Women on Bicycle Initiative
(Bisikletli Kadın İnisiyatifi – BKİ)
İstanbul Türkiye
Turkey is the best country in empowerment of women

Violence against women
Honor kilings dominate the violence dimension.
- In the last 3 years 5,000 women are killed by their husbands, partners, brothers or fathers.

Representation in decision making processes
Number of women in parliament is the most visible issue.
14.5% of the parliament. For local governments it goes below 5%.
Politicians tell the story

“I don’t believe in equality of women and men.”
R. Tayyip Erdoğan, President

The answer to a woman who asks for a job: “Is housework not enough?”
Veyesel Eroğlu, Minister Of Forestry And Water Affairs

“Marriage of working women ends in divorce”
Bülent Arınç, Former Vice Prime Minister

Society embraces the story

“What’s working impacts the child negatively.”
59% agree
60% agree

“What’s working harms family life”
43% agree

“Women’s working harms family life”
45% agree

Women workers are “emotional, unsteady, have low level of attachment to work”

“Women should always obey their husbands.”

“Man makes money, woman looks after home”

“Women are vulnerable in working environment”

“A woman should not earn more than her husband”
Women: Nowhere but home

Participation in labor force:
- F: 34%
- M: 77%

Young NEET:
- F: 45%
- M: 19%

Marriage age: 23
First birth: 24

Part of the labor force:
Among University Graduates 72%
Others 25%

Those employed are in agriculture or unskilled jobs

Women at senior levels:
- Bureaucracy: 9%
- Parliament: 14%
- NGO’s: 15%

# of Entrepreneurs:
- Women: 90 K
- Men: 1,030 K
What about cycling?

- Women see cycling as a leisure time event.
- 5% of the women use bicycle. 65% wants to cycle.
- Only 0.6% of women use bicycle for shopping, going to work, school. (In general it is 3%)
- False thoughts of women: Istanbul is not a bicycle friendly city. My age is not proper for cycling.

Datas by Active Living Association
I travel by bicycle around the world

I commute by bicycle in İstanbul
There are other women who commute by bicycle in our car-centric, hilly and middle eastern country.

We united our powers as first women then cyclist, and formed BKİ by saying possible (MÜMKÜN) to use bicycle in İstanbul in daily life.
We all learned the hard way, by ourselves, there were no women to ask/share/discuss. Only male dominated groups who see cycling as different than us.
Like us, they have fears to start cycling because of similar reasons (surely you have similar stories) :

• It is dangerous to cycle in İstanbul
• There is no cycle path
• My family does not approve
• I am not strong/fit enough
• The distance is too long
• I don’t have a bicycle
• My route is not suitable for riding
• I cannot go to work by sweating
• No parking place
• Disrespect of drivers ...
What we do: Mainly sharing experience

Ride in the traffic together with beginners (who already can cycle)
What we do: Mainly sharing experience

After work rides
What we do: Mainly sharing experience

Weekend rides
What we do: Mainly sharing experience

Teach them how to cycle
What we do: Mainly sharing experience

Repair course
What we do: Mainly sharing experience

Meetings to discuss issues they want to ask
What we do: Mainly sharing experience

Meetings to give information about what we are doing and how they can contribute
What we do: Mainly sharing experience

Facebook group for questions, comments, sharing ideas and fun (İstanbul is a big city and there are women from other cities)

facebook.com/groups/bisikletlikadınininisiyatifi
instagram.com/bisikletlikadin
bisikletlikadınininisiyatifi@gmail.com
Finding ways to get it easier on their routes
Accompanying them to the work
Integration with public transport
Parking solutions
Showing how they can manage with different situations (including abuse!)
Suit-up and make-up solutions
Alternative routes
Guideline for women

What have we learned so far...?

Society
Politicians
Private companies

http://www.etietieti.com/eti-sari-bisiklet-projesi

http://sivildusun.net/
Sarı Bisiklet (Yellow Bicycle project – ETI)
What we want to see on the streets
Sisterhood
Thanks to all of you for believing in freedom of cycling 😊