #1 - Women Friendly Cities III  <b>Indirect management</b> with an entrusted entity, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).</p> <p>Areas of Support #2 - Turkey-EU Business Dialogue II</p>			

	<p><b>Indirect management</b> with Turkey (Managing Authority and Implementing Body for policy management: DEUA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Intermediate Body for financial management: CFCU).</p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p><b>Direct management</b> by European Commission, EU Delegation to Turkey through grant.</p>
<b>Final Date for conclusion of Financing Agreement</b>	At the latest by 31 December 2022
<b>Final date for concluding contribution / delegation agreements, procurement and grant contracts</b>	3 years following the date of conclusion of the Financing Agreement, with the exception of cases listed under Article 114(2) of the Financial Regulation
<b>Indicative operational implementation period</b>	72 months following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement
<b>Final date for implementing the Financing Agreement</b>	12 years following the conclusion of the Financing Agreement

## 1.2. Summary of the Action

In the last 20 years, the European Union has made considerable contributions to empowering civil society in Turkey. The EU perceives civil society as an indispensable component of a functioning democracy. Turkey being declared a candidate country has given impetus to the strengthening of the civil society sector, enhancing its organisational capacity, boosting EU-Turkey civil society dialogue and improving the legislative framework to create a more enabling environment for civil society organisations (CSOs).

Civil society has been treated as a separate sub-sector in the IPA II period. This important benchmark, coupled with past interventions, contributed significantly to the recognition of civil society as a national development objective, notably included in the 11th National Development Plan (NDP). IPA III interventions will build on these achievements and on increased commitment by Turkey.

The activity entitled ‘Women Friendly Cities (WFC)-III’ under Area of Support #1 aims to improve the institutional capacity of municipalities to advance to becoming ‘women-friendly’. It also aims to improve CSOs’ capacity to ensure inclusiveness and better cooperation with municipalities regarding a rights-based approach, gender equality in local policies, and service delivery, all of which are of primary importance for a democratic society. The ‘Turkey-EU Business Dialogue (TEBD) II’ activity under Area of Support #2 will address the capacity development needs of Turkish chambers as well as the need of both EU and Turkish chambers to build relationships that support not only their members’ business interests and trade between Turkey and the EU, but also the enlargement policy priorities. Therefore, the capacity development of chambers and business dialogue constitute the two core strategic objectives of this activity.

The action chiefly fulfils the capacity-building and public-CSO cooperation objectives in the IPA III Programming Framework and in Turkey’s 11th NDP. The horizontal issues covered by the action are: increasing people-to-people contacts, developing a positive agenda in EU-Turkey relations with the involvement of civil society in a broader context,

and fostering a functioning pluralistic, participatory and representative democracy. Other key elements covered by the action are sustaining the already developed capacities on civil society dialogue and EU *acquis* alignment.

## 2. RATIONALE

### 2.1. Context Analysis

Since the beginning of the 2000s, civil society has been an important agenda item in EU-Turkey relations. Turkey underwent several legal reforms of the Civil Code, the Law on Associations and the Law on Foundations in 2004, 2008 and 2011, respectively. Along with these developments on the legislative side, the EU also started to support this field through a number of projects which aimed at improving civil society dialogue between Turkish and EU communities and enhancing the capacity of Turkish CSOs. The IPA II period was, yet, the most important milestone as civil society was defined as a sub-sector and EU support to civil society was designed with a more structured and strategic approach. This approach is continued in the IPA III period as civil society is again one of the thematic priorities under Window 1 of the IPA III Programming Framework. In the Programming Framework, civil society is defined as an actor of change and its democratic watchdog function and contribution to the alignment with and implementation of the EU *acquis* are underlined.

Based on the objectives described in the IPA III Programming Framework, the following objectives have been set in the Strategic Response of Turkey under the civil society thematic priority:

- strengthening the enabling legal and policy environment and support the basic needs of CSOs;
- increasing CSOs' role in decision and policy making in partnership with public authorities based on trust and mutual recognition and around common interests;
- strengthening CSOs' skills and capacities;
- enhancing civil society dialogue and inter-cultural exchange between civil societies in Turkey and EU.

**Context related to women:** Gaps are still observed in statistics related to equality between women and men especially in fields like women literacy, participation of women in politics, women's representation in decision-making positions and employment of women in Turkey. Therefore, multi-sectoral policies and action plans need to be in place both at the central and local level to remedy such inequalities that affect the exercise of women's human rights and their participation in cultural, social, economic and political life. Turkey has recently withdrawn from the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the "Istanbul Convention"). The withdrawal was announced by a Presidential Decree on 20 March 2021 and entered into effect on 1 July 2021. The Government has reiterated that although Turkey withdraws from the Istanbul Convention, the Law No. 6284 on the Protection of Family and Prevention of Violence Against Women, which is based on the Istanbul Convention as per Art 1/2 - a of the Law, is still in force, and that Turkey is committed to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and to "zero tolerance policy on violence against women". In addition, Turkey has recently announced its 4th National Action Plan on Combating Violence, whose main goal is to prevent all kinds of violence against women with the Zero Tolerance Principle. Despite these factors, Turkey's withdrawal might hinder progress to fully promote equality between women and men and combat violence against women through further strengthening of national legislative, policy and institutional frameworks. Therefore, there is a need for an increased support by governmental and non-governmental institutions to prevent any backsliding on the domestic legislation, specifically Law No. 6284, to promote its effective and efficient implementation in line with zero tolerance policy and to decrease the gaps in Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response for women and girls in Turkey. Municipalities and CSOs, working at the local level, are important stakeholders for this matter to materialise the continued commitment for gender equality and elimination of violence at the local level. Hence, the WFC III project will be a key platform to emphasise positive gender norms, advocate for investment in girls and women's empowerment, and enhance communication for gender equality, which is now even more crucial for Turkey.

**Context related to business dialogue:** Turkey's economy has become closely integrated with the EU. The EU-Turkey Customs Union and accession negotiations have played a pivotal role in facilitating this integration, which goes beyond the elimination of customs duties and other restrictions on industrial and processed agricultural products. The Customs Union supported Turkey's alignment with the technical elements of the *acquis*, encouraged the vertical integration of Turkish firms into European production networks, and stimulated the modernization of Turkey's

customs administration. Chambers and business organisations both in Turkey and in the EU have an important role in fostering this economic cooperation and contributing to the advancement of Turkey's EU accession process and the modernisation of the Customs Union between Turkey and the EU. Business Dialogues are also important platforms, which bring together business organisations in Turkey and the EU, public authorities and the EU institutions in order to analyse and discuss the economic relationship between the EU and Turkey, and how it can be further strengthened to maximise the benefits for both sides.

In line with the specific objectives of the Civil Society Thematic Priority and the context explained above, this Action mainly focuses on increasing the capacities of CSOs<sup>1</sup> and local authorities for mainstreaming gender equality into local service delivery; and strengthening mutual understanding and integration while also facilitating knowledge sharing between EU and Turkish business communities. Additionally, increasing people-to-people contacts, developing a positive agenda in EU-Turkey relations with the involvement of civil society in broader terms, and fostering a functioning pluralistic, participatory and representative democracy will be considered as the horizontal issues addressed in this Action Document. The Action will also complement the national objectives set out in the 11th NDP.

## 2.2. Problem analysis by areas of support

### **AREA OF SUPPORT #1 WOMEN FRIENDLY CITIES III**

Notable gaps are observed between women and men in Turkey. According to the Gender Inequality Index published by UNDP in 2020<sup>2</sup>, Turkey ranks 68th among 162 countries, in terms of criteria measuring women literacy, maternal mortality, participation of women in politics, adolescent fertility and employment of women. According to the Global Gender Gap Report published by the World Economic Forum in 2020<sup>3</sup>, Turkey ranks 130th among 153 countries. Despite the recent improvements, inequalities persist in participation of women into the labour markets where women's labour force participation rate in June 2021 was 31.7% compared to 69.1% for men<sup>4</sup>. The last national prevalence survey on domestic violence in Turkey was conducted in 2014<sup>5</sup>, and it indicates that 38% of women (45% in certain regions) were subject to violence by their husbands or partners at least once during their lifetime. Only 13% of these women applied to official institutions or non-governmental organizations for help.

Regional disparities also fuel inequality between women and men in the country and hinder access to social protection services, such as Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response services. According to the 'Comparative Gender Equality Scorecard for 81 Cities' report (Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (TEPAV), 2018<sup>6</sup>), Istanbul is the city where women are empowered the most, whereas Ağrı is the city where women are empowered the least. On the other hand, the District Level Gender Equality Index, which covers 81 provinces and 234 districts in Turkey (Yanındayız Association, 2020)<sup>7</sup> demonstrates that although most districts might achieve the highest scores in the areas of education, health and sports, even the best-scoring districts approach the lowest scores in achieving equality between women and men in participation in politics and decision-making, economic life and access to resources.

Women remain under-represented in decision-making positions within the executive and legislative branches of government at both national and local levels. As in other countries, women's political under-representation is due to the combined effect of institutional and structural constraints, as well as cultural and attitudinal barriers. According to the results of the local elections held on 31st March 2019, 3 metropolitan mayors and 42 mayors are women. 2,283 municipal assembly members and 48 provincial assembly members are women. A total of 1,086 women were elected as mukhtars throughout Turkey in the latest local elections (8th Periodic Country Report of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW))<sup>8</sup>. Hence, decision-making and policymaking processes are still mostly male dominated.

<sup>1</sup> CSOs, which work for mainstreaming gender equality and focusing on promoting and protecting of women's rights at the local level, will be involved in the activity titled Women Friendly Cities III (WFC III). Hence, CSOs used within the context of WFC III refer to this category of organisations.

<sup>2</sup> UNDP, Human Development Index, 2020. [https://www.tr.undp.org/content/turkey/en/home/library/human\\_development/hdr-2020.html](https://www.tr.undp.org/content/turkey/en/home/library/human_development/hdr-2020.html)

<sup>3</sup> World Economic Forum. Global Gender Gap Report 2020. [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GGGR\\_2020.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2020.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Turkstat. Labour Force Statistics. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Labour-Force-Statistics-June-2021-37482>

<sup>5</sup> Hacettepe University Institute of Population Studies. National Research on Domestic Violence Against Women in Turkey 2014. [http://www.hips.hacettepe.edu.tr/eng/english\\_main\\_report.pdf](http://www.hips.hacettepe.edu.tr/eng/english_main_report.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> TEPAV Gender Equality Scorecard for 81 Cities' 2018 (in Turkish)

[https://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1520402632-7.Karsilastirmalarla\\_81\\_Il\\_Icin\\_Toplumsal\\_Cinsiyet\\_Esitligi\\_Karnesi\\_2018.pdf](https://www.tepav.org.tr/upload/files/1520402632-7.Karsilastirmalarla_81_Il_Icin_Toplumsal_Cinsiyet_Esitligi_Karnesi_2018.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Yanındayız. Gender Equality Index. <https://yanindayiz.org/toplumsal-cinsiyet-esitligi-endeksi/>

<sup>8</sup> 8th Periodic Country Report of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2fC%2fTUR%2f8&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2fC%2fTUR%2f8&Lang=en)

As explained above, women and girls experience different inequalities in different parts of Turkey, and therefore there is a need for multi-sectoral policies and action plans (including health, GBV, education etc.) to remedy such inequalities that affect the exercise of women's human rights and their participation in cultural, social, economic and political life. Hence, Turkey needs to take additional measures to ensure that the adopted legislation is implemented in the daily lives of citizens, inclusive of vulnerable groups, particularly women. A democratic society requires that each citizen has equal opportunities in access to rights, resources and services but also has a role and voice in the decision and policy-making processes which ensures social inclusion and non-discrimination, not only at central level but also at the local level. Participatory local governance with adequate women representation can better address regional disparities if local policies and services are designed in consideration of the specific needs and challenges, especially those of the most vulnerable groups, particularly women. The solutions can then be well planned and budgeted as they are based on feedback from these groups. Municipalities and CSOs play a critical role here, ensuring the bottom-up approach to mainstream gender equality into local service delivery (covering health, GBV etc.). To this aim, there is a need to strengthen the capacities of local authorities and CSOs so that they work in a coordinated manner to promote a gender responsive rights-based approach, as underlined in the IPA III Programming Framework. Therefore, the activity titled 'Women Friendly Cities (WFC) -III' aims to improve the institutional capacity of municipalities to advance into becoming "women friendly" and of CSOs to ensure inclusiveness and better cooperation with municipalities regarding the rights-based approach and equality between women and men in local policies and service delivery, which are of primary importance for each democratic society.

Previous WFC Actions (WFC I: 2006-2010 and WFC II: 2011-2015) paved the way for development and implementation of Local Equality Action Mechanisms and Plans. WFC I defined and established the local intervention tools for Turkey, namely the Local Equality Mechanisms (LEMs) and Local Equality Action Plans (LEAPs) covering sectors of health, education, employment, protection-GBV, participation and urban services. The most significant success achieved in WFC II was the integration of the LEAPs into institutional plans and the allocation of respective budgets for the implementation of these plans by the respective local institutions. Additionally, a Small Grant Scheme was implemented to help local women CSOs develop their capacity on issues related to equality between women and men and ultimately to contribute to the implementation of LEAPs in partnership with local authorities. Despite these positive developments, the needs, gaps and challenges for integrating inclusive and gender equal structures and services at the local level still persist because there is a need to reinstate the WFC model, increase municipal ownership especially at the decision making level and establish continuous accountability and advocacy mechanisms for WFCs. In addition, according to the final report of the WFC II (2015), women continue to suffer from traditional gender roles, which put various responsibilities over their shoulders, this has been reinforced during Covid-19 pandemic, hence they need to have access to extensive urban and social services in cities. Gender blind approaches continue to fail detecting women's needs and, simultaneously, veil their unequal access to services. Based on the local reflections, gender equality needs to be further mainstreamed in local decision and policy-making structures with an extensive perspective on ensuring equality between women and men.

Over the years, the demand to be a WFC among local actors has increased. UNFPA has continued to technically support municipalities, on an ad hoc basis, for development and improvement of their LEAPs and also integrating into these a component on the elimination of child, early and forced marriages (CEFM). As of November 2020, there are 34 Local Equality Units in Turkey, most of which are not active, do not have required staff and financial resources or do not have living LEAPs<sup>9</sup>. Hence, there is a crucial need to provide specialized and comprehensive technical assistance for municipalities and CSOs in consideration of their specific roles and abilities at the local level to establish the specifics of the WFC model and ensure its expansion by example. Municipalities and CSOs are and can be the leaders of gender equality mainstreaming at the local level through creating, implementing and monitoring gender sensitive and inclusive policies. In previous phases, certain capacities were built and institutional structures were transformed but there is still a need to build on these and ensure not only their expansion and replication but also the ownership with strong partnerships established at the national and local level. Hence, the WFC model needs to be sustained across Turkey via the provision of minimum standards to become a WFC and laying out the concrete expectations for leadership and financial resources. Awareness on gender issues among most actors, including policy makers, is still an issue, therefore the service quality cannot be always improved for women and girls as their needs are not seen or properly analyzed for its mainstreaming.

<sup>9</sup> Ülker Şener and Bengin İnanç. 2021. 'Current Situation Analysis of Local Equality Units in Municipalities'. Association for Monitoring Gender Equality

Main stakeholders of this area of support are the Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT), municipalities and other local authorities as appropriate, CSOs, and relevant public institutions (including DEUA, CFCU and Ministry of Interior). UMT, as the union where all municipalities around Turkey are its natural members, will own the 'brand of WFC' to ensure its sustainability and expansion beyond the third phase of WFC via provision of continued capacity building for municipalities and CSOs within their institutional mandates.

Paragraphs 776.4 and 778 in the 11th NDP of Turkey read "Efforts will be carried out to increase the participation and effectiveness of CSOs in decision-making and legislation processes" and "Civil society-public cooperation will be strengthened and the capacities of the public and CSOs will be improved", respectively. The WFC-III will contribute to strengthening of the capacity of CSOs for better advocacy, increasing CSOs' participation in decision-making processes and enhancing public-CSO cooperation through partnerships in joint grant initiatives. In this respect, the activity is fully aligned with national objectives in the civil society domain.

## **AREA OF SUPPORT #2: TURKEY-EU BUSINESS DIALOGUE II**

Chambers both in Turkey and in the EU have an important role in fostering economic cooperation and contributing to the accession process. Turkish Chambers, however, have limited number of staff and their level of expertise does not allow them to adequately address the requests of industry and trade sectors or to develop new services to their members in line with the EU's priorities and strategies. Each chamber with sufficient knowledge on EU *acquis* employ 2-3 full-time experts who have a proper comprehension of EU issues whereas most of the remaining staff lack basic level of knowledge on the EU *acquis*, the EU's new strategies, programmes and trade regulations and could follow the EU agenda related to their business area only on a limited scale. There is also a need for disseminating the knowledge on EU rules and regulations as well as the EU's strategies and priorities to all departments of the chambers so that they could both satisfy their members' needs and delegate the workload proportionally to the related departments.

The first phase of the Turkey-EU Business Dialogue (TEBD) Project was financed under IPA II and implemented during 2018-2021. TEBD Project has revealed that Turkish Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs)<sup>10</sup> and enterprises are key stakeholders in the implementation of the EU legislation, as most of the Turkish legislation that is aligned with the EU *acquis* will affect business communities either directly or indirectly. It is, therefore, crucial that the Turkish business community is informed properly and in a timely manner on business-related *acquis* as well as on the potential opportunities and challenges linked to Turkey's accession process.

TEBD project activities also showed that there is a need for EU and Turkish chambers to build relationships that support not only their members' business interests and trade between Turkey and the EU, but also the policy priorities of Turkey and the EU's enlargement strategy. TEBD organised an EU-Turkey High Level Business Dialogue on the European Green Deal on the 10-11 March 2021, which gathered 4160 businesses from 36 countries. It transpired in this meeting that the European Green Deal will shape the future EU-Turkey economic and business relations. There is, however, a lack of knowledge and awareness on the European Green Deal, the EU's Digital and Climate Neutrality Strategies<sup>11</sup> and their implications for the chambers and their members. Furthermore, the circular economy and industrial decarbonisation are likely to become core elements of the future EU-Turkey relationship. These issues require increased business dialogue and mutual understanding between business communities in the EU and Turkey, as well as between the business communities and the public authorities.

In these respects, the TEBD II project aims at making the European and Turkish businesses more innovative and an integral part of industrial value chains, and also key partners in the sustainable development of the economy. To support and strengthen this process, there is a need for more intimate cooperation projects between business communities that aim at better integration of Turkish chambers with their European counterparts. Therefore, capacity

<sup>10</sup> Turkey has approximately 3.2 million active SMEs, representing 99.8% of all registered entities in the country. The SMEs constitute 64.5% of the total turnover of the enterprises, 56.3% of the country's exports, and 73.8% of its workforce. (SMEs of Turkey 2020 Report. TOBB. 2020. <https://www.tobb.org.tr/KobiArastirma/Documents/SMEs%20of%20Turkey%20Report%202020.pdf>)

<sup>11</sup> COM(2020) 67 EC Communication *Shaping Europe's digital future* & COM(2021) 550 EC Communication *Fit for 55': delivering the EU's 2030 Climate Target on the way to climate neutrality*

development of chambers and business dialogue constitute the two core strategic objectives to be pursued in TEBD II activity.

TEBD has currently reached out to all 365 Turkish Chambers and 28 National Chambers, 115 Regional or Local Chambers in the EU countries. 4.735 SMEs from 37 countries participated in TEBD activities. Activities such as the TEBD Academy and Study Visits provided excellent opportunities for Turkish Chambers' representatives to meet their counterparts from EU countries (and vice versa). Through 45 TEBD SME Workshops held until the end of June 2021, the project reached out to 1464 representatives of the Turkish and EU business communities at local level to increase their understanding of EU-Turkey economic relations and also to elicit their input on how the policy framework for doing business between Turkey and the EU could be improved. TEBD provided opportunities for the local SMEs to acquire knowledge on a variety of topics (e.g. opportunities and challenges of the EU-Turkey Customs Union; EU and Turkish rural development policies; EU directive on packaging and packaging waste; post COVID-19 EU: Turkey's place in the EU Value Chain; business opportunities, risks, and challenges for Turkish SMEs; post COVID-19 EU: Industry and Trade Strategy Change and its impact on SMEs; adaptation of Food Producers to the EU Standards, e-commerce) and to communicate their views and needs interactively on these matters. Those events were important for a better understanding of relevant EU legislation by Turkish chambers and companies so that they could improve their access to EU markets.

TEBD II aims at continuing to facilitate knowledge sharing and enhancing mutual understanding between the business communities in the EU and in Turkey, and raising awareness in EU and Turkish business communities about the opportunities and challenges of EU-Turkey economic and trade relations in a wider range of topics considering the EU's new strategies and priorities.

According to "Chambers Women Entrepreneurship Services 2019 Survey", the share of women-led businesses is roughly 21%. Regarding the employment and decision-making in the Chambers about 40% of overall management positions are covered by women. There are marked differences in the presence of women in middle and top management positions in both European and Turkish Chambers. The presence of women in the management positions of Turkish Chambers, however, is the lowest among European Chambers. According to EUROCHAMBRES' Report entitled 'COVID-19: Impact on Women Entrepreneurs'<sup>12</sup> COVID-19 confinement measures have heightened a number of pre-existing obstacles to women entrepreneurship, notably in relation to work/life balance and access to finance. Moreover, the crisis has had a transformative impact on many women entrepreneurs' business practices and models. 75% of women entrepreneurs surveyed indicated the need for training and support to enhance digital skills.

TEBD Project has encouraged the participation of women staff in its activities. On 23-25 November 2020, TEBD organised a Women Entrepreneurs Forum and gathered 1637 participants from 32 countries including women entrepreneurs, policymakers, representatives of international financial institutions, EU and Turkish Chambers, and other relevant institutions. 53 Turkish Chambers and 22 European Chambers and their women network discussed different topics in 5 engaging and interactive thematic sessions and also promoted a constructive dialogue between the Women Entrepreneurs from Turkey and the EU while allowing participants to build their networks, enhance their skills and expand their knowledge.

TEBD II will work in close cooperation with EUROCHAMBRES Women Network and TOBB Women Entrepreneurs Board to address these needs of women entrepreneurs and will mainstream gender in its activities. TEBD II will enable networking as well as exchange of information and best practices among women entrepreneurs and chamber representatives from both Turkey and the EU. Moreover, the involvement of women staff of the chambers to the activities will be encouraged.

Main stakeholders of TEBD II are the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), EUROCHAMBRES, Turkish and European chambers, Turkish SMEs and relevant public institutions (including DEUA and CFCU).

The activity is aligned with the objectives laid down in the 11th NDP of Turkey in that it will contribute to the capacity enhancement of chambers as important building blocks of the civil society.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.eurochambres.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Report-EWN.pdf>

### 2.3. Relevance and complementarity with strategies supported by key national stakeholders

The EU accession process has been the main driving force for active civil society in Turkey. The efforts for developing civil society commenced during IPA I and continued throughout the IPA II period by nearly doubling the allocations for civil society in the country.

Civil society has been addressed as a specific policy area in the 11<sup>th</sup> NDP. As for Turkey's national policy objectives, the 11th NDP<sup>13</sup> (covering 2019-2023) has a sub-chapter dedicated to civil society, setting out the following main objectives for the next 5 years: (i) develop awareness on civil society; (ii) improve organised civil society; (iii) ensure a transparent and accountable structure for CSOs; and (iv) promote effective participation in decision-making processes. These objectives are closely aligned with those set forth in IPA III Programming Framework. EU-funded civil society interventions have also an undeniably important share.

The Action chiefly fulfils the capacity building and public-CSO cooperation objectives in the 11<sup>th</sup> NDP and IPA III Programming Framework. Additionally, increasing people-to-people contacts, developing a positive agenda in EU-Turkey relations with the involvement of civil society in a broader context, and fostering a functioning pluralistic, participatory and representative democracy will be considered as the horizontal issues in this Action Document. Sustaining the already developed capacities on civil society dialogue and EU *acquis* alignment will be the other key elements.

### 2.4. Relevance and complementarity with EU policy and EU and other donors' assistance

The Action chiefly addresses the objectives of strengthening CSOs' skills and capacities and increasing CSOs' role in decision- and policy-making in partnership with public authorities based on trust and mutual recognition and around common interests. To a lesser extent the Action contributes to strengthening the enabling legal and policy environment and supporting the basic needs of CSOs, and increasing public awareness on CSOs' needs and role. The Action will also support civil society dialogue between the EU and Turkey for increasing the contribution of CSOs to the alignment with and implementation of the EU *acquis*.

**The European Commission's Enlargement Strategy<sup>14</sup>** underlined that:

- Turkey is a candidate country and a key partner for the EU in essential areas of joint interest, such as migration, counter-terrorism, economy, trade, energy and transport.
- The EU continues its strong support for local civil society organisations, human rights defenders, journalists and independent media outlets.

**Commission 2021 report on Turkey<sup>15</sup>** states that, "*A powerful and diverse civil society is a crucial component of any democratic system and should be acknowledged and treated as such by the state institutions.*" The report also stresses that Civil society faced continuous pressure and their space to operate freely has continued to diminish limiting their freedom of expression and freedom of association.. This implies that more progress is needed to improve the enabling environment for a vibrant and active civil society in line with the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and international standards.

**The Commission Guidelines for EU Support to Civil Society in Enlargement Countries, 2021-2027<sup>16</sup>** include a set of objectives, results, and indicators, which will allow progress to be measured at country level, as well as across the enlargement region. The guidelines translate the political objectives of the Commission as indicated in the IPA III Programming Framework and in the Enlargement packages into a concrete results' framework with outcomes and indicators

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/On\\_BirinciPLan\\_ingilizce\\_SonBaski.pdf](http://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/On_BirinciPLan_ingilizce_SonBaski.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> COM(2021) 644 2021 Communication on EU enlargement policy [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/system/files/2020-10/20201006-communication-on-eu-enlargement-policy\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/system/files/2020-10/20201006-communication-on-eu-enlargement-policy_en.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> SWD(2021) 290 Turkey 2021 Report [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/turkey-report-2021\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/turkey-report-2021_en)

<sup>16</sup> The Guidelines for EU support to Civil Society and Media in the enlargement region were in place for the period 2014-2020, and are currently being updated for the period 2021-2027. The actions under this AD are aligned with these documents.

As the **EU's new Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Action 2021–2025**<sup>17</sup> (**GAP III**) aims to accelerate progress on empowering women and girls, the GAP III makes the promotion of equality between women and men a priority of all external policies and actions. Also, the key objective of GAP is stated as “Contributing to empowering women, girls and young people to fully use their rights and increase their participation in political, economic, social, and cultural life”. Therefore, GAP III strongly supports the participation and leadership of girls and women, promoting it, for example, through governance programmes and public administration reforms.

In addition, **Political Guidelines for the European Commission (2019-2024)**<sup>18</sup> sets out clear and bold strategy and targets to achieve ‘equality for all and equality in all senses’ and to achieve a Union for Equality. WFC III activity will have gender equality at its core, hence contributing to Union for Equality and GAP III objectives.

Further to those, civil society is a crucial element in localizing the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. Cities and regions are in a privileged position to transform the broad and abstract 2030 Agenda into concrete goals, to adapt these goals to their local context, and to help the public understand and be fully committed to them. As the voice of the poorest and most marginalised members of the society, CSOs play a crucial role in the localisation of the SDGs, which means ownership, establishing partnerships, reporting and also monitoring for the achievement of the SDGs at the local level.

## 2.5. Lessons learned and links with previous financial assistance

Support for civil society in Turkey dates back to 2001 and includes nearly 30 programmes/initiatives. Significant investments and efforts have been made to develop the capacities of CSOs, support civil society-public dialogue, and the EU-Turkey civil society dialogue. The activities will build on this extensive experience.

### Women Friendly Cities III

The major lessons from EU-supported flagship programmes targeting local authorities (Town Twinning Action between Turkey and the EU, Local Administration Reform – III, Technical Assistance Project for Strengthening the Capacity of Departments of Investment, Monitoring and Coordination) are taken into consideration while formulating the activity. According to the main lessons learned from these projects, it is observed that further capacity is needed for service delivery at local level and that further engagement of local stakeholders to municipal actions is required. The WFC III will not only enhance the institutional capacity of municipalities but also strengthen the cooperation of municipalities with CSOs and other local stakeholders for achieving more “women friendly” cities.

An independent evaluation of the “UN Joint Programme on Promoting Gender Equality at Local Level (Women Friendly Cities)” and “Women Friendly Cities Small Grants Programme” published by SIDA in 2015 examines above all the involvement of local authorities. It is stated that the **visibility of the WFC model** among government and non-governmental stakeholders is limited, that **central, provincial and municipal ownership** of the WFC programme ‘model’ remains weak and that the functioning of local equality mechanisms is affected by the lack of full-time equality representatives at the municipal level. Furthermore, the limitations of Local Equality Action Plans are defined. Finally, the need for civil society partners to support women’s empowerment through sustained presence and capacity building are determined as important considerations for future phases. Key recommendations referred to the i) need to transfer leadership and brand to a local/ national stakeholder; ii) design and implement a multi-dimensional sustainability strategy that sets out annual targets for technical, institutional, financial and legal sustainability of the key steps in the change pathway; iii) the need to look at required legal amendments needed for WFC model; iv) the need for municipality councils to allocate adequate/sufficient financial and human resources to Equality Units to operate; and finally the need for engagement of men in grassroots empowerment and community mobilisation activities.

Based on the main findings and recommendations of WFC’s previous phases and past/ongoing actions, the WFC III activity will focus on two actors; **municipalities** and **CSOs**. The aim is to develop tools/capacities in consideration of their specific roles to sustain and replicate WFCs. Municipalities have the potential to be the local leaders to mainstream gender equality in decision-making and to implement Local Equality Action Plans with allocation of

<sup>17</sup> COM(2020) 152 A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0152&from=EN>

<sup>18</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024_en)

necessary financial and human resources. CSOs are key leaders in ensuring inclusiveness and accountability in these processes thanks to their monitoring and advocacy capacity. Hence, a system for continuous capacity building for both actors will be established via structured WFC training programmes, technical assistance to Local Equality Mechanisms with required guidelines and standards as well as via the in-kind support programme. This will be the driving force to reinstate the WFC budget, the relevant initiatives and to implement Local Action Plans in a given province via the provision of not only technical and practical support but also seed funding.

In addition, it aims to strengthen the ownership and replication for the WFC model with the leadership of UMT, where all municipalities are its natural members. Hence, WFC II activity aims to ensure that the WFC model is owned and sustained by municipalities and CSOs as they are equipped with necessary tools, guidelines and partnerships.

## **Turkey-EU Business Dialogue II**

Between December 2016 and February 2017, an Ex-Post Impact Assessment was conducted for the two phases of the EU-Turkey Chambers Forum (ETCF) implemented in 2008-2010 and 2012-2014. Although ETCF I and II are evaluated as being very effective, ‘partnership project’ grantees noted that they tended to spend a disproportionately large amount of time on grant contract administration, when compared to the actual delivery of project activities, and have requested that procedures be amended to fit the context of having implementing partners in multi-national locations.

As a follow-up activity of ETCF I and II, TEBD I has been highly effective and relevant to the capacity development needs of Turkish chambers, the needs of both EU and Turkish chambers to build relationships that support their members’ business interests and trade between Turkey and the EU, and to the policy priorities of the Turkish government and the EU’s enlargement strategy. The two components of the project (direct grant – Component A and a separate grant scheme – Component B) have been implemented efficiently, with good disbursement rates of the grant funding under Component B and a wide range of activities under Component A, such as the Business Dialogues, SME Surveys, SME Workshops, Acquis Audit, Solvency Audit, Energy Efficiency Audit, Study Visits, and Academies, delivered according to plan and with strong completion rates among participants.

The TEBD I Project implemented a wider range of activities than the previous projects such as SME Workshops, Solvency Audit and Energy Efficiency. These addressed both the capacity of Turkish chambers in developing innovative services and putting more focus on the EU-Turkey trade and business relations and the EU accession process.

In terms of audit activities, the concept of acquis audit is outdated considering the easier digital accessibility of the information on the EU acquis and legislation and the changing serves of the Chambers. It is experienced that there are still differences between EU and Turkish legislation.

SME Workshops were implemented in an interactive and fruitful way under TEBD. However, the outcomes of the discussions during the workshops are highly important in order to demonstrate the view/ experience of the SMEs. In order to see the impact of the SME workshops and receive more feedback from the ground, there is a need for a follow-up mechanism.

During the design of TEBD II the following points are taken into account:

- Ensure a balance between building the capacities of Turkish chambers and supporting mutual EU/Turkey benefits (in order to build on and sustain engagement of EU chambers with Turkey);
- Expand the dialogue by exploring options for taking a multi-stakeholder approach;
- Promote support to the process of adopting the European Green Deal, EU’s Digital and Climate Neutrality Strategies, modernizing the EU-Turkey Customs Union, and also cross-cutting issues (such as innovation, access to new markets, e-commerce, health & safety, gender equity, food and environment).

Although the formal capacity building activities and Chamber Partnership Grant Scheme under TEBD I have been well received and satisfied the needs, the proposed project aims at more efficient ways for supporting peer-to-peer activities. Considering the heterogeneous capacity across various Turkish and European chambers, a more flexible

tool needs to be devised for the ones with more limited access to grant facilities so that they can enhance their relationships with their EU counterparts and increase their knowledge on EU issues.

Furthermore, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the way of doing business and the needs of Chambers and their members has changed distinctively. There is a need for training and support to enhance digital skills of Chambers and business communities. In order to have more digital chambers and digital business communities, the project includes online events for 'match-making' between chambers in both the EU and Turkey.

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

#### 3.1. Planned results and intervention logic

The Action targets to achieve four outputs. These are:

- Capacity of CSOs are developed so that women's empowerment and gender equality is promoted at the local level and women's participation in local decision-making processes for women friendly cities is enhanced.
- Gender equality mainstreamed into local service delivery through capacity building and in-kind support.
- Improved cooperation among Turkish and European Chambers and business communities.
- Enhanced awareness of the opportunities and challenges on green economy and policy development.

The outputs are designed to i) strengthen an enabling environment for women friendly cities and gender equality at local level and ii) to strengthen mutual knowledge, understanding and integration between EU and Turkish business communities (Chambers and their counterparts).

These outcomes are based on the assumptions that local authorities and their stakeholders will actively participate in programme activities; CSOs, working for equality between women and men at the local level, declare interest to be mobilised to monitor and advocate for WFC services and stakeholders are committed to participate and cooperate throughout the project activities.

The strengthening of gender equality at local level and mainstreaming of gender equality into local service delivery and strengthening of mutual knowledge, understanding and integration between EU and Turkish business communities, which are targeted as the outcomes of this Action, will help Turkey to foster a functioning pluralistic, participatory and representative democracy. This would be possible if political commitment to improve women's rights is continued at local and central level and EU chambers show adequate willingness and capability to cooperate with and transfer know how to their Turkish counterparts.

#### 3.2. Indicative type of activities

##### **Area of Support #1 Women Friendly Cities III (WFC III)**

It is composed of the following indicative activities:

- capacities of municipalities will be increased on gender responsive and inclusive service delivery and participatory governance in partnership with relevant stakeholders to reinstate and disseminate the framework of WFC model;
- strengthening the capacities of CSOs for effectively mobilising and advocating for a sustainable women-friendly service provision;
- non-financial support to selected 25 municipalities in the form of highly specialised and supervised institutional capacity building such as: human resources support, expert support, specialised training programmes on Local Equality Action Plan application, women friendly urban design services, equipment and software for digitalization, event management, mobility and networking, organisational capacity building, communication etc. This will strengthen women friendly service delivery at municipal level (Advance WFC programme).

An institutional capacity-strengthening programme for the establishment of Local Equality Mechanisms (LEMs) and women friendly service delivery at municipal level will be implemented. The eligible themes to be supported under this work package will be consistent with the EU policies and priorities as well as national policy documents. This modality will aim to support municipalities to establish LEMs (Equality Unit, Equality Council, Equality Commission in the Municipal Assemblies, Equality Action Plan) and to provide tools and resources for ensuring women friendly service

delivery at local level, so that municipalities are well equipped to empower women in social and economic life and to ensure women's participation in decision making processes.

The 25 pilot municipalities that will benefit from the highly specialised and supervised capacity building activities of Work Package 3 will be selected on the basis of criteria determined by DEUA, the EU Delegation in Turkey (EUD), UMT and UNFPA and in consultation with other stakeholders, if relevant. The criteria should involve establishing partnerships with civil society organisations (CSOs) to the pilot implementation process and should include a balanced geographical, economic and demographic distribution. Pilot municipalities will be selected through an open call and the final list of municipalities will have to be endorsed by the EUD.

In the project activities, special attention will be paid to women from the most vulnerable groups in line with the EU's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025.

### **Area of Support# 2 Turkey-EU Business Dialogue II (TEBD II)**

The overall objective of this Area of Support is to strengthen mutual knowledge and understanding between Turkish chambers and their counterparts in the EU, thus promoting the integration of EU and Turkish business communities and ensuring a stronger awareness of the opportunities and challenges of a potential future Turkey's accession to the EU in both Turkey and the EU. It will be implemented through two components:

#### **Component 1**

Within the scope of this component, there will indicatively be four activities:

1. Cooperation Activities between Turkish and EU Chambers and Business Communities (activities for supporting business dialogue, SME surveys, roadshows, etc.)
2. Capacity Building Activities for Turkish and EU Chambers (Chamber Academies, Acquis Audit, Early Warning Turkey Audit, Green Deal Audit, Digital Chambers Platform, etc.)
3. Networking and Mobility Support Mechanism for Turkish and EU Chambers (through financial support to third parties)
4. Support to the EU-Turkey Chambers Partnership Grant Scheme

To support gender equality the involvement of female staff members of chambers will be encouraged to participate in the activities of the TEBD II. In particular, the number of female participants to the training seminars and capacity building activities will be encouraged to reach at least 30% of all participants.

#### **Component 2**

The second component under this Area of Support will be the continuation of grant schemes implemented by EUROCHAMBRES and TOBB in the context of the civil society dialogue (EU-Turkey Business Dialogue I under IPA II 2015 programming, the two first phases of the EU-Turkey Chambers Forum in 2007-2009 and 2011-2014, and the two phases of the Turkish Chamber Development Programmes in 2002 and 2005.) The grant projects will address issues such as the provision of opportunities to chambers in EU and Turkey for networking and sustainable collaboration; and enhancing the capacity of Turkish chambers to support green and resilient recovery from the impact of COVID-19, improvement of resource and energy-efficiency of businesses (esp. SMEs) and the transition to the circular economy, participation in carbon markets, improvement of business resilience to climate change impacts and to provide up-to-date services in a sustainable way to their members. Approximately 20 partnerships will be established between EU and Turkish Chambers within this grant scheme.

### 3.3. Risks and assumptions

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Risk level (H/M/L)</b>	<b>Mitigating measures</b>
Lack of determination of local/public institutions to improve the legislative environment and willingness to cooperate with CSOs in decision-making processes and implementation	L	An effective strategy to promote the willingness of local/public institutions and CSOs to collaborate will be developed. New actors will be involved via information sharing activities for relevant stakeholders and opportunities to share success stories. The benefit

		of improving the legislative environment will be promoted.
Lack of adequate gender-segregated data <sup>19</sup>	<b>L</b>	In order to reduce this risk, partnership will be established with NGOs, universities, TurkSTAT, relevant government institutions including ministries, and Regional Development Agencies. In addition, the indicators and score tables to be developed under the Programme will determine from which source what data should be collected
Limited capacity for good governance and participation mechanisms <sup>20</sup>	<b>M</b>	In order to mitigate this risk, the WFC Capacity Building Package will cover issues related to good governance and a rights-based approach.
Change of administration in local stakeholders, especially municipalities	<b>M</b>	Beneficiary Institutions will take utmost care in communicating the benefits of the Action to all stakeholders and encourage them to be actively involved in the activities. Thanks to adequate and qualified field presence of the project team at the provincial level, the focal points of local stakeholders for the project will be actively engaged in and informed of activities. In case there are changes in focal points, the project team will immediately engage with the new focal points. Another mitigation strategy for the action will be to ensure, from the very beginning of the action, the capacity building trainings are also available online so that new focal points are up-to speed regarding WFC. Additional supervision support will be provided as well, if/when necessary.
Insufficient sector-specific capacities at the individual, organisational and institutional level	<b>M</b>	Business organizations implement concrete services and activities for enterprises, while on the other hand they can collect and provide relevant data to raise awareness among local and national authorities on existing market obstacles and on the importance of creating an enabling business environment.
Inadequate implementation and monitoring of grants/sub-grants	<b>M</b>	The Beneficiary Institutions will be trained on grant/sub-grant management. Continuous guidance will be provided by the Operating Structure.
Continuation of pandemic conditions	<b>M</b>	Possibility of extension of pandemic related measures are taken into account when planning the details of activities. All activities will be designed flexible enough to use alternative methods such as distant learning, tele-conferences, etc.
<b>Assumptions (to be reflected in the Logical Framework Matrix above) – grouped by outputs and outcomes</b>		
<u>At Outcome Level</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing commitment of Turkey to the EU accession process.</li> <li>Continuous commitment steered and coordinated at the highest level to address the key priorities under civil society.</li> </ul> <u>At Output Level</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders' are committed to participate and cooperate throughout the activities.</li> <li>Strong stakeholder involvement and contribution to the Action.</li> </ul>		

<sup>19</sup> One of the most important challenges in developing and implementing local gender action plans in Phase 2 of WFC was the readiness, correctness and effectiveness of gender-disaggregated data to be used in problem analysis and regular monitoring.

<sup>20</sup> Good governance and participatory local planning and budgeting are new concepts for local administrations in Turkey. In addition to the lack of Local Agenda 21 mechanisms implemented with all its articles, many of the local stakeholders have limited experience in civil society cooperation, governance and participation.

- Sufficient number of staff assigned by relevant institutions.
- Minimal staff turnover at technical and managerial level.

### 3.4. Mainstreaming

#### **How does this Action contribute to Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment (in line with the EU gender equality strategy 2020-2025)?**

This Action will place gender equality as an integral part of its design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The Action will aim at contributing to broaden women's equitable participation at all levels of decision-making, especially during the consultation processes. Gender equality will be facilitated especially during the implementation phase.

In particular, WFC III Activity will mainly aim to mobilise the full potential and to incorporate all the talent and diversity at the local level to mainstream equality of opportunity. This Activity has an affirmative character. It proposes concrete actions to contribute to gender equality and women and girls' empowerment in line with the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025. The capacities of municipalities, women CSOs and other relevant stakeholders will be strengthened so that gender equality, including effective response to GBV and transforming challenging gender stereotypes in society, will be mainstreamed in local service delivery and policy development in Women Friendly Cities. In such cities, as there will be more involvement of women and women CSOs, hence more awareness around the benefits of being WFC, there will be an increased number of policies around access to high quality and affordable childcare and other care services, ensuring work-life balance for women and men in practice and improving the balance between women and men in decision-making positions. The activity will also incorporate intersectionality in all activities ensuring all women from different backgrounds are involved. There will be special focus on the activity for women from the most vulnerable groups, i.e. women at risk of violence, women at risk of unintended or frequent pregnancies, pregnant or lactating women, young women and girls without employment, education or training, adolescents at risk of child marriage, women who are migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, women who are rural and migrant agricultural workers, women at risk of STI/HIV, women living with disabilities and elderly women. In addition, the Local Equality Units established within the activity will be the main body ensuring that there is dedicated funding for a gender equal future in the municipality budget.

Equal opportunity principles and practices in ensuring equitable participation of women and men in the TEBD II will be encouraged in project activities. Regarding the employment and decision-making in the Chambers, according to "Chambers Women Entrepreneurship Services 2019 Survey"; about 40% of overall management positions are occupied by women. There are marked differences in the presence of women in middle and top management positions in both European and Turkish Chambers. Furthermore, the presence of women in the management positions of Turkish Chambers are lower than all European Chambers.

To support gender equality, the involvement of female members of chamber staff will be encouraged to participate in the activities of the TEBD II. In particular, the number of female participants to the training seminars and capacity building activities will be encouraged to reach at least 30% of all participants.

#### **How does this Action address Environment and Climate change?**

WFC III does not have a separate component on Environment and Climate change. However, the activity will adhere to the UN's overall approach where the climate perspective is integrated into programming via undertaking climate-positive actions and reducing the carbon footprint of its activities. WFC III considers climate change not just as an environmental issue but also as a development, humanitarian and above all an equality issue. The inequality and discrimination experienced by women and girls, especially the most marginalized, are amplified by climate change. In line with this framework, it will be ensured that the programme staff is supported with available tools and guidelines for integrating climate perspectives into programming. The UN trainings on Climate Change will be made available to programme staff and partners.

TEBD II have separate components on environment and climate change. The Activity will support capacities of Chambers and their members on the European Green Deal, the EU's Digital and Climate Neutrality Strategies and their

implications for their businesses. In terms of capacity building activities for Turkish and European chambers, courses on environment and climate issues for middle and senior Chamber executives will be offered. Capacity and knowledge within Turkish chambers will be supported, which will allow them to advise SMEs and Chamber members on clean products and technologies, in particular certification, circular skills, cooperation, reuse, recycle and waste prevention for circular economy. Furthermore, activities will also allow the business community to network with each other on Green Deal related issues and increase networking among green business and sectors in order to increase market demand for environmental goods and services. Additionally, some activities will be organised on environment and climate change issues to reach out to the Chambers and business community at local level both in Turkey and the EU, and also to increase their understanding. Moreover, environment and climate change related projects will be encouraged to be developed under the EU-Turkey Chambers Partnership Grant Scheme.

### **How does this Action address the Rights Based Approach?**

To ensure the Constitutional rights of equal treatment for all the citizens, activities financed under this Action will be implemented by complying with the principles of preventing all forms of discrimination and promoting equality between women and men. Based on the fundamental principles of promoting equality and combating discrimination, participation in the Action will be guaranteed on the basis of equal access regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Furthermore, the necessary arrangements will be made to ensure that the public activities will be equally accessible to persons with disabilities.

In particular, the WFC III Activity is based on a rights based approach as it proposes a strategic restructuring of local services and policies with women friendly cities which would ensure the realisation of women's human rights. This also ensures the "leaving no one behind" principle as it considers the political, social and economic situation of women, especially from the most vulnerable populations, and proposes solutions accordingly. The activity will analyse inequalities between women and men at the local level, redress unjust practices and power imbalances that impede gender equality into local service delivery and policy development. The activity will also ensure the ownership and responsibilities of municipalities, CSOs and other stakeholders to sustain WFCs as a way to ensure human rights, the reinforcement of the framework to claim rights, and the participation of citizens in the process. In the end, Women Friendly Cities aim to be urban spaces where all persons - regardless of their legal status, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic or other status - can live in a free, equal, fair and dignified manner, and in peace.

During the implementation of the TEBD II the human rights standards and principles in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights texts will be followed. TEBD II will have advanced and promoted inclusion and participation, non-discrimination, equality, transparency and accountability in all senses.

### **How does this Action promote the systematic engagement with Civil Society?**

The Action directly (affirmatively) relates to civil society at the national and local levels. The DEUA has been steering the programming process with the relevant CSOs and line Ministries. Support to and therefore engagement with civil society is the main objective of this Action.

CSOs will participate as active members in the Action's various Steering Committees and in the Action Monitoring Committee.

TEBD II will have an inclusive approach towards all business communities and CSOs in order to have a sustainable impact in the long term. Taking into consideration the priorities of TEBD II on the global topics of climate and digital transformation, the participation of CSOs will be encouraged in most of the project activities and Steering Committees.

### **Others (such as Resilience and Conflict Sensitivity, Roma, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups)**

This Action will deal with civil society issues targeting a general improvement of the CSOs' capacity and participation to decision making processes. CSOs are the voice of the poorest and the most vulnerable groups. In this regard, implementation of this Action will be beneficial to all citizens including underprivileged social groups.

## **3.5. Conditions for implementation**

The most significant conditions for the implementation of the action are in place. Turkey has a legal framework ensuring that the exercise of the freedom of association and expression is formally guaranteed.

The Action requires the continued commitment of the Turkish authorities, particularly local authorities, including by allowing the provision of funding from abroad to CSOs. This includes political support for the action's objectives and expected results, including enabling conditions for participation of CSOs, and sufficient and stable staffing of the beneficiary institutions.

A precondition for the Action is the EUD's endorsement of the list of pilot municipalities for Activity 1.

### 3.6. Logical Framework

Results	Results chain: Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (year)	Targets (year)	Sources of data (1 per indicator)	Assumptions
<b>Impact</b>	To foster a functioning pluralistic, participatory and representative democracy	Country score according to the Worldwide Governance Indicator (Voice and accountability)	24,63 (2019)	32 (2025)	World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators	<i>Not applicable</i>
<b>Outcome 1</b>	Strengthened environment for women friendly cities and gender equality at local level	Number of local authorities that incorporated gender component into their strategic planning  Number of municipalities that have mainstreamed gender equality into their local services	0 (2020)  12 (2011)	25 (2025)  37 (2025)	Strategic plans of municipalities WFC commitments signed by municipalities	Political commitment to improve women's rights is continued at local and central level
<b>Outcome 2</b>	Strengthened mutual knowledge, understanding and integration between EU and Turkish business communities (Chambers and their counterparts)	Percentage of Turkish chambers which developed long term cooperation with European Chambers	10% (2020)	20% (2025)	TOBB Statistics  EUROCHAMBRES reports	Adequate willingness and capabilities of EU chambers to cooperate with and transfer know how to Turkish counterparts
<b>Output 1 related to outcome 1</b>	Capacity of CSOs are developed so that women's empowerment and gender equality is promoted at the local level and women's participation in local decision making processes for women friendly cities is enhanced	Number of increase in public activities of CSOs which are working to promote gender equality and women's empowerment	0 (2020)	100 (2025)	Project reports	CSOs declare interest to be mobilized to monitor and advocate for WFC services.

Results	Results chain: Main expected results (maximum 10)	Indicators (at least one indicator per expected result)	Baselines (year)	Targets (year)	Sources of data (1 per indicator)	Assumptions
<b>Output 2 related to outcome 1</b>	Gender equality mainstreamed into local service delivery through capacity building and in-kind support programme	Number of municipalities with functioning Local Equality Mechanisms  Number of Municipalities with costed Local Equality Action Plans, funded from the Municipal Council budget.	12 municipalities (2011)  0 municipalities (2021)	37 municipalities (2025)  25 Municipalities (2025)	WFC commitments signed by municipalities	Local authorities and their stakeholders actively participated in programme activities
<b>Output 1 related to outcome 2</b>	Improved cooperation among Turkish and European Chambers and business communities	Number of people, who participated in P2P/B2B events	0 (2020)	500 (2025)	Project reports	Stakeholders are committed to participate and cooperate throughout the activities.
<b>Output 2 related to outcome 2</b>	Enhanced awareness of the opportunities and challenges on green economy and policy development	Number of dialogue mechanisms supported by the project  Number of actors attending them	0 (2020)  0 (2020)	30 dialogue mechanisms (2025)  350 (2025)	Project reports	Strong stakeholder involvement and contribution to the Action.

## 4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

### 4.1. Financing agreement

In order to implement this Action, it is foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the Republic of Turkey.

### 4.2. Implementation modalities

The Commission will ensure that the respective EU rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures<sup>21</sup>.

#### 4.2.1. Direct Management (Grants)

The EU Delegation in Turkey will be the Contracting Authority for the implementation of Component 1 under Area of Support#2 Turkey-EU Business Dialogue II. The EUD may sign a direct grant to be awarded to EUROCHAMBRES.

#### **Grants: (direct management): Direct award**

##### **(a) Purpose of the grant(s)**

The key objective of the project is to enhance the business dialogue between EU and Turkey building on the successful experience of previous projects. It aims at improving cooperation among Turkish and European Chambers and business communities, strengthening mutual knowledge, understanding and integration between EU and Turkish business communities as well as enhanced awareness of the opportunities and challenges on green economy and policy development.

##### **(b) Type of applicants targeted**

The target group of the project are member companies (economic operators) that are represented through chamber organisations both in the EU and Turkey.

##### **(c) Justification of a direct grant**

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to Eurochambres. In accordance with Art. 195 (f) FR, grants may be awarded without a call for proposals to bodies for activities with specific characteristics that require a specific type of beneficiary for its technical competence, specialisation or administrative power.

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because:

- The EU-Turkey Business Dialogue II project is built upon the collaboration between the Turkish and European chambers of trade and industry and it is based on the successful implementation of previous EU-Turkey Chamber Forum (ETCF) and EU-Turkey Business Dialogue, projects which were also implemented by Eurochambres in the form of a direct grant.

<sup>21</sup> [www.sanctionsmap.eu](http://www.sanctionsmap.eu) Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

- Eurochambres exclusively represents the European Chamber of Commerce and Industry network (which includes Turkey also) with the status of a European umbrella organization, guaranteeing full geographical coverage in all EU Member States and Turkey.

- Eurochambres has unique competence and experience in terms of organizational capacity and development of its member chambers. It also provides regular trainings, advocacy, legal advice and research services to its members. Chambers in Turkey are important players of civil society in Turkish economic life and are represented through the Turkish Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges (TOBB), which is a full member of Eurochambres. Eurochambres has therefore unique competence in maintaining and serving this network.

#### 4.2.2. Indirect management with an entrusted entity

A part of this action (namely the activities under Area of Support #1 Women Friendly Cities III) may be implemented in indirect management with the UNFPA using the following criteria: a) extensive experience in gender mainstreaming, b) ability to build upon lessons learned, c) technical capacity to implement development and humanitarian projects on gender, health and population dynamics in Turkey.

The envisaged entity has been selected as:

- UNFPA is the most experienced international organisation in Turkey that is working on mainstreaming of gender equality.
- Besides its immense experience on the subject matter, UNFPA has been involved in the implementation of the past two phases of the Programme, which will contribute to building on lessons learnt as well as sustainability of achievements.
- UNFPA has unique technical capacity and 50 years of experience in Turkey on development and humanitarian programmes on gender, health and population dynamics.
- UNFPA has long-standing partnerships across Turkey, not only at the national but also local level, which allows coordinated and integrated programme implementation.
- UNFPA has experience in delivering quality project results funded by different kinds of donor, including EU funding (projects funded under IPA and DG ECHO).
- UNFPA has policy and guidelines in place for efficient and effective programme and financial management.

The implementation entails a capacity-strengthening programme for the establishment of Local Equality Mechanisms (LEMs) and women friendly service delivery at municipal level, in order to promote gender equality at the local level and strive for gender equality mainstreamed into local service delivery.

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select a replacement entity using the same selection criteria given above.

#### 4.2.3. Indirect management with an IPA III beneficiary

A part of this action (namely Component 2 under Area of Support #2 Turkey-EU Business Dialogue II) will be implemented by the Republic of Turkey (IMBC).

The managing authority responsible for the execution of this component is the NIPAC Support Office in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate for EU Affairs. The managing authority shall be responsible for legality and regularity of expenditure, sound financial management, programming, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, information, visibility and reporting of IPA III activities.

The managing authority shall rely on sectoral expertise and technical competence of the following intermediate body for policy management: the same Ministry's Department of Project Implementation. It shall ensure sound financial management of the action.

Budget implementation tasks such as calls for tenders, calls for proposals, contracting, contract management, payments and revenue operations, shall be entrusted to the following intermediate body for financial management: Ministry of Treasury and Finance, Central Finance and Contracts Unit.

#### 4.3. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

#### 4.4. Indicative budget

<b>If applicable, indicate which component and related implementation modality will use a financing not linked with costs.</b>	<b>EU contribution (amount in EUR)</b>	<b>Indicative third party contribution (amount in EUR)</b>
<b>Area of Support#1 Women Friendly Cities III</b>	<b>5 000 000</b>	
Indirect management with an entrusted entity – cf. section 4.2.2	5 000 000	20 000
<b>Area of Support#2 Turkey-EU Business Dialogue II</b> composed of:	<b>6 000 000</b>	
• Direct management for Component 1 (direct grant) – cf. section 4.2.1	3 500 000	
• Indirect management with Turkey (IMBC) for Component 2 – cf. section 4.2.3	2 500 000	
<b>Evaluation</b> (cf. section 5.3)	will be covered by another decision	N.A.
<b>Audit/Expenditure verification</b> (cf. section 6)	will be covered by another decision	N.A.
<b>Communication and visibility</b> (cf. section 7)	N.A.	N.A.
<b>Contingencies</b>	N.A.	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11 000 000</b>	<b>20 000</b>
<i>of which:</i>		

<b>Direct Management:</b>		
○ <b>Grants – total envelope under section 4.2.1</b>	3 500 000	
○ <b>Procurement – total envelope</b>	-	
<b>Indirect management with Turkey (IMBC) – total envelope under section 4.2.3</b>	2 500 000	
<b>Indirect management with entrusted entities – total envelope section 4.2.2</b>	5 000 000	

#### 4.5. Organisational set-up and responsibilities

The lead institution in the field of Civil Society is the Directorate for EU Affairs (DEUA) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. DEUA will be responsible for management and coordination of the Action. The main stakeholders involved in the management and implementation of this Action are the CFCU, UMT, UNFPA, EUROCHAMBRES (and TOBB) and relevant civil society organisations.

A Steering Committee (SC) will be set up at each Activity level. SC will be mainly composed of the representatives of the DEUA, end beneficiaries, Presidency of Strategy and Budget, CFCU and EUD. Additional stakeholders may also be invited to the SC on ad-hoc basis. The SC will act as the advisory body that will provide high-level strategic guidance and oversight on project implementation. SC will gather at regular intervals and on ad-hoc basis whenever deemed necessary.

## 5. PERFORMANCE/RESULTS MONITORING AND REPORTING

### 5.1. Internal monitoring

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process and part of both primarily the implementing partner's responsibilities (Lead institution target beneficiary) and that of the EU operational manager. Both types of internal monitoring will be undertaken in an inclusive way, involving key stakeholders.

Directorate for EU Affairs, Department of Project Implementation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as the Managing Authority, is responsible for overall programming, monitoring and evaluation in the thematic priority.

Monitoring of this action will be performed by the target beneficiary and the Managing Authority at action level. Sectoral and programme level monitoring will be performed by respective monitoring committees.

### 5.2. Roles & responsibilities for data collection, analysis & reporting

The different responsibilities for this dual internal monitoring are the following:

- Implementing partners'/ beneficiary country's monitoring, under the coordination of NIPAC Office, will aim at collecting and analysing data to inform on progress towards planned results' achievement to feed decision-making processes at the action's management level and to report on the use of resources.

To this aim, the implementing partner/ beneficiary country shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress monitoring reports (at least twice a year) and final reports.

Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes jointly introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (outputs and direct outcomes) as measured by the corresponding agreed indicators (and related targets) included in the log frame matrix. The report shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. Reporting focusing on activities and inputs' use, will not be considered. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

- For the Area of Support#2, the EU operational manager monitoring will aim at complementing implementing partners'/ beneficiary country's monitoring, especially in key moments of the action cycle. It will also aim at ensuring a sound follow-up on external monitoring recommendations and at informing EU management. This monitoring could take different forms (meetings with implementing partners, action steering committees, on the spot checks), to be decided based on specific needs and resources at hand. Reporting will be done on the basis of checklists and synthesised in a monitoring note/report.

Both types of internal monitoring are meant to inform and provide support to external monitoring:

- External monitoring (ROM)

The Commission and/or NIPAC may undertake additional project monitoring in line with the European Commission rules and procedures set in the Financing Agreement through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission/NIPAC for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission/NIPAC for implementing such reviews).

- Results data collection

Beside the ROM review, the Commission/NIPAC may undertake action results data collection through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission/NIPAC (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews). Their aim would be to identify and check the most relevant results on the action.

The overall progress may also be subject to joint monitoring by the European Commission (DG NEAR) and the beneficiaries. The compliance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and coordination in implementation of financial assistance will be regularly monitored by Sectoral Monitoring committees, which will ensure a monitoring process at sector level.

The Steering Committees will be established at activity level in order to monitor the implementation of activities, achievement of results against indicators in the action document, and to agree on corrective actions as appropriate. The Steering Committees will be composed of the representatives of end beneficiaries, Lead Institution, NIPAC Office, Contracting Authority, Presidency of Strategy and Budget and the EU Delegation.

### 5.3. Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, an ex-post evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular with respect to the programming of future civil society actions.

The Commission shall form a Reference Group (RG) composed by representatives from the main stakeholders at both EU and national (representatives from the government, from civil society organisations (private sector, NGOs, etc.), etc.) levels. If deemed necessary, other donors will be invited to join. The RG will especially have the following responsibilities:

- Steering the evaluation exercise in all key phases to comply with quality standards: preparation and/or provision of comments to the Terms of reference; selection of the evaluation team; consultation; inception/desk, field, synthesis and reporting phases.

The EU programme manager steers the RG and is supported in its function by RG members.

- Providing input and information to the evaluation team. Mobilise the institutional, thematic, and methodological knowledge available in the various stakeholders that are interested in the evaluation.
- Providing quality control on the different draft deliverables. The EU programme manager, as lead of the RG, consolidates the comments to be sent to the evaluation team and endorses the deliverables.
- Ensuring a proper follow-up after completion of the evaluation.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least two months in advance of the dates foreseen for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing Decision.

## 6. AUDIT

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

The financing of the audit shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing decision.

For the part of the action incorporating a form of financing not linked to costs but on the achievement of results, the verification mechanisms will focus on the results and performance indicators previously agreed.

## 7. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Visibility of EU funding and communication about objectives and impact of Actions are a legal obligation for all Actions funded by the EU, as set out in the EU communication and visibility requirements in force.

In particular, the recipients of EU funding shall acknowledge the origin of the EU funding and ensure its proper visibility by:

- providing a statement highlighting the support received from the EU in a visible manner on all documents and communication material relating to the implementation of the funds, including on an official website and social media accounts, where these exist; and
- promoting the actions and their results by providing coherent, effective and proportionate targeted information to multiple audiences, including the media.

Visibility and communication measures shall be implemented, as relevant, by the national administrations (for instance, concerning the reforms linked to EU budget support), entrusted entities, contractors and grant beneficiaries. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included, respectively, in financing agreements, delegation agreements, and procurement and grant contracts.

The measures shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan, established and implemented in line with the EU communication and visibility requirements in force. The plan shall include, inter alia, a communication narrative and master messages for the Action, customised for the various target audiences (stakeholders, civil society, general public, etc.).

Visibility and communication measures specific to this Action shall be complementary to the broader communication activities implemented directly by the European Commission services and/or the EU Delegation. The European Commission and the EU Delegation should be fully informed of the planning and implementation of the specific visibility and communication activities, notably with respect to the communication narrative and master messages.

Communication activities should also take into consideration the risks of potentially related disinformation attempts, and ways of countering these, as disinformation might undermine the Union's efforts and image in the country.

## 8. SUSTAINABILITY

Increasing the capacity of the Union of Municipalities, municipalities, CSOs, chambers and various local actors will enable further involvement of these actors to EU accession process and engagement of civil society to decision making process.

### **Women Friendly Cities III**

In line with the findings and recommendations of the independent evaluation of previous WFC phases, the ownership and active participation of the municipal staff, CSOs and relevant stakeholders are crucial for the sustainability of this activity. This is because there is a higher potential among these actors to ensure the sustainability of Local Equality Mechanisms thanks to their financial, human resources, advocacy and monitoring capacity which are going to be further strengthened through WFC III activities. It is expected that there will be different levels of ownership in each city but it will be important to observe the challenges experienced by each province in order to ensure better sustainability of the activity's results. The activities proposed under the action correspond to the priorities of the UMT and municipalities in the field of equality between women and men as well as women's empowerment. They will assume leadership for the continuation of technical assistance about WFCs and they will continue promoting and advocating the WFC brand with municipalities and central authorities. Based on the recommendations laid out in the independent evaluation of WFC's previous phases, WFC III activity will provide technical capacity to municipalities and CSOs to design a multi-dimensional sustainability strategy that sets out annual targets for technical, institutional, financial and legal sustainability of the key steps in the change pathway in the establishment of Local Equality Mechanisms. One of the UMT's institutional mandates is providing capacity building for public authorities or municipal governments. Furthermore, the capacity building trainings for municipalities, stakeholders and CSOs are essential as the knowledge, skills and attitudes gained through the action will help ownership and continuity of the outputs. The positive experience accumulated from this activity will be transferred to other municipalities as well, thanks to incorporation of WFC Capacity Building Package

to UMT's Municipal Academy. The in-kind support programme, coupled with capacity building and networking events will also promote the WFC model and increase the ownership among municipalities. These activities will focus on thematic areas such as Local Equality Mechanisms and Legislative Framework, Local Equality Action Plans and monitoring, Local Democracy and Civil Society – Public Sector Cooperation.

The activity will develop significant capacities at the local level through both design and delivery of WFC Capacity Building Package and technical assistance. The training modules will be used by the UMT for further training programs to be delivered by municipalities' respective training departments.

## **Turkey-EU Business Dialogue II**

Considering previous cooperation projects and already existing contacts between business chambers from Turkey and EU member states, it can be expected that relevant actors will continue to work together in the future in order to strengthen the EU-Turkey mutual understanding, the integration of Turkey in the EU economy and the capacity of the Turkish Chambers to lead the EU accession process.

Relying on a wide network of European and Turkish regional and local Chambers for its implementation implies that the concrete outcomes and long-term effects of the project will not be confined to EUROCHAMBRES and TOBB but rather be shared by their members at all levels. The activity is deemed to be sustainable in so far as its main objectives, i.e. to strengthen the Turkish Chambers' services to members as well as their role vis à vis other institutions, will ultimately benefit the business community in Turkey and its civil society at large.

The most important effect will be the spreading of the Project achievements throughout the network of regional and local chambers in Turkey. This will ultimately provide benefits to these chambers' members, i.e. Turkish companies of all sizes and sectors, and the country economy at large.

Based on the previous experiences of the implementation of the grant schemes, it is observed that the transfer of knowledge and expertise goes in both directions and thereby creates additional business links between the regions concerned. Besides networking, exchanging of knowledge and best practices; trainings are organised to increase the capacity of Chambers so that they developed and improved the services they provide to their members. In the framework of these partnership projects, new websites on energy efficiency, digitalisation, mentoring services, SMEs coaching and international trade as well as e-learning platforms on access to finance and financial management, and also web platforms, were developed which ensure the sustainability of the projects. Most of the Chambers internalised the TEBD activities and hired the project staff in the Chambers for the continuation of the services. Moreover, following to the implementation of the partnership projects, most of the Chambers signed "memorandum of understanding" with an aim of expansion and deepening of long-term mutually beneficial economic cooperation between Turkish and European Chambers.

Based on these experience and lessons learnt during the implementation period of TEBD I, the activities are restructured and improved for the TEBD II to ensure the better sustainability. Moreover, TOBB and EUROCHAMBRES will create a task force, involving TOBB senior staff, EUROCHAMBRES staff and local chambers, to develop a sustainability strategy. The task force will assess the impact of these pilot actions, and the potential to further expand the tools across the country.

Each of the Chamber Partnerships will be assessed against their multiplier impact: how will the proposed activities impact on the regional economy represented by the chambers involved. Furthermore, the Project will ensure that follow-up activities will be implemented after its completion.