Caring Workspaces:
A Guide for Civil Society Organizations and Social Enterprises
research and focus group meetings to serve this purpose as a guide and experience to create a long-term road map.

For institutions, the major obstacle in integrating a gender+

dimensions of a caring workspace. We defined those as interrelated to identify different program, community main headings of the report show, we used categories of workspace" from gender+ perspective, we determined some After developing our discussions on the question of "what is a caring approach?

allowed us to approach the concept of care from a more from the literature on well-being while developing the research inequities and maintain the gender binary. Finally, we also benefited responsibility of caregiving is attributed to women due to gender employees. It provides an anti-discriminatory space for all employees

illustrat ion

Fintoz Cansu Tapan
Duru Dumankaya

Proofreading
Duru Dumankaya

Design and Illustration
Öykü Naz Mustafaoğlu

This rapor is supported by the RESISTIRÉ project.

RESISTIRÉ, is a two-year EU project funded under the Horizon 2020 call "Advancing knowledge for clinical and public health responses to the 2019-nCoV epidemic" - and contributes to the reduction of gendered and intersectional inequalities arising from COVID-19 policy responses and creates innovative operational tools to address inequalities.
Table of Contents

Introduction

Methodology

What should a caring workspace look like?
   A. The spatial features of a caring work space
   B. Policies supporting caring workspaces
   C. Programs for sustainable caring workspaces
   D. Building a caring community
   E. Beyond the workspace

Conclusion
I. Introduction

Within the context of workspaces and working conditions, social enterprises and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provide critical space to consider the concept of care, which has become impossible to ignore with the Covid-19 pandemic. On the one hand, there are serious problems related to care that need to be discussed within these sectors. On the other hand, their expertise and practices are invaluable to implement the necessary principles and methods in order to draw the attention of workplaces to the care issue. Therefore, we expect improvement in workspace standards through a discussion initiated by these sectors to have progressive results for all other work sectors.

Despite being subjected to significant stress and precarious work conditions, NGO employees and human rights defenders who work in the fields of social benefit, social justice, and human rights through a rights-based approach have difficulty in speaking about worker rights, mental health and well-being. In a research conducted by University of York in 2017, 86% of the human rights defenders at risk expressed that they are “mildly anxious” or “severely anxious” about their mental and emotional health.¹ A global research carried out later by the same institution shows that human rights organizations generally fail in responding to the well-being of their workers.² On the one hand, NGO
employees experience stress because they are subjected to primary or secondary trauma due to the very nature of their jobs, documenting and advocating against severe human rights violations, and working with fragile and vulnerable groups. On the other hand, they have difficulty drawing a distinct line between their working life and private life. Moreover, they are underpaid and overworked under precarious conditions while their workplaces exploit the motivations for “idealism” and “volunteerism.”

Along with these challenges, the Covid-19 pandemic gave rise to discussions on working conditions in terms of remote working, irregular working hours, blurred boundaries between paid and unpaid labor, and increase in domestic labor as well as the heightened pressure on working parents. Moreover, existing gender inequalities in workplaces have increased and become more visible. As shown by a research carried out in European Union countries, Serbia, Turkey and England by the RESISTIRÉ project, many nursing facilities, which were closed due to the lockdowns and stay at home measures, greatly affected children, the elderly, the disabled and/or caregivers.³ Women have taken the burden of both the increase in unpaid care work and the decrease in formal employment. The result was a greater disparity between genders in terms of income, labor force, and caregiving.⁴ For instance, a research conducted among NGO employees in Turkey shows that workload has increased for female workers but decreased or didn’t change for male workers.⁵ LGBTI+ employees, who are among the most vulnerable and precarious workers, have confronted the risk
of losing their jobs and heightened exploitation during the pandemic.\textsuperscript{6} In addition, gender inequalities remained out of sight when designing policies in response to changing pandemic conditions; women and LGBTI+s could not take part in decision-making processes, and thus, the challenges they experienced have been ignored.\textsuperscript{7} As a result, the pandemic made it even more apparent that there is a need for diverse, inclusive, safe, and caring\textsuperscript{8} workspaces.

Caring Workspaces project aims at both responding to the challenges raised by the pandemic and creating workspaces which encourage inclusivity, diversity, and care for employees by prioritizing a gender+ perspective in collaboration with our stakeholders.

The project has been jointly run by Postane and Hafiza Merkezi and supported by the RESISTIRÉ\textsuperscript{9} project, which is financed by the EU Horizon Program 2020. Postane is a solidarity space that aims to host social, environmental, and urban impact-oriented works as well as joint cultural productions with social enterprises and civil society organizations. Hafiza Merkezi is an NGO that advocates against severe human rights violations and provides institutional support to rights-based institutions. By combining their unique experiences and network in the fields of human rights and social entrepreneurship, the two institutions aim to contribute to making our working lives safer, more inclusive, and egalitarian.

This report discusses what a caring workspace should look like and
presents a checklist as a source of reference to guide the institutions to take a concrete step. Towards the final phases of the project, a campaign will be conducted in which inspiring examples of caring workspaces in Turkey and Europe will be shared with the public and put to vote. The winner will receive the Caring Workspaces Award.

II. Methodology

Postane and Hafıza Merkezi currently take a caring perspective within their own institutions and communities and make their policies accordingly. Postane has expertise in the design of socially benefitting workspaces, accessible public spaces, and spatial politics. Hafıza Merkezi is an NGO that works on fields including human rights, coming to terms with the past, and providing institutional support to rights-based NGOs. Thus, the experience and needs of these two institutions directly inform the project’s methodology.

We first developed our research questions and created survey forms that include basic components of a caring workspace. The project geographically comprises the European Union countries, Serbia, Turkey, and England, which are also the target countries of the RESISTRÉ project. We shared the survey forms with our collaborators,
stakeholders, and experts in Turkey and Europe. We asked those who consider care as a crucial part of their institutional culture to fill out the survey and suggest other institutions which they consider as caring workspaces. As a result, we made an extensive list including caring policies and/or strategies developed by 22 civil society institutions in Turkey. Unfortunately, there was not enough participation from abroad. To compensate, we organized international focus group discussions and carried out desk research.

In the research process, we looked for individuals, institutions, and social enterprises that develop policies and strategies on inclusivity, diversity training, and defending the rights of NGO employees. At the same time, we made a literature review including sources such as reports, articles, and educational modules prepared on local, national, and international scales.

Lastly, we organized five focus group meetings with both national and international participation to share our experience with people and institutions that have expertise in different aspects of the subject and discuss what a “caring workspace” is. We have broadened the scope of the project by incorporating the output from those meetings into the research findings.

**The conceptual framework**

The research aims to draw an overall framework of caring workspaces
and share inspiring examples. To that end, we investigated the caring practices of organizations in the civic sector. Inspired by the academic Dina Georgis’ conceptualization, we called those examples “better stories.” In Better Stories: Queer Affects from the Middle East, Georgis suggests stories as a method of social inquiry and an instrument for alternative interpretations of history on the grounds that “there is always a better story than the better story.”

In the research, we employed a gender+ perspective, which centers intersectionality as the conceptual framework. The gender+ approach explains that gender inequalities intersect with other inequalities due to one’s ethnicity, class, disability, age, religion/faith and sexual orientation; and further inequalities emerge as a result. The approach acknowledges that women are not a homogeneous group and other axes of inequality always intersect with gender and, thus, it tries to understand that intersectionality itself. 10 Within the scope of the project, our main goal is to develop a framework for caring workspaces, in which gender+ perspective is at the center, and encourage institutions and initiatives to create better experiences.

During the research, which began in April 2022, we surveyed inclusive, safe, diverse and caring workspaces and career fields. We first defined what we mean by “caring workspaces.” Feminist literature on “care ethics” explains how caregiving and care receiving responsibilities create gendered power inequalities. We decided to use the concept of care as the research project focuses on gender+ perspective. As the
For institutions, the major obstacle in integrating a gender+ perspective and becoming a caring workspace is the lack of knowledge and experience to create a long-term road map. We aimed the project research and focus group meetings to serve this purpose as a guide.
for institutions willing to become “a caring workspace.” Therefore, we would like to underline that the report and checklist, the outputs of this project, have been prepared according to a methodological framework that prioritizes a gradual transformation of the institutions instead of a rapid change.

III. What should a caring workspace look like?

What do we mean with the term “caring workspace”? A caring workspace should comply with different criteria including inclusivity, ensuring working conditions and employee rights, policies and programs for employee well-being, and equitable and participatory governance. It cares about the physical and psychological health of all employees. It provides an anti-discriminatory space for all employees to express their opinions and to contribute, and it values their contributions. A caring workspace also prioritizes equal and participatory decision-making at all levels. It supports the feeling of belonging and solidarity and ensures that everyone expresses their
opinions, asks questions and solves problems together.

The five major categories we established in order to better understand the constituents of a caring workspace are as follows:

**Space:** Is the workspace physically inclusive, diverse, safe, accessible, and participatory?

**Policy:** Are there policies identifying the necessary mechanisms to create and maintain a caring workspace?

**Program:** Are there practices and programs to implement a caring approach?

**Community:** Is there a diverse, inclusive and participatory governance and community building?

**Beyond the workspace:** Does the workspace take the impact, relations and communications beyond the workspace into consideration?

**The spatial features of a caring workspace**

The pandemic, as well as technological developments, brought a new experience in which the workspace became digital and moved to the private sphere. Nevertheless, a workspace primarily manifests as a physical space. Thus, the spatial features of a workspace and the
extent that care relations inform the spatial design and practice are integral to other dimensions of care.

*Design Council* describes the principles of an inclusive design as the following:

1. It locates people at the center of the design process.
2. It acknowledges diversity and differences.
3. It offers alternatives when a single design solution fails to meet all user needs.
4. It provides flexibility.
5. It creates convenient and welcoming buildings and spaces.¹¹

A caring workspace with an inclusive design approach creates spaces that meet the physical needs of all users, provides workplace safety, prevents gender-based inequities and leads a participatory design process. The space we work in also brings a sense of belongingness to where we are. Therefore, a caring workspace does not just provide a physically convenient and accessible space but also ensures that all users feel safe and comfortable.
We asked 22 institutions to select the spatial features of a caring workspace that they implement in their workspaces:

| Feature                                                                 | Selected
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working areas (location of desks, selection of office equipment, office design etc.) are organized collectively in a participatory manner.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are gender neutral toilets.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In addition to the working space, there are socializing and rest areas.</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a safety policy describing the necessary measures to prevent the risks, accidents, and other physical injuries in the workspace.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The workspace is accessible for all employees, beneficiaries and visitors.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are menstrual pads and kits available.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a green policy (waste management, renewable energy, composting etc.).</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Necessary equipment such as chairs, desks, keyboards, monitors etc. for those who have different physical accessibilities are available.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a space reserved for breastfeeding.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are spaces available to meet the childcare needs of employees and beneficiaries.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In terms of space, the most fundamental principle for a caring workspace is to establish **health and security measures** for possible hazards and accidents, to set a **fire prevention and protection system** with necessary equipment and procedures, to have access to **natural ventilation** and **sunlight**.

**Accessibility** is the primary universal design principle which enables workspaces to become inclusive and diverse. *Erişilebilir Her Şey (Accessible Everything)*, which is a social enterprise offering consultancy and training services to institutions and brands on accessibility, emphasizes the difference between “diversity” and “inclusivity” in accessibility policies. *Erişilebilir Her Şey (Accessible Everything)* states that increasing employment opportunities is not sufficient to realize diversity in a workspace: “However, we cannot talk about inclusivity unless employers provide necessary accessibility arrangements (assistive technologies, physically accessible buildings, co-working dynamics, etc.) for people with disabilities and include them in the decision-making processes.”

In order to provide spatial accessibility, there must be **signage, directions and written content in braille signage, tactile yellow surfaces, sign language-speaking staff, silent areas for autistic and senior individuals, and accessible toilets and floor plans**.

Only 7 of the 22 institutions that participated in the survey stated that their workspaces are accessible for people with different physical accessibility. TÜSEV (Third Sector Foundation of Turkey), one of the participants in the
survey, expressed that although there are wheelchair mechanisms on every floor, the entrance area cannot be made more accessible since the building is a historical construction. Similarly, Hafıza Merkezi also stressed that they are unable to make arrangements for accessibility at their office since their building is not accessible enough. Postane said that despite being a physically accessible space, the building is not yet accessible for people who are blind or have low vision due to lack of accessible signage. Thus, although accessibility is one of the primary qualities of a caring workspace, institutions should make long-term plans, determine policies, and allocate resources to transform their spaces in order to have a long-lasting solution. At the same time, institutions shouldn’t consider accessibility merely in terms of spatial and physical needs; they should also work towards increasing communication and cooperation with disabled partners. The importance of inclusivity in determining target groups and beneficiaries will be discussed in more detail in the “Beyond the workspace” section.

The importance of participatory design processes was emphasized in both the survey forms and focus group meetings. The needs of all users including employees, visitors, partners, and beneficiaries should be considered in both phases of design and use of a space. Çatı Atölye emphasized that while they design spaces “in which every employee feels that they belong and call their own,” they also try to open all spaces to common use. Suggestions to maintain the flow, function, and sustainability of the decision-making processes through task and responsibility distribution in accordance with the principles of participatory approach are discussed in more detail in the section “Programs for Sustainable Caring Workspaces.”
Another point that came up in the focus group meetings is that the meaning of “comfort” is not self-evident since it may not always be possible to provide comfort for everybody. In this sense, the spatial design should be flexible and adaptable which allows interventions in the space when needs change over time.

At first glance, office furniture and digital equipment like desks, chairs, computers etc. may seem irrelevant for spatial design. However, they are of paramount importance for the physical and mental health of the employees. Focus group participants expressed that they don’t have ergonomic desks and chairs in their workspace and that even their basic needs such as monitors and keyboards are not adequately provided. Since NGOs do not have sufficient resources for equipment and digital tools, they resort to various means, especially grants. While some donor institutions support such expenditures and others don’t, there is a discrepancy among different projects and programs.

In a caring workspace, spatial practices like private call areas, secure internet access, security cameras, and data protection systems should be in place to ensure the physical and digital privacy of the employees and visitors.

It is essential that caring workspaces create spaces for employees to easily meet their care needs without facing discrimination. In that sense, workspaces with limited financial and spatial resources could benefit from designing multi-purpose rooms. For instance, one example of a caring space
is a multi-faith prayer room or silent room. Workspaces should provide silent rooms where employees can practice their faith, meditate, rest, or concentrate. In that sense, workspaces should identify implementation and monitoring methods and accordingly develop policies to prevent discrimination regarding faith and well-being practices and to ensure equitable and fair use of such spaces.

When the survey data is analyzed, it is seen that there is only one institution that fulfills the criteria for childcare spaces. Furthermore, in focus group meetings, it was mentioned that the few workspace breastfeeding rooms aren’t designed well. Because of the spatial limitations of workspaces, it seems feasible to convert resting or meeting rooms into breastfeeding rooms. However, security cameras or the frequent use of these rooms might get in the way. Therefore, multi-purpose rooms in caring workspaces should be designed in a way that can serve this function.

On childcare oriented workspaces, Kırkayak Kültür emphasizes that, even though its workspace doesn’t have a playground, it has some space where employees can spend time with their children securely. The presence of spaces where the children of the employees and visitors can spend time and meet their needs is significant for overcoming gender inequities as well. However, in focus group meetings, the insufficiency of playgrounds or private rooms for creating an environment where the employees could work next to their children was brought up. Some employees described having their children at the workspace and working alongside their children as an exhausting and distracting experience. Employing someone to take care of
the children was mentioned as the most efficient way for parents to concentrate on their work, but many employees don’t have the budget to afford this option. Appointing an employee with pedagogic competence as a “playmate” who can take care of children at the workplace was suggested as a possible solution. Another suggestion was outsourcing this service with a smaller budget when it is necessary instead of employing full-time staff.

When the topic is caring spaces, one of the areas that first come to mind is individual **gender-neutral toilets**. 15 of the 22 institutions that participated in the research stated that there are gender-neutral toilets in their institutions. In a caring workspace, everyone should be able to use the working, activity, and social areas feeling safe and at ease. Providing toilets without an emphasis on a particular gender is a significant step in precluding the subjection of non-binary and transgender employees to discrimination and abuse. As mentioned in Workplace Pride’s guide for trans-inclusive workspaces, employees in the workspaces which provide toilets in addition to gendered ones should be able to decide which toilet they prefer to use.

**Socializing** and **resting** areas support the psychological well-being of the employees and nourish the culture of solidarity. Hence, caring workspaces must provide common kitchens, resting and socialization areas, and open spaces such as balconies, terraces, and gardens to their employees.

Lastly, a primary component of a caring workspace in a spatial sense is the **green policies** it implements. Developing policies and tools to limit carbon emissions (such as prioritizing renewable energy, reducing the use of
energy, and planning waste management) is an increasingly popular topic because of the climate crisis. According to the Design Council, which internalizes the “Design for Planet” mission, a good design makes life with low-carbon conditions possible, supports biodiversity, revives the circular economy, and makes inclusive experiences that support sustainable living. In this sense, Postane stated that it considered environmental effects as one of the basic principles in the design process. By redesigning the terrace as a city garden, Postane not only enabled growing edible plants and watering them through rainwater harvesting, but also transforming the organic waste in the building to soil through the compost system in their terrace garden. Similarly, it offers potable, filtered water to all users free of charge and without producing plastic waste.
Furthermore, in focus group discrimination regarding faith and well-being practices and to ensure is a multi-faith prayer room. At some institutions that participated in the research survey, it was stated that they can take a leave of absence or receive monetary compensation for their work. Subjection of non-binary and transgender employees to discrimination and abuse. As mentioned in Workplace Pride's guide, one should address the rights and care needs of people who menstruate. In a caring workspace, everyone should be able to use the working, activity, and toilet facilities. This includes menstrual leave and the option to use the toilet without being observed. There are further rights to leave, which the employees can use for off-work care and orientation for the newly employed. Many workspaces have recruitment and orientation processes that ensure the physical and digital privacy of the employees and meet their needs and expectations.

Lastly, a primary component of a caring workspace in a spatial sense is the provision of green spaces such as balconies, terraces, and gardens to their employees. This can help create a sense of community and well-being. In a caring workspace, there should be consideration of the menstrual leave as a necessity rather than an inconvenience. It is essential that caring workspaces create spaces for employees to easily access the working, activity, and toilet facilities.

Checklist: The spatial characteristics of a caring workspace

**Basic principles**
- Health and safety measures
- Fire prevention and protection system
- Access to natural ventilation
- Access to sunlight

**Universal design principles**
- Equitable and accessible use for people with diverse abilities
- Clear and legible signage & information
- Using participatory methods in the design process
- Flexible and adaptable spatial design
- Ergonomic and comfortable equipment and digital tools (such as computer, screen, softwares)

**Privacy**
- Private call areas
- Secure internet access
- Security cameras access
- Security cameras and data protection warnings

**Care centered spaces**
- Praying room
- Breastfeeding room
- Child friendly areas
- Individual gender neutral toilets with menstrual kits
and meet their needs is significant for overcoming gender inequities as well. 

employees can spend time with their children securely. The presence of childcare oriented workspaces, get in the way. Therefore, multi-purpose rooms in caring workspaces should be discussed and strategies for protecting the employees should be determined.

In this sense, Postane stated that it considered environmental effects as a possible solution. Another suggestion was outsourcing this service with the initiative of the executives and don't provide any guarantee of care to the employees. To leave of absence stood out as another prevalent problem. Only 8 of the 22 institutions that participated in the research survey stated that they can leave for birth should be given to both parents and durations to mothers and fathers.

The lack of long-term visions for policies that support the working conditions and relying on funds and grants. Understaffing also raises funds for the sustainability of these policies. Fair discrimination regarding faith and well-being practices and to ensure monitoring methods and accordingly develop policies to prevent and Human Rights), a good example in this context, announced that it will accordingly, and raises funds for the sustainability of these policies.

According to the relevant regulations, the death leave delivered to bereavement leave in Europe. In this context, Postane stated that it considered environmental effects as a possible solution. Another suggestion was outsourcing this service with the initiative of the executives and don't provide any guarantee of care to the employees. To leave of absence stood out as another prevalent problem. Only 8 of the 22 institutions that participated in the research survey stated that they can leave for birth should be given to both parents and durations to mothers and fathers.

Another practice that supports the well-being of the employees is to grant leave for care responsibilities or employees who have difficulty in extra work that left to the decision of the executives. In a caring workspace, menstrual leave should be a right for everyone and the whole workplace, leave for birth should be given to both parents and motherhood, coverage, gender diversity, homosexual partners, must be included in these policies. The policies should cover not only heterosexual and married parents but case of parental leave, in a caring workspace, homosexual partnerships, as in other fields.

In a caring workspace, leave of absence and overtime work. Many institutions that participated in the research stated that they can stand out as another prevalent problem. Only 8 of the 22 institutions that participated in the research survey stated that they can

Social areas
- Common kitchen
- Socializing and resting areas
- Open spaces (balcony, terrace, garden, etc.)

Green policy
- Access to plants and greenery
- Recycling/composting infrastructure
- Tools and policies to reduce carbon emissions
- Renewable energy source

Inspiring Stories

CavaRei15 (Italy)
CavaRei is a social cooperative in Italy with facilities and laboratories especially designed for individuals with different disabilities that aims to create inclusive spaces for disabled individuals.

CavaRei works on employing disabled individuals, employing disabled individuals in various areas such as production, labeling, and data entry on computers according to their skills. In addition, it features departments reserved for the care and rehabilitation of disabled
individuals in its facilities.

CavaRei comes to the fore with its well-equipped centers. The central building of CavaRei is fully made of wood and built with an eco-adaptive dry method; it is a multi-purpose construction designed with the well-being of the employees and energy conservation in mind. Their first building opened in 2016 on an area of nearly 1000 square meters, accommodating administrative offices, socio-vocational laboratories for the employment of disabled individuals, laboratories for third parties, the CavaRei shop, StampaRei media center, and training rooms.

The second building opened in 2017 on an area of 600 square meters. It contains a daily socio-vocational center on the first floor, a Snoezelen room and socio-rehabilitation center for multi-sensory stimulation, and a residential center.

CavaRei also has a park equipped with “smart poles” for lighting with low consumption, free wi-fi control units, video monitoring cameras, and speakers set together with the cooperation of GhisaMestieri.

**Dimensions:** space, program, community, beyond the workspace
B. Policies supporting caring workspaces

One of the biggest difficulties people who work in civil society and social sectors face is that their workplace doesn’t guarantee caring policies. When the employees advocating in the areas of social benefit, social justice, and human rights voice the working conditions and rights in their sectors, they confront systematic impediments. Practices like paying low wages, insisting on overtime work, not conferring the social rights of the employees, giving responsibilities not involved in the job description, mobbing, not fulfilling the psychological support needs of the employees, which are common in these sectors, lead to insecure working conditions. If employees demand their rights, they are faced with the prevailing view that the job's ethical and moral attainments are more important than monetary gain. This view expects especially NGO employees to be “self-sacrificing,” “voluntary,” or “idealist” and that they don’t complain about low wages and overtime work. This situation not only makes the working conditions of NGO employees unnegotiable and invisible but also reproduces the systematic oppression of the employees in every stage and prevents coming up with permanent solutions.

The most important steps to be taken in order to create a caring workspace are (1) developing caring policies, (2) guaranteeing these policies through written documents, (3) allocating the necessary roles and responsibilities for the implementation of these policies, and (4) determining the control and evaluation mechanisms for sustainability. Caring policies guarantee wages, social rights, working hours, psychological and physical health, and
well-being. They develop practices that monitor the needs and rights of women and LGBTI+s by adopting a gender+ perspective. They define what “mobbing” is in workspaces and set the necessary mechanisms for conflict resolution.

The answers of the institutions that participated in the research regarding the caring policies in their workspaces are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employees benefit from social rights such as health insurance, food, and transportation allowance.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees have flexible working hours.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working hours respect the care responsibilities of the employees.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The job definitions of employees aren’t unclear and don’t change frequently.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a code of ethics consisting of some ethical principles to guide the behaviours and attitudes in the workspace.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees can take menstrual leave.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees can take leave or be paid for working over-hours.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is an anti-mobbing policy in order to take protective, supportive, and disciplinary measures.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The policy document defines maternal leave as a right for every employee.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When the topic was caring policies in workspaces, the prevailing subjects in the focus group meetings, just as in the replies in the survey forms, were **wages** and **social rights**. A caring workspace should **determine a wage policy according to life expenses, that can pay the social security contribution based on the precise amount of wages, cover the food and transportation costs of the employees, and meet their legal progress payments such as severance, notice, and leave payments in full compliance with the laws**. A fundamental problem regarding this issue is the wages of NGO employees, which are low and not determined according to the professional competency or responsibilities of the employees. Similarly, social entrepreneurs, in the early period when they are occupied with putting their business ideas into practice, tend to push their own subsistence conditions aside and prioritize socially benefitting work over wages and social rights. Institutions that participated in the research often justified this situation with precarious financial sustainability. In sectors that depend on funds and grants, only short-term projects can be carried out, which precludes the implementation of a wage policy that would take care of the subsistence of the employees. Furthermore, as it has been emphasized in the focus group meetings, employees also stated that they are paid less than the gross salary written in the budget reports which are approved by the fund organizations, and that their institutions don’t negotiate with the fund organizations about the social
rights and compensation of the employees. At this point, it is important that a caring workspace establishes policies that guarantee the wages and social rights of the employees, listens to the needs of the employees, and encourages them to participate in the decision-making mechanisms while planning the financial sustainability of the institution. Otherwise, the predictions and plans of the institutions don’t satisfy the requests and needs of the employees.

Participants also mentioned that the ratio of the workload to the number of employees in the projects are unbalanced, because of project-based working conditions and relying on funds and grants. Understaffing also brings about other problems such as unspecified job definitions and working overtime. Combined with low wages and social rights which cannot be enjoyed or even demanded, this situation results in a stressful and tense workplace. A caring workspace is required to create an institutional vision that prioritizes the well-being of its employees, develops policies accordingly, and raises funds for the sustainability of these policies.

Lack of compensation for overtime work in the form of extra payment or leave of absence stood out as another prevalent problem. Only 8 of the 22 institutions that participated in the research survey stated that they can take a leave of absence or receive monetary compensation for their overtime work. Many institutions that participated in the research stated that they don’t have any written policies regarding leaves for working overtime, but that in practice they give leaves of absence to their employees on the weekends with extra work. İnsan Hakları Derneği (Human Rights
Association) states that they make sure their employees don’t work overtime since they can’t pay for extra working hours. As with other rights, the lack of written policy on overtime work is not a caring approach because it makes way for unpredictable and unfair practices of leave of absence, often left to the decision of the executives. In a caring workspace, extra work that cannot be covered financially must be compensated with the leave of absence and employees must be encouraged to take it.

With the pandemic, flexible hours and working from home came to the agenda in civil society and social benefit organizations, as in other fields. Determining their working hours or periods gives employees more control and freedom in their work lives. For instance, working hours are reworked for parents with care responsibilities or employees who have difficulty in physically going to work. In a caring workspace, flexible working hours play an important role in looking after the duties and needs of the employees in their lives outside of work. However, in focus group meetings, it was mentioned that this flexibility sometimes works against the employees because when everyone works at different hours, employees are often requested to work off-hours or expected to be available at all times. In a caring workspace, before switching to flexible working hours, the conditions should be discussed and strategies for protecting the employees should be determined.

In a caring workspace, recruitment and cease of employment/disemployment processes should be determined based on diverse, inclusive, and transparent principles by the policy documents. Fair
recruitment policies guarantee that nobody will be discriminated against in any recruitment process, including making job advertisements, planning, and orientation for the newly employed. Many workspaces have recruitment procedures based on the employment laws in their countries or the relevant regulations, but these procedures do not necessarily eliminate discrimination and prejudices. An inclusive recruitment policy prepared with a gender+ approach sees the communities subjected to diverse inequities and follows objective criteria. It also prevents discrimination against employees based on their identities, opinions, or physical characteristics.

Another practice that supports the well-being of the employees is to grant further rights to leave, which the employees can use for off-work care responsibilities or personal situations, in addition to the right to annual leave defined in the contract. In this context, parental leave, menstrual leave, patient accompanist leave, health leave, sabbatical leave, and bereavement leave stood out in the focus group discussions.

Parental leave for childcare and most importantly maternal leave are prevailing subjects in the context of gender+ equality in leave policies. According to the Labor Law in Turkey, maternal leave is 16 weeks for mothers and 5 days for fathers. As claimed by the research carried out by RAND Europe, there are four different kinds of leaves in Europe, which are maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave, and home care leave. Maternity leave provides income support for working women before and after birth and in some countries during the child adoption process. Paternity leave provides income support for working men only under certain circumstances. Parental leave is given to working parents along with
maternal and paternal leave and provides varying income support based on the country's laws. Home care leave delivers the right to care at home just after the parental leave until the child turns two or three years old. Home care leave is rare among EU countries and unpaid in general.  

When we look at the distribution of these leave types across EU countries, we see, unfortunately, that the duration of parental leave is usually shorter than the duration of maternal leave and that parental leaves grant different durations to mothers and fathers.

In a caring workspace, the improvement of maternal and paternal leave which is provided to both parents advances gender equality, has positive effects on the development of children, and helps the parents sustain the balance between their work and private life. Therefore, in a caring workspace, leave for birth should be given to both parents and parental leave should be extended. At the same time, single parenting, surrogate motherhood, and adoption must be included in these policies. The policies should cover not only heterosexual and married parents but parents with gender diversity, homosexual partners, and civil partnerships. As in the case of parental leave, in a caring workspace, homosexual partnerships, civil partnerships, and family cohabitations without legal foundation should be included in the patient accompanist leave.

Menstrual leave was ticked up by 9 of the 22 institutions that participated in the survey forms. Some of the participants stated that there are no policies regarding menstrual leave in their institutions but every employee is likely to
Many institutions expect health leave to be supported by medical examinations or medical reports. This causes employees to take annual leave under circumstances that affect their physical and psychological health but can't be medically reported. Although there are some unofficial flexibility with leaves in some workplaces, they depend on the initiative of the executives and don't provide any guarantee of care to the employees. To protect both the physical and psychological health of the employees, a caring workspace with a gender+ perspective must make policies to meet the private health needs of their trans employees. kırmızı şemsiye cinsel sağlık ve insan hakları derneği (Red umbrella association for sexual health and human rights), a good example in this context, announced that it will provide hormone therapy leave to its employees beginning in May 2022.
Private health insurance, which is necessary to fulfill the employee's right to health and is not provided by many non-governmental organizations and social initiatives, was another popular subject in the focus group meetings. Limited budgets stood out as the biggest obstacle to establishing better health policies. The lack of long-term visions for policies that support the health of the employees and the necessity to take action were discussed.

The sabbatical leave is usually the long-term, paid or unpaid leave given to employees who have worked for a certain amount of years. This leave differs from other kinds of leave by not being needs-based; instead, it enhances the self-care and motivation of the employees by giving them distance from work for mental rest.

In general, a paid leave given in the case of the death of a primary relative is described as “death leave” in Turkey and bereavement leave in Europe. According to the relevant regulations, the death leave delivered to employees in Turkey is 7 days for civil servants and 3 days for workers. The bereavement leave in Europe can vary from 1 to 5 days. In some countries, it includes partners and civil partnerships in addition to the relatives such as mother, father, sibling, child, married spouse, and grandmother/grandfather.

In a caring workspace, as with all other types of leave, bereavement leave should cover not only married or heterosexual partnerships but all kinds of partnerships. In other words, it should consider the family institution to include the employee's chosen family.
Lastly, in addition to securing the rights of employees, regulations that describe, encourage, and protect an inclusive, diverse, and safe environment for all employees, including those in executive and administrative positions, should be developed. These policies can be specified as a code of ethics, a discrimination and harassment prevention policy, a sexual harassment/assault and violence prevention policy, an anti-mobbing policy, and a conflict resolution policy. Furthermore, an intelligible and transparent employee handbook that explains employee rights and caring policies and practices in the workplace should be prepared.
Checklist: Policies supporting caring workspaces

**Basic principles**
- Living wage policy
- Equal pay policy
- Pay ratio policy
- Legal progress payments in compliance with laws (such as severance and notice payments and leave payments)
- Social insurance premium payments
- Lunch allowance
- Transportation allowance
- Overtime pay and/or leave
- Ensuring compliance with working and rest hours
- Clear job descriptions that don't change frequently
- Extended private health insurance (trans inclusive)
- Flexible working hours
- Disaster risk management plan
- Policy on inclusive, diverse and transparent recruitment

**Leave policies**
- Extended parental leave for all employees
- Menstrual leave
on the weekends with extra work. Overtime, but that in practice they give leaves of absence to their employees that they don't have any written policies regarding leaves for working. Lack of a particular job definition means that employees might face difficulties in planning the financial sustainability of the institution. Otherwise, the institution should encourage them to participate in the decision-making mechanisms while considering the social rights of the employees, listening to the needs of the employees, and ensuring that their rights and compensation are protected. At this point, it is important that institutions prioritize the well-being of their employees, develop policies that reflect diverse, inclusive, and transparent principles, and ensure that policies are designed to meet the needs of the community.

In a caring workspace, flexible working hours play a crucial role. For parents with care responsibilities or employees who have difficulty in physically going to work, determining their working hours or periods gives employees more control over their schedules. In a caring workspace, working from home with flexible hours cannot be covered financially must be compensated with maternity leave. Maternity leave provides income support for working women before and after giving birth. According to the Labor Law in Turkey, maternity leave is 16 weeks for working women. Other types of leave include parental leave, paternity leave, and home care leave. According to the Labor Law in Turkey, parental leave can be extended in cases of specific circumstances such as single parenting, surrogate motherhood, or a child with a health condition. Similarly, menstrual leave is a right for all employees, and the use of vague descriptions such as “empathy leave” and abstaining from using the words “period/menstruation” is unacceptable.

Another practice that supports the well-being of employees is to grant bereavement leave under circumstances that affect their physical and psychological health. Bereavement leave should be extended to include partners and civil partnerships in addition to the relatives such as parents and siblings. According to the relevant regulations, the death leave delivered to employees is 12 days in Europe. Home care leave delivers the right to care at home just as effectively as being present. When we look at the distribution of these leave types across EU countries, we see that the duration of parental leave is usually shorter than what is internationally recommended. In this context, a gender+ approach sees the communities subjected to diverse inequities.

In a caring workspace, as with all other types of leave, bereavement leave is needed to protect the employees who have experienced a significant loss. In this context, the right to bereavement leave should be extended. Similar to the off-hours working and health leaves, the bereavement leave should be extended to include partners and civil partnerships in addition to the relatives such as parents and siblings. According to the relevant regulations, the death leave delivered to employees is 12 days in Europe. Home care leave delivers the right to care at home just as effectively as being present.

Lastly, in addition to securing the rights of employees, regulations that respect the rights and social rights of the employees must be included in these policies. The policies should be intelligible and transparent, and they should include the following:

- Patient accompanist leave includes non-married partners
- Working hours for care giving employees
- Need-based extended health leave (trans inclusive)
- Sabbatical leave
- Bereavement leave

**Policies on attitudes and behaviors**

- Code of ethics
- Discrimination and harassment prevention policy
- Sexual harassment, assault, and violence prevention policy
- Anti-mobbing policy
- Conflict resolution policy
- Employee handbook

**Inspiring Stories**

**aquí bcn** (Spain)

aquí is a Barcelona based social innovation collective that works on creating a more fair, sustainable, and healthy city together with citizens and local organizations. It eases participatory urban design.
processes and contributes to solidarity networks. Through workshops and demonstrations, it aims to transform streets into living spaces and build public spaces for everyone.

aquí works in the field of participatory urbanism and focuses on “inclusion” and “care” in its interactions. It tries to make every participant of any age, gender, sexual orientation, and culture feel safe. In the recruitment process, it always puts diversity and representation forward and arranges workshops for particular groups (for example, women-only or queer-only workshops) to strengthen underrepresented voices.

aquí also has a wage policy that covers the minimum amount sufficient for sustenance and provides compensation or the right to take leave for working overtime. It provides menstrual leave as well.

The collective provides flexible working hours for parent employees and prioritizes “care” (for example, if one is required to take care of themselves or somebody else, whatever the needs of the project are, they can take a leave).

aquí’s care for diversity, inclusiveness, and transparency in workspaces extends to the recruitment processes. To manage workspace demeanor, they have a code of ethics and clear and consistent job descriptions. Moreover, they arrange regular meetings to share thoughts and feelings
about ongoing projects and team relationships and for team-control. These regular meetings include collective self-evaluations on the mechanisms of inclusion/exclusion in the workplace. The decision-making process in aquí is based on consensus and proceeds horizontally.

To ensure gender equality in the workplace, it has an equal pay policy and implementations to support women in substantial positions.

**Dimensions:** policy, program, community
D. Programs for sustainable caring workspaces

One of the crucial steps for a caring workspace to fulfill the spatial characteristics mentioned so far and accomplish and maintain the policies that support the rights and welfare of the employees is its implementation of care-centered programs. A caring workspace opens spaces for every employee to express their opinions and demands by prioritizing participation and inclusiveness, develops programs that support their well-being, incorporates them into the decision-making processes, and procures the necessary budget and resources for a caring workspace.

The answers of the institutions that participated in the research about caring programs in their workspaces are as follows:

- Our institution encourages us to attend trainings and seminars which support our self-development.
  - 18
- Regular feedback sessions/meetings are held to make space for everyone to express their concerns, demands, and views, even if they conflict.
  - 15
- We care for the wellbeing of our employees and take actions focusing on their care needs and care responsibilities.
  - 14
- To make decision-making and implementation processes more inclusive, we have study groups/commissions.
  - 13
We arrange intracompany trainings to make workspaces more diverse, inclusive, and safer. 11

We implement conflict resolution mechanisms by including all executives and employees. 9

We develop and implement the necessary policies and programs to support the psychological health of our employees. 7

While designing projects, we budget for creating and maintaining caring work areas. 3

While describing a caring workspace, in every section, including policy and space, we discussed the importance of participatory practices. A caring workspace is responsible for creating **participatory decision-making processes** and ensuring that the voice of every employee is heard and their views are considered. In the survey, 13 of the 22 institutions that participated stated that there are study groups/commissions in their workplaces to make decision-making mechanisms more participatory. In the answers given to the participation-based approaches, we often, unfortunately, fail to understand whether the stated problem describes a systematic practice or institutional culture. However, it is important to point out that for participatory programs to go beyond being part of the institutional culture, they should be written and monitored in practice.

When it comes to **participation**, a prevailing subject in focus group
discussions is the risks likely to occur in implementation and monitoring unless the responsibilities are allocated during the decision making processes. Hierarchy among employees can be necessary for some administrative matters. Similarly, operating a mutual decision-making process for every subject might not be maintained. What is important in a caring workspace is to set decision-making mechanisms that make the process transparent and represent all employees. For instance, after creating a policy text on sexual harassment and assaults in the workplace, a diverse study group of employees who have knowledge of the subject in question can be formed in order to carry out control, evaluation, and decision-making processes. When we draw the outline of participation in a workplace, we can keep these questions in mind: i) Is there any assignment for those who study this area/subject? ii) Is the assignment process transparent, and does it represent the diversity in the workplace? iii) Does the assigned individual(s) or department regularly inform all the employees about the decisions made and the process? iv) Does the assigned individual(s) or department take feedback regularly? Lastly, the leading program to be implemented to support and maintain the participatory processes should consist of inclusive team meetings, feedback sessions/meetings, and team retreats for all the employees in all levels.

In maintaining a caring workspace, one of the most significant issues is to carry out and control the conflict resolution mechanisms. In a caring workspace, the problems one employee has with another and their concerns should be discussed comfortably and methods for their quick, effective, and consistent resolution should be formed. In the research survey, 9 of the 22
Institutions stated that there is a mechanism that provides that kind of conduct in their institutions. In focus group meetings, it came to the fore that disadvantaged groups, especially women and LGBTI+s, always have more responsibility in conflict resolutions and the struggle for rights. It shows us that the “emotional labor” frequently reviewed in the feminist literature should be spoken about and discussed much more. In a caring workspace, matters like conflict and right violations shouldn’t be left to just one employee’s initiative and struggle; they must be determined as a principle of governance and both preventive and troubleshooting mechanisms should be formed. Such a system would prevent leaving the employee alone in searching for resolutions and claiming their rights.

18 of the institutions that participated in the research survey stated that their institutions encourage their employees to attend training and seminars that support their personal development, while 11 of them stated that intracompany inclusiveness training are arranged. In a caring workspace, trainings that contribute to the institution (including prevention of discrimination and inclusiveness) and that strengthen the vocational capacities of the employees should be supported. Forms of learning based on cooperation among employees should be supported and embraced as a significant tool to improve the capacities of the employees. Furthermore, a mentorship system which doesn’t depend on power and status relations should be developed. Basic first aid training should be provided in regular intervals as well.

Another subject discussed in the focus group meetings is programs for
enhancing the physical and psychological wellbeing of the employees, such as psychological counseling support or a self-care/wellbeing budget. A prevailing problem is that people who work for non-governmental organizations which operate in areas like trauma, violence, and right violations don’t receive support for their psychological health and their employers don't provide a budget or service for this kind of support. The globally discussed concept “duty of care” claims that non-governmental organizations, as those in other sectors, are responsible for looking after the physical and psychological health of their employees. While the concept has been used previously as a legal obligation for protecting employees from physical threats at work, it now presents a broader perspective that covers the responsibility regarding the well-being of employees. As with the policies mentioned, non-governmental organizations in Turkey have difficulties in providing social rights such as private health insurance and psychological counseling support due to insufficient funds. Even though institutions cannot meet these kinds of support financially, they can create similar support mechanisms by mobilizing other sources. For example, SPoD (Social Policy, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Studies Association), one of the institutions that participated in the survey, states that they hold self-care and well-being workshops at certain periods, and volunteers with a peer support role provide supervision or psychological support.

As mentioned on many subjects throughout the report, one prevailing obstacle that stood out in the focus group meetings is the limited budgets of the institutions. Both to create and maintain a caring workspace, institutions should budget for caring policies and practices and try to raise funds when
there are budget limitations. One instance mentioned in focus group meetings is that as the remote working system has grown with the pandemic, the financial burden of the changing working conditions has been put on the shoulders of the employees. In this sense, the institutions that provide funds must develop caring policies and approaches for the institutions that receive funds. In 2019, through the cooperation between Ariadne–European Funders for Social Change and Human Rights, Human Rights Funders Network (HRFN), and Gender Funders CoLab, a project on care and well-being within the networks and communities of human rights funders was developed. Centering around the concept of “collective care,” the project accepts that there is post-traumatic stress disorder, self-sacrifice, and overworking in human rights movements and organizations. It also advocates for funders to support improved working conditions and sufficient compensation.

The project emphasizes not just what but how funders finance. It invites all funders to question power dynamics, finance communities most affected by injustice and inequities, be transparent and accountable during the decision-making process, and be committed to the values their grants try to preserve.  

22
Checklist: Programs for sustainable caring workspaces

Commissions
- Study groups/commissions for participatory decision-making and implementation
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
- Conflict resolution mechanisms

Meetings
- Inclusive team meetings for employees in all levels
- Feedback sessions/meetings
- Team retreats

Trainings
- Institutional capacity development trainings
- Personal capacity development trainings/support for employees
- Mentorship for team-mates
- Basic first aid training for employees
- Supporting lifelong education

Resources
- Budgeting for caring projects
- Capacity development budget for all employees
- Well-being programs
- Psychosocial support
- Remote working support (support for electricity, water, fuel, internet bills etc.)
Inspiring Stories

European Endowment for Democracy (Belgium)

European Endowment for Democracy is a caring workspace that has participatory study groups and implements policies for the well-being of their employees.

European Endowment for Democracy (EED), established by European Union and EU member countries in 2013, is an independent institution that supports non-governmental organizations, pro-democracy movements, civil and political activists, and independent media platforms. It also supports and gives grants to journalists working for a pluralist and democratic political system.

It has security policies which describe the behaviors and measures for the prevention of threats, accidents, and other harms in a workspace, and provides socializing and resting areas in working areas in addition to productive spaces. It has a code of ethics to manage workspace demeanour and practices for the well-being of the employees and focuses on their care needs and responsibilities. It established gender+ social rights for its employees such as social support and health insurance, services like food and travel, and childcare and extended parental leave. It defines maternal leave as a right for all.
employees in its policy documents. The job descriptions of the employees aren’t unclear and it provides flexible working hours.

To make decision-making and implementation processes more inclusive, it has study groups and commissions. It holds evaluation meetings regularly to make everyone express their concerns, demands, and views without any discrimination. It encourages the employees to attend trainings and seminars which support their personal development and implements policies and programs necessary for supporting the psychological health of the employees. Off-work socializing is a part of EED’s institutional culture and it implements practices to this end.

**Dimensions:** space, policy, program, community
D. Building a caring community

In discussions about caring workspaces, the subject most talked about after sustainability is the responsibility of administrative positions to have a caring approach in community formation and communication. A caring community formation refuses power imbalances and hierarchy of traditional forms of governance, prioritizes that the executives have an inclusive and egalitarian approach, and develops new methods with a gender+ perspective.

The answers given by the institutions that participated in the research regarding community building are as follows:

- Leaders/executives are responsible for making everyone's voices heard and their views taken into account. 19
- The horizontal and vertical relations of our workspace are inclusive and participatory. 18
- Socializing off-work is a part of institutional culture. 17
- We developed policies based on diversity, inclusiveness, and transparency for the 15
- We hold meetings where not only executives/leaders but everyone can discuss problems and make suggestions. 13
- The key administrative positions in the workspace represent the diversity of the community in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, etc. 10
For the formation and sustainability of a caring community, executives/leaders must have a standpoint that is inclusive, egalitarian, representative of diversity, and motivated. Many employees in focus group meetings state that they want a caring workspace, but the administrative and consulting councils don’t represent employees and beneficiaries in an equal or inclusive way. A caring workspace requires equal and fair representation and the participation of the demanders in decision-making and implementation.

A good example in that regard is FAIR SHARE of Women Leaders, which works for mobilizing feminist leadership at all stages by equipping individuals and institutions working in the global social impact sector with feminist tools and strategies. It describes feminist leadership as the undertaking to create alternatives to traditional hierarchic leadership mechanisms and institutional cultures. The institution prioritizes intersectionality and covers everyone defining themselves as women. They also advocate that the leading teams of the future should represent all the employees of all genders, races, ages, nationalities, economic and social background, and the diversity of the people they work with. When we look at the institutions that participated in the survey, only 10 of them state that key administrative positions reflect the diversity of the community. The concept of feminist leadership promises not only to increase the number of women+ leaders but also to build leadership teams that represent employees.

Similarly, ActionAid expresses that they consider workplace conduct and
culture through a feminist framework. Their list of feminist principles of conduct are as follows:\textsuperscript{24}

**Self awareness:** Accepting our own vulnerabilities as well as recognizing and valuing our strengths and those of others.

**Self care and caring for others:** Caring for our own emotional and physical health and encouraging and supporting others for doing so.

**Dismantling bias:** Reconsidering our institutional privileges and power based on the advantages we have in terms of gender, class, race, and other factors.

**Inclusion:** Building diverse teams including and working towards solutions for the different barriers to participation.

**Sharing power:** Creating spaces that foster non-hierarchical leadership.

**Responsible and transparent use of power:** Being clear, timely and transparent in decision-making.

**Accountable collaboration:** Clearly defining the collective efforts and making them mutually owned: Holding ourselves and others responsible for the achievements.

**Respectful feedback:** Valuing taking and giving constructive feedback as an opportunity for learning in two directions.

**Courage:** Taking initiative: learning from mistakes, and not being afraid of failure.

**Zero tolerance:** Uncovering all sorts of discrimination and the misuse of power and staying away from all sorts of harassment and exploitation.
These feminist principles overlap with the basic principles repeated in all the areas pertaining to our description of caring workspaces. Then, what methods and practices can the institutions that desire to carry out caring feminist behaviors and policies use? In the answers in the survey, monthly/weekly/annually thematic vision meetings, structured and systematic feedback meetings, and horizontal organization stand out.

A subject that appeared in the focus group meetings but not in the research survey or sample was the union rights of NGO workers. In Turkey, collective bargaining on behalf of non-governmental organizations is made only by Sosyal-İş Sendikası (Union of Social Insurance, Education, Office, Commerce, Cooperative and Fine Arts Workers of Turkey) affiliated with DISK (The Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions Of Turkey). Celal Uyar, the secretary-general of the union explains that they are organized only in 4 non-governmental organizations in Turkey because of objection of NGO executives to the unionization attempts of the employees (to the point of taking legal action in some cases) and the renunciation of union-member employees from their rights attained by collective bargaining on the ground of “the condition of their workspace.” Sosyal-İş announced on December 1, 2020, that employees in Mavi Kalem Association for Social Cooperation and Solidarity who became a member of the union and completed their unionization by exercising their constitutional rights were dismissed. Unionization is a crucial mechanism for non-governmental organization employees to demand various worker rights such as wages, insurance, social rights, and leaves and to put pressure on employers. A caring
workspace should support the unionization attempts of its employees as their constitutional right.

A work culture based on rivalry, power, and competition in a workspace prevents employees from demanding their rights, taking their attained rights, and inclusiveness and diversity in the internal relations of the institution. Therefore, an institutional culture based on cooperation and solidarity is necessary for supporting and empowering inclusive and participatory governance and community building. In community building, two tools institutions can use for the sustainability of feminist, inclusive, and fair practices and approaches mentioned so far are having an employee responsible for community relations and determining communication resources for the community. In addition, creating opportunities for off-work socializing contributes to reinforcing the relationships between employees and executives and establishing an institutional culture in which cooperation and solidarity triumph.
Checklist: Building a caring community

Governance
- Key management positions reflecting the diversity of the community
- Leadership that promotes and protects diversity, equality, and inclusion
- A transparent, accountable, and responsible governance model
- Supporting trade union organization
- Idea, feedback, and suggestion sharing mechanisms for the community

Institutional Culture
- Culture of cooperation and solidarity
- Inclusive and participatory vertical and horizontal relations

Resources
- Designated person for community relations
- Communication resources for the community
- Socializing opportunities beyond the workspace
Inspiring Stories

**ActionAid** (United Kingdom)

ActionAid is a policy-making non-governmental organization based in the United Kingdom that works and carries out research on the rights of women and girls, the problems that arise in times of disaster and crisis, ceasing world-wide violence, and reducing poverty. ActionAid centers all its studies around the rights of women and girls, as it believes that the violation of these rights is one of the biggest reasons of world-wide poverty and injustic.

ActionAid works globally for women and girls who are subjected to unfair treatments merely because of their genders. Therefore, ActionAid *gives active roles to women and girls during the design and decision-making processes of the program* and supports them to become leaders and mediators of change.

As a part of its commitment to the rights of women and girls, ActionAid implements and advocates *feminist principles* in its way of working and approach. As a part of the feminist governance system, it not only cares for the *emotional and physical health* of its employees.
and partners but also encourages others to do the same. Accordingly, it takes into account care responsibilities, especially to relieve women from double workload while planning deadlines and programs. It also incorporates everyone in the recruitment process in order to organize diverse teams and respond to the different barriers to participation. It creates spaces for everyone to take on leadership, encourages its employees to recognize their own values and skills, and supports them to step forward in committees, promotions, and other opportunities.

The team realizes when a discriminating policy or process occurs and changes it accordingly. Policies supplied to the employees include practices that regard maternal and paternal leave, job security, well-being, and unexpected challenges. It also fosters a space in which everyone can express their opinions.

ActionAid is an institution committed to diversity and inclusivity. This approach extends from the recruitment processes to discussing prejudices and preventing the formation of power structures that render groups underrepresented in organizations, including LGBTQI+ and disadvantaged communities. In addition to being a trans-inclusive institution, ActionAid aims to make its non-binary and trans co-workers feel represented. Its diverse and inclusive practices cover gender neutral toilets, voluntarily adding pronouns in the HR system and e-mail signs, updating intracompany policies and procedures to avoid
assuming gender beforehand, preparing a guide for trans-inclusive language in communication activities, and holding meetings with the LGBTQI+ network twice a year.

ActionAid makes all its operations transparent and accountable. It is possible to see how it is financed, how it spends its income, and what impact it has through its financial accounts and activity reports.

Dimensions: policy, program, community, beyond the workspace
E. Beyond the workspace

Thus far in the research report, caring policies and practices that can be produced in the spatial and institutional boundaries of the workspaces have been discussed. However, a caring workspace has responsibilities not only for its institution and employees but also for other individuals and institutions it cooperates with, its beneficiaries, and the groups the social impact they aim to increase.

The caring practices of institutions that participated in the research in their relations with other people, institutions, and the nature beyond the workspace are as follows:

- The mission of our workspace contains concrete effects to create a more sensitive world. 14
- We adopt a caring and inclusive gender approach in our interactions with clients/partners/grantors. 12
- We have guiding principles for procurement processes that help us purchase goods and services that benefit society, the economy, and the environment. 8
- Ecological concerns are prioritized in all the programs, actions, and operations. 7

We claim that the principles necessary for being a caring workspace should be valid beyond the social initiatives and non-governmental organizations that are the subjects of the research. Therefore, for a sensitive world, the mission, main working fields, and social as well as environmental impact of workspaces that operate in the other sectors should also follow caring
principles.

In the responses given to the survey and focus group meetings, one of the prevailing subjects was the attitude of institutions towards diverse identities in terms of gender, age, disability, ethnicity, etc. In this sense, an institution's projects, activities, and productions must be inclusive and attentive to diversity while determining their utilizers and target groups. A caring workspace should enable the representation of the groups they plan to have an impact on and encourage them to contribute to the works undertaken as an actor by improving partnerships. For instance, an institution that provides spatial accessibility shouldn’t be satisfied only with that; it should also develop projects and communication strategies to reach the disabled as utilizers or partners.

A caring workspace should also aim at sectoral change and transformation. In this context, sharing the caring policies and practices developed with the public, cooperating with the institutions interested and advocating for a caring approach in other workplaces are significant.

The communication and advocacy strategies of the institutions also play a role in forming public discourse. In this sense, non-governmental organizations and social initiatives should contribute to creating a discourse that is rights-based, inclusive, diverse, free from discrimination, and based on the gender+ perspective.

A caring workspace prefers a responsible and sustainable trade model by
preventing injustices like human rights violations, poverty, and gender inequities in the production and procurement processes. **Fair trade**\(^25\) is a trading partnership based on dialog, transparency, and respect for more equality in international trade. By providing better trade conditions for marginalized producers and workers as well as securing their rights, it contributes to sustainable development. According to World Fair Trade Organization, the basic principles of fair trade are creating opportunities for disadvantaged producers, transparency and accountability, fair trade implementations, fair pricing, being opposed to child laborers and forced labor, being distant from discrimination, supporting gender equality and freedom of association, providing better working conditions for the employees as well as the development of their capacity, encouraging fair trade, and respecting the environment.\(^26\)

Lastly, a caring workspace should prioritize the **ecological effects** of its activities and programs even if its working field is not directly related to the climate crisis or environmental rights. In the part of the report on the spatial characteristics of a caring workspace, climate-based policies were discussed in more detail. Furthermore, institutions should consider all the relations and work concerning its utilizers or partners in a climate-based manner. For example, nowadays, many institutions decrease the carbon emission of participants by carrying their activities such as international popular symposiums or conferences to online platforms and generating hybrid solutions.
Checklist: Beyond the workspace

- Social impact targeting
- Transformative and inclusive client/stakeholder/donor relationships
- Publicly communicating caring workspace measures for sectoral change
- Gender+ inclusive, non-discriminatory, and rights-based discourse in communication and advocacy activities
- Social and fair trade procurement
- Considering ecological impact in all programs and operations

Inspiring Stories

B&L Evolution (France)

B&L Evolution is a caring workspace with equal, cooperative, and participatory principles practiced in its workspace and pricing policy.

B&L Evolution is a French non-profit cooperative consultancy company delivering consultancy services in areas such as institutional
social responsibility, energy, and biodiversity.

B&L Evolution describes its long-term goal as ensuring that all companies go beyond their mere economic existence by integrating sustainable development into their general strategies and fully undertaking social responsibility for the community of which they are a part of. The organization also has B-Corp certification, calculates the carbon and water footprint of its activities every year, and organizes its daily operations accordingly.

B&L Evolution implements an innovative way of working that combines all the components of sustainable development. With a cooperative and participatory principle, it aims to build horizontal relations in the workplace by offering all its employees the opportunity to work together. Furthermore, its pricing policy ensures that no two employees have a difference of five times between their wages.

**Dimensions:** program, community, beyond the workspace
IV. Conclusion

Caring Workspaces project aims to draw a broad outline of the workplaces that encourage inclusiveness, diversity, security, and care and hold a gender+ perspective. The report discusses how a caring workplace should be and presents a guiding checklist for the institutions that want to work toward this goal.

Caring workspaces follow approaches such as being inclusive, guaranteeing the working conditions and rights of their employees, creating policies and programs that look after their good, and managing through an egalitarian and participatory approach. As evident in the main headings of the report, we talked about the categories of space, policy, program, community, and beyond the workspace to discuss these approaches.

A caring workspace creates spaces that regard the physical needs of everyone using the space and provides job security, prevents gender-based inequities, and conducts the design process together with the participatory efforts of the stakeholders. Beyond just being a physically useful and accessible space, such an approach makes everyone using the space feel safe and comfortable. Caring policies guarantee the payments, social rights, working hours, psychological and physical health, and well-being of employees, and are supported by written documents and in practice, and all the necessary roles and responsibilities are allocated. In a caring
A caring workspace, to maintain the sustainability of the caring approach, the institution establishes monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. It runs programs centering around care, which leads to spaces where every employee can express their opinions and demands. It develops programs that enhance the well-being of its employees, involves them in the decision-making processes, and supplies the necessary budgets and resources for a caring workspace. A caring community-building effort rejects the power inequalities and hierarchy in traditional governance mechanisms, prioritizes that the executives adopt an inclusive and egalitarian approach, and develops new methods based on the gender+ perspective. Lastly, a caring workspace is responsible not only for its institution and employees but also for individuals and institutions outside of the workspace it has cooperated with beyond the workspace, its utilizers, and the groups it aims to have a social impact on.

A great risk of this approach is that, if there isn’t enough responsibility allocation within the institution, participation generates problems in both implementation and monitoring. A hierarchy of tasking, authority, and responsibility on administrative matters among employees can be necessary. Similarly, exercising a mutual decision making process for every subject might not be sustainable. Therefore, a caring workspace should build mechanisms with transparent decision processes and aim to represent all employees.

Through this research report, including the outputs of the project, the inspiring stories and checklist, we aim to guide the institutions that want to
become caring workspaces. Therefore, we emphasize that the transformation of institutions should be **gradual** instead of immediate and that institutions need a **long-term road map**.

The transformation is possible if the institutions budget for caring policies and implementations and try other methods for fundraising in case there is a limited budget. Therefore, we argue that the actions of institutions alone are insufficient and that **funders** are responsible for delivering the necessary resources and opportunities for building and maintaining caring workspaces.
Caring Workspaces

A caring workspace is a concept that emphasizes inclusiveness, diversity, security, and care in the workplace. It follows approaches such as being inclusive, guaranteeing accessible space, and providing job security, which prevent gender-based inequities. A caring workspace creates spaces that regard the physical needs of everyone using the space and provides job security, prevents gender-based inequities, and conducts the design process together with participatory approach.

In the “methodology” section of the report, you can find more detail on the concept of “care.”

The RESISTIRÉ project is a Europe-wide consortium aiming to develop policy offers against the gender-based inequalities created by the Covid-19 pandemic. For more details: https://resistire-project.eu/.

References

   https://securityofdefendersproject.org/s/HRD-Hub-Policy-Brief-1-EN.pdf


   https://resistire-project.eu/download/factsheet-5-care-and-crisis-fostering-a%e2%80%afparadigm%e2%80%afshift%e2%80%af%e2%80%af/?wpdmdl=4542&refresh=62e700e3db1c91659306211

4. Ibid.: p. 3.

5. N. Eylül Açıkkol, Şeyma Keskin, Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum Örgütlerinde Gönüllü ve Ücretli Çalışan Haklarının Gözlem Raporu, Universus Sosyal Araştırmalar Merkezi, 2020, p. 50, Date of access: 11 August 2022.


8. In the “methodology” section of the report, you can find more detail on the concept of “care.”

9. The RESISTIRÉ project is a Europe-wide consortium aiming to develop policy offers against the gender-based inequalities created by the Covid-19 pandemic. For more details: https://resistire-project.eu/.
workspaces. resources and opportunities for building and maintaining caring are responsible for delivering the necessary insufficient and that funders and implementations and try other methods for fundraising in case there is a

The transformation is possible if the institutions budget for caring policies instead of immediate and gradual become caring workspaces. Therefore, we emphasize that the institutions need a long-term road map.

For more details: https://wfto.com/our-fair-trade-system#10-principles-of-fair-trade

For more details: https://www.actionaid.org.uk/about-us/people-and-culture/how-we-practise-feminism-at-work

For more details: https://sites.google.com/hrfn.org/grantmaking-principles/home

For more details: https://aqui.design/

For more details: https://fairsharewl.org/about-us/

How we practise feminism at work, Action Aid, Date of access: 12 Eylül 2022,

https://www.actionaid.org.uk/about-us/people-and-culture/how-we-practise-feminism-at-work

For more details: https://wfto.com/who-we-are

For more details: https://wfto.com/our-fair-trade-system#10-principles-of-fair-trade
Caring Workspaces project aims to draw a broad outline of the workplaces that encourage inclusiveness, diversity, security, and care and hold a gender+ perspective. The report discusses how a caring workplace should be and presents a guiding checklist for the institutions that want to work toward this goal.

Caring workspaces follow approaches such as being inclusive, guaranteeing the working conditions and rights of their employees, creating policies and programs that look after their good, and managing through an egalitarian and participatory approach. As evident in the main headings of the report, we talked about the categories of space, policy, program, community, and beyond the workspace to discuss these approaches.

A caring workspace creates spaces that regard the physical needs of everyone using the space and provides job security, prevents gender-based inequities, and conducts the design process together with the participatory efforts of the stakeholders. Beyond just being a physically useful and accessible space, such an approach makes everyone using the space feel safe and comfortable. Caring policies guarantee the payments, social rights, working hours, psychological and physical health, and well-being of employees, and are supported by written documents and in practice, and all the necessary roles and responsibilities are allocated. In a caring workspace, to maintain the sustainability of the caring approach, the institution establishes monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. It runs programs centering around care, which leads to spaces where every employee can express their opinions and demands. It develops programs that enhance the well-being of its employees, involves them in the decision-making processes, and supplies the necessary budgets and resources for a caring workspace. A caring community-building effort rejects the power inequalities and hierarchy in traditional governance mechanisms, prioritizes that the executives adopt an inclusive and egalitarian approach, and develops new methods based on the gender+ perspective. Lastly, a caring workspace is responsible not only for its institution and employees but also for individuals and institutions outside of the workspace it has cooperated with beyond the workspace, its utilizers, and the groups it aims to have a social impact on.

A great risk of this approach is that, if there isn’t enough responsibility allocation within the institution, participation generates problems in both implementation and monitoring. A hierarchy of tasking, authority, and responsibility on administrative matters among employees can be necessary. Similarly, exercising a mutual decision making process for every subject might not be sustainable. Therefore, a caring workspace should build mechanisms with transparent decision processes and aim to represent all employees.

Through this research report, including the outputs of the project, the inspiring stories and checklist, we aim to guide the institutions that want to become caring workspaces. Therefore, we emphasize that the transformation of institutions should be gradual instead of immediate and that institutions need a long-term road map. The transformation is possible if the institutions budget for caring policies and implementations and try other methods for fundraising in case there is a limited budget. Therefore, we argue that the actions of institutions alone are insufficient and that funders are responsible for delivering the necessary resources and opportunities for building and maintaining caring workspaces.
Caring Workspaces project aims to draw a broad outline of the workplaces that encourage inclusiveness, diversity, security, and care and hold a gender+ perspective. The report discusses how a caring workplace should be and presents a guiding checklist for the institutions that want to work toward this goal.

Caring workspaces follow approaches such as being inclusive, guaranteeing the working conditions and rights of their employees, creating policies and programs that look after their good, and managing through an egalitarian and participatory approach. As evident in the main headings of the report, we talked about the categories of space, policy, program, community, and beyond the workspace to discuss these approaches.

A caring workspace creates spaces that regard the physical needs of everyone using the space and provides job security, prevents gender-based inequities, and conducts the design process together with the participatory efforts of the stakeholders. Beyond just being a physically useful and accessible space, such an approach makes everyone using the space feel safe and comfortable. Caring policies guarantee the payments, social rights, working hours, psychological and physical health, and well-being of employees, and are supported by written documents and in practice, and all the necessary roles and responsibilities are allocated. In a caring workspace, to maintain the sustainability of the caring approach, the institution establishes monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. It runs programs centering around care, which leads to spaces where every employee can express their opinions and demands. It develops programs that enhance the well-being of its employees, involves them in the decision-making processes, and supplies the necessary budgets and resources for a caring workspace. A caring community-building effort rejects the power inequalities and hierarchy in traditional governance mechanisms, prioritizes that the executives adopt an inclusive and egalitarian approach, and develops new methods based on the gender+ perspective. Lastly, a caring workspace is responsible not only for its institution and employees but also for individuals and institutions outside of the workspace it has cooperated with beyond the workspace, its utilizers, and the groups it aims to have a social impact on.

A great risk of this approach is that, if there isn’t enough responsibility allocation within the institution, participation generates problems in both implementation and monitoring. A hierarchy of tasking, authority, and responsibility on administrative matters among employees can be necessary. Similarly, exercising a mutual decision making process for every subject might not be sustainable. Therefore, a caring workspace should build mechanisms with transparent decision processes and aim to represent all employees.

Through this research report, including the outputs of the project, the inspiring stories and checklist, we aim to guide the institutions that want to become caring workspaces. Therefore, we emphasize that the transformation of institutions should be gradual instead of immediate and that institutions need a long-term roadmap. The transformation is possible if the institutions budget for caring policies and implementations and try other methods for fundraising in case there is a limited budget. Therefore, we argue that the actions of institutions alone are insufficient and that funders are responsible for delivering the necessary resources and opportunities for building and maintaining caring workspaces.
Caring Workspaces project aims to draw a broad outline of the workplaces that encourage inclusiveness, diversity, security, and care and hold a gender+ perspective. The report discusses how a caring workplace should be and presents a guiding checklist for the institutions that want to work toward this goal.

Caring workspaces follow approaches such as being inclusive, guaranteeing the working conditions and rights of their employees, creating policies and programs that look after their good, and managing through an egalitarian and participatory approach. As evident in the main headings of the report, we talked about the categories of space, policy, program, community, and beyond the workspace to discuss these approaches.

A caring workspace creates spaces that regard the physical needs of everyone using the space and provides job security, prevents gender-based inequities, and conducts the design process together with the participatory efforts of the stakeholders. Beyond just being a physically useful and accessible space, such an approach makes everyone using the space feel safe and comfortable. Caring policies guarantee the payments, social rights, working hours, psychological and physical health, and well-being of employees, and are supported by written documents and in practice, and all the necessary roles and responsibilities are allocated. In a caring workspace, to maintain the sustainability of the caring approach, the institution establishes monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. It runs programs centering around care, which leads to spaces where every employee can express their opinions and demands. It develops programs that enhance the well-being of its employees, involves them in the decision-making processes, and supplies the necessary budgets and resources for a caring workspace. A caring community-building effort rejects the power inequalities and hierarchy in traditional governance mechanisms, prioritizes that the executives adopt an inclusive and egalitarian approach, and develops new methods based on the gender+ perspective. Lastly, a caring workspace is responsible not only for its institution and employees but also for individuals and institutions outside of the workspace it has cooperated with beyond the workspace, its utilizers, and the groups it aims to have a social impact on.

A great risk of this approach is that, if there isn’t enough responsibility allocation within the institution, participation generates problems in both implementation and monitoring. A hierarchy of tasking, authority, and responsibility on administrative matters among employees can be necessary. Similarly, exercising a mutual decision making process for every subject might not be sustainable. Therefore, a caring workspace should build mechanisms with transparent decision processes and aim to represent all employees.

Through this research report, including the outputs of the project, the inspiring stories and checklist, we aim to guide the institutions that want to become caring workspaces. Therefore, we emphasize that the transformation of institutions should be gradual instead of immediate and that institutions need a long-term road map. The transformation is possible if the institutions budget for caring policies and implementations and try other methods for fundraising in case there is a limited budget. Therefore, we argue that the actions of institutions alone are insufficient and that funders are responsible for delivering the necessary resources and opportunities for building and maintaining caring workspaces.
Caring Workspaces project aims to draw a broad outline of the workplaces that encourage inclusiveness, diversity, security, and care and hold a gender+ perspective. The report discusses how a caring workplace should be and presents a guiding checklist for the institutions that want to work toward this goal.

Caring workspaces follow approaches such as being inclusive, guaranteeing the working conditions and rights of their employees, creating policies and programs that look after their good, and managing through an egalitarian and participatory approach. As evident in the main headings of the report, we talked about the categories of space, policy, program, community, and beyond the workspace to discuss these approaches.

A caring workspace creates spaces that regard the physical needs of everyone using the space and provides job security, prevents gender-based inequities, and conducts the design process together with the participatory efforts of the stakeholders. Beyond just being a physically useful and accessible space, such an approach makes everyone using the space feel safe and comfortable. Caring policies guarantee the payments, social rights, working hours, psychological and physical health, and well-being of employees, and are supported by written documents and in practice, and all the necessary roles and responsibilities are allocated. In a caring workspace, to maintain the sustainability of the caring approach, the institution establishes monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. It runs programs centering around care, which leads to spaces where every employee can express their opinions and demands. It develops programs that enhance the well-being of its employees, involves them in the decision-making processes, and supplies the necessary budgets and resources for a caring workspace. A caring community-building effort rejects the power inequalities and hierarchy in traditional governance mechanisms, prioritizes that the executives adopt an inclusive and egalitarian approach, and develops new methods based on the gender+ perspective. Lastly, a caring workspace is responsible not only for its institution and employees but also for individuals and institutions outside of the workspace it has cooperated with beyond the workspace, its utilizers, and the groups it aims to have a social impact on.

A great risk of this approach is that, if there isn't enough responsibility allocation within the institution, participation generates problems in both implementation and monitoring. A hierarchy of tasking, authority, and responsibility on administrative matters among employees can be necessary. Similarly, exercising a mutual decision making process for every subject might not be sustainable. Therefore, a caring workspace should build mechanisms with transparent decision processes and aim to represent all employees.

Through this research report, including the outputs of the project, the inspiring stories and checklist, we aim to guide the institutions that want to become caring workspaces. Therefore, we emphasize that the transformation of institutions should be gradual instead of immediate and that institutions need a long-term road map. The transformation is possible if the institutions budget for caring policies and implementations and try other methods for fundraising in case there is a limited budget. Therefore, we argue that the actions of institutions alone are insufficient and that funders are responsible for delivering the necessary resources and opportunities for building and maintaining caring workspaces.