



Melike Bal

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Nationality: Turkish

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ABOUT MYSELF

I am Melike Bal. I am from Türkiye and I have Cerebral Palsy. I am currently studying undergraduate law at Social Sciences University of Ankara. I am proud member to ENIL & ENIL Youth also, a national disability organization (a longstanding partner to ENIL) called Association of Women with Disabilities (ENG-KAD). I feel proud to be a part of civil society because I know that these organizations and activists online helped me discover and embrace my disabled identity. I want to be a part of the amazing work being done and help other disabled people in discovering themselves and fight the good fight with us. I published a poetry book in 2017 and I enjoy watching TV dramas, especially medical and legal, in my free time.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Association of Women with Disabilities Ankara, Turkey

Address Atatürk Blv. No:105, Sanlı İş Merkezi K:5 No:515 Kızılay, Çankaya, 06200, Ankara, Turkey | **Email** engellikadindernegi@gmail.com | **Website** <http://engkad.org/>

Disability Inclusion Trainer

03/06/2023 – Current

I deliver disability inclusion training sessions to the personnel of UN Türkiye agencies, humanitarian workers (in collaboration with UNFPA), as well as staff and volunteers from various civil society organizations in Türkiye. My approach involves delivering engaging training through the use of narratives and analogies. The training curriculum spans a diverse range of topics, covering disability rights, models of disability, disability history, UN CRPD, disability-inclusive communications, national disability laws, and social benefits available to individuals with disabilities. Proficient in presenting in both English and Turkish, I strive to enhance awareness and understanding of disability inclusion among diverse audiences.

European Network of Independent Living Youth Network Brussels, Belgium

Address Mundo J, Rue de l'Industrie 10, 1000, Brussels, Belgium | **Email** secretariat@enil.eu | **Website** <https://enil.eu/>

Board member

12/11/2022 – Current

I was elected as a board member by ENIL Youth Members in November 2022. As a board member, I represent ENIL at international events, provide assistance with maintaining contact with partner organizations, support the board's efforts of organizing events, and help with inter-organizational communications. Additionally, I highlight the importance of disability and youth activism's intersectionality when I represent ENIL at the events.

Women Enabled International United States

Email info@womenenabled.org | **Website** <https://womenenabled.org>

Legal Intern

01/07/2024 – 06/09/2024

As the inaugural Stephanie Ortoleva Legal Intern, I conducted research on obstetric violence, stereotypes impacting women and girls with disabilities, home and community-based services for people with disabilities, supporting WEI's advocacy work at UN and beyond. Based on my research I prepared memos for internal and external use. In this role I was a part of Advocacy and Accountability division of Women Enabled International and I directly reported to manager at Advocacy and Accountability, Ishani Cordeiro.

Association of Women with Disabilities Ankara, Turkey

Business or Sector Human health and social work activities | **Address** Atatürk Blv. No:105, Sanlı İş Merkezi K:5 No:515 Kızılay, Çankaya, 06200, Ankara, Turkey |

Email engellikadindernegi@gmail.com | **Website** <http://engkad.org/>

Communication manager (Volunteer Staff)

01/10/2023 – 31/01/2024

As the Communications Manager at the Association of Women with Disabilities, my role encompassed a wide array of responsibilities. I oversaw the organization's social media presence by efficiently managing DMs, engaging with followers, and implementing strategic content plans. Utilizing graphic design tools like Adobe Express, I created visually appealing social media posts and captions, ensuring alignment with our messaging. Additionally, I leveraged my proficiency in English to nurture international partnerships, including effective communication, collaboration,

and the preparation of written materials. My data-driven approach helped optimize our social media strategies for maximum impact.

Neurofeedback Turkey Campaign-Self Employment Elazığ, Turkey

Project coordinator

10/05/2019 – 15/09/2021

I started the Neurofeedback Turkey Campaign to increase access to the method in Turkey. Neurofeedback is a computer-based therapy method that could potentially improve the health and life quality of disabled people.

My medical traumas make me more passionate about it. Because, I made attended many painful, but not as helpful, physical therapy sessions throughout my childhood. Also, my medical team convinced my parents to a very excruciating orthopedic surgery to make me "more like my friends." When I found out about it, which is pain-free, I felt amazed. The method does not aim to make someone nondisabled but offers them support and help to adapt to the world.

So, I wanted disabled people in the country to have access to edge-cutting technology while getting to choose what is best for them. To impact decision makers and get the method under national insurance coverage: I prepared a report and presented it to members of our parliament, met with NGO representatives, and interviewed by local news channels about the campaign.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

26/09/2022 – CURRENT Ankara, Turkey

Bachelor of Laws - LLB Social Sciences University of Ankara

Foundational areas of Turkish law like Civil Law, Constitutional Law, Family Law, Criminal Law, Obligations and Contracts Law, Administrative Law, Property Law, Trade Law, Civil Procedure Law, Criminal Procedure Law, Employment Law, Tax Law, and Bankruptcy Law have been taught by professors during a four-year program. Aside from these fundamental courses, global topics like Public International Law, International Civil Procedure Law, Human Rights Law and EU Law also are parts of this program. Additionally, the teaching language of the program is 30% English. Students who complete this program can work as lawyers, judges, prosecutors, and notaries across Turkey.

Electives taken: Political History, Environmental Law, Fundamental Rights and Freedoms.

Address Hükümet Meydanı No: 2 Ulus, Altındağ, 06050, Ankara, Turkey | **Website** <https://hf.asbu.edu.tr/en/> | **Field of study** Law |

Level in EQF EQF level 6 | **National classification** Lisans Diploması | **Type of credits** ECTS | **Number of credits** 240

17/09/2018 – 17/06/2022 Elazığ, Turkey

High School Degree Elazığ Bahçeşehir Science High School

Sciences, math, Turkish literature lessons given by the school, preparing for nationwide university exam students who wish to get into a bachelor degree take called YKS.

Address Ataşehir Mahallesi Malatya Caddesi No: 45 / 1A - 1B, 23040, Elazığ, Turkey | **Field of study** Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics | **Final grade** 99/100 | **Level in EQF** EQF level 4 | **National classification** Lise Diploması

LANGUAGE SKILLS

MOTHER TONGUE(S): Turkish

Other language(s):

English

Listening C2

Spoken production C2

Reading C2

Spoken interaction C2

Writing C2

French

Listening A1

Spoken production A1

Reading A1

Spoken interaction A1

Writing A1

Levels: A1 and A2: Basic user - B1 and B2: Independent user - C1 and C2: Proficient user

LICENSES & CERTIFICATIONS

01/03/2025 – 02/03/2025

● **Corporate Law Advanced Training Program-Turkish Lawyers' Foundation**

01/02/2025 – 02/02/2025

● **Rental Law and Practices Advanced Training Program-Turkish Lawyers' Foundation**

01/2025

● **Rights of a Child as an Individual Training-Community Volunteers Foundation (TOG)**

23/01/2024 – 24/01/2025

● **Trademark Law and Registration Advanced Training Program-Turkish Lawyers' Foundation**

01/01/2025 – 01/01/2026

● **Court Interpreter (TR-EN/EN-TR)-Ankara First Instance Courts' Judicial Commission**

19/07/2024 – 19/07/2026

● **IELTS Academic 8.5/9 (Listening: 9, Reading: 9, Writing: 7, Speaking: 8)**

24/04/2024 – 24/04/2029

● **Foreign Language Test 85/100**

13/10/2023

● **Civil Society School STOK 200 "Plan Lover Organizations"-Civil Society Development Center**

29/04/2023

● **Monitoring Freedom of Association Project "Right to Participation Training"-Civil Society Development Center**

SKILLS

PRDODUCTIVITY

Google Workspace (Google Drive, Google Docs, Google Slides, Google Sheets, Google Forms) | Microsoft Office | Microsoft Word | Microsoft Powerpoint | Zoom

DATA ANALYSIS

IBM Statistical package for Sciences (SPSS) | Microsoft Excel

SOCIAL MEDIA

Adobe Express | Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn)

CONFERENCES & SEMINARS

03/12/2024 Istanbul University Disability Applied Research Center

● **Current Approaches in Disability: Bridging Technology, Policy, and Practices**

Melike BAL, a student at Social Sciences University of Ankara Faculty of Law and a member of the Youth Committee of the European Network of Independent Living (ENIL), delivered a presentation titled "The Philosophy, Policy, and Practices of Independent Living."

14/03/2024 United Nations Headquarters, New York United States

● **Interactive Dialogue with Young Representatives-CSW 68th Session**

The interactive youth dialogue focused on the priority theme for this session: Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective. I was selected by UN Women to represent Europe and Central Asia region. I spoke on the importance of creating fair and inclusive finance systems for all especially women and girls with disabilities.

Links <https://press.un.org/en/2024/wom2234.doc.htm> | <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1h/k1h8dbecdj>

07/12/2023 – 29/12/2023 Ankara

● **UNFPA Service Providers' Disability Inclusion Training Series**

I have conducted a series of disability training sessions for UNFPA's partner field service providers in collaboration with UNFPA Türkiye and the Association of Women with Disabilities. Our organization brought together a team of experts,

including myself, to cover a diverse range of topics. During my sessions, I specifically addressed models of disability and provided insights on the preparation of accessible documents.

04/12/2023 Ankara

UN Women Türkiye Staff Disability Inclusion Training

I facilitated a training session on disability inclusion with the UN Women Türkiye office staff. It was my privilege to co-deliver this training alongside Elif Emir Öksüz, Assistant Professor, and Gamze Cudal.

18/07/2023 UN Türkiye Office, Ankara

Inclusive and Accessible Communications Training with UNCG Staff

I co-facilitated a training on inclusive and accessible communication with Bahar Yavuz and Heba Kholif, together with the UN Communication Group staff at the United Nations Türkiye Ankara office. The training was organized by Arianna Sica, the United Nations Türkiye Disability Inclusion Focal Point.

03/06/2023 Izmir

Minority Rights Group Europe Disability Training for MARC Project

I co-facilitated a disability inclusion training with Turkish-French disability activist Güler Koca. The first session conducted by Güler Koca covered the definition of disability, disability models, and barriers to inclusion. The second session I facilitated covered national and international disability law. I also assisted Ms. Koca with the Turkish translation of the disability terminology she used during her session.

17/03/2023 – 19/03/2023 Ankara

"Who are Disabled Women?" Project Workshop

"Who are Disabled Women" workshop initiated within the Strong Civic Space for Gender Equality project which is initiated by UN Women Turkey and funded by EU Delegation to Turkey. Participants discussed the problems and needs of disabled women in six different working groups for three days.

09/03/2023 Online

GADRA Emergency Operations Center Activates to Türkiye and Syria Webinar

I spoke on this webinar about activities of Association of Women with Disabilities after February 6 earthquakes.

15/12/2022 Online

Age and Disability: A Blindspot in Policy Making?

The aim of this webinar, organised by the European Network on Independent Living, is to raise awareness on the topic of the intersectionality of disability and age. I spoke on this webinar about intersectionality of being young and being disabled.

Link <https://enil.eu/event/age-and-disability-a-blindspot-in-policy-making/>

22/10/2022 – 23/10/2022 Ankara

International Access to Justice Conference

The Association for Monitoring Equal Rights (AMER) hosted the International Access to Justice Conference on October 22-23, 2022, in Ankara as part of the project on "Strengthening Access to Justice for Disadvantaged Groups". The conference was hosted in partnership with the Union of Turkish Bar Associations and Atılım University.

Link <https://www.adaleteerisim.org/tr/duyuru/uluslararasi-adalete-erisim-konferansi>

26/02/2022 – 27/02/2022 Ankara

Association of Women with Disabilities Roundtable Meeting for PAKT Project

On 26-27 February 2022 Association of Women with Disabilities conducted a roundtable meeting with disabled people and their caregivers regarding the Personal Assistance as a Key Tool for Independent Living and Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities (PAKT) project. The majority of the participants were women. At the various sessions, participants discussed disability rights and the state of Independent Living (IL) and Personal Assistance (PA) in Turkey. Also, Kamil Goungor of ENIL and Kladija Poropat from Slovenia shared their PA experiences. After discussions, we got together in a working group to draft a Personal Assistance Policy Model.

I was invited to the meeting by the board member Dr. Ünal. The roundtable was a very educative and fun experience. Also, I met with prominent members of Turkey's disability community.

08/10/2020 – 09/10/2020 Online

5th Annual Cerebral Palsy Conference

In 2020 I joined the New England Cerebral Palsy Conference (first organized by James Cavanaugh) and served as a conference ambassador. Through this spectacular conference, I met great people and established great professional relationships within the American CP community.

Links <https://cerebralpalsyconference.org> | <https://cerebralpalsyconference.org/conference-ambassadors>

06/10/2019 Elazığ Bahçeşehir Science High School

World Cerebral Palsy Awareness Day Conference

On September 2019, I informed my high school's principal about World Cerebral Palsy. I demanded that the school's administration recognize its importance and give me the platform to inform&educate my peers about it. The principal accepted my demands. On October 6th, I gave a speech about being disabled and having Cerebral Palsy, supported by a slide show. To show solidarity, my teachers wore green clothes that day. It was the first time students engaged in that kind of activity. I believe it had a significant role in reversing the stigma I experienced in my local community as a disabled person.

VOLUNTEERING

03/03/2025 – 06/05/2025 United Nations Geneva Office

Legal Support Assistant to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

I am volunteering to support the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. I am attending the online day of general discussion on the rights of persons with disabilities to participate in political and public life on March 20, 2025, and I am engaging actively with the content. I am reviewing written contributions available on the Committee's webpage, carefully analyzing each submission to understand diverse perspectives. I am identifying the legal issues and challenges that are preventing persons with disabilities from fully exercising their right to participate in public and political life. Finally, I am preparing a comprehensive report detailing the legal issues and obstacles I am uncovering, contributing my insights to help pave the way for a more inclusive society.

Link <https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies/crpd>

01/10/2024 – CURRENT Ankara

Disabled Students' Committee Student Representative at SSUA

12/02/2024 – CURRENT Türkiye

Ageing and Disability Inclusion Task Team Member

Ageing and Disability Inclusion Task Team acts as a resource to the different coordination mechanisms and stakeholders to better mainstream the inclusion of persons with disabilities and older persons throughout the different humanitarian and development programming. I was elected as a member in February 2024, representing the Association of Women with Disabilities.

CREATIVE WORKS

20/02/2017

The City (Bu Şehir)

"The City" (original title: Bu Şehir) is the first poetry book I published in February 2017 in 7th grade. There are poems about love, peace, and disability in the book.

NETWORKS & MEMBERSHIPS

24/01/2023 – CURRENT International

European Law Students' Association-ELSA

The European Law Students' Association (ELSA) is an international, independent, non-political, non-profit, non-governmental organisation run by and for law students. ELSA activities comprise a large variety of academic and professional events that are organised to fulfill the stated vision of ELSA.

Link <https://www.elsa.org>

16/03/2022 – CURRENT Brussels

European Network on Independent Living

The European Network on Independent Living (ENIL) is a user-led network of disabled people, with members throughout Europe. ENIL is a forum for all disabled people, Independent Living organizations and their non-disabled allies on the issues of Independent Living. ENIL represents the disability movement for human rights and social inclusion based on solidarity, peer support, deinstitutionalization, democracy, self-representation, cross disability and self-determination. I am a full individual member and also a member of ENIL Youth.

Link <https://enil.eu/>

24/01/2022 – CURRENT Ankara

Association of Women with Disabilities

The Association of Women with Disabilities (ENG-KAD) was founded by a group of disabled women in 2011. It aims to draw attention to the multi-dimensional discrimination disabled women face for being women and being disabled together. The association embraces a human rights-based approach in its work. I became aware of the association when I saw their announcement about a webinar. After a couple of months, I turned 18 and had the legal right to be their member and filed my membership application on my birthday.

Link <https://www.engkad.org>

HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

US TV Shows

I started watching TV shows to improve my listening skills four years ago, and since then, I have been watching one or two episodes almost every day. It is an incredible tool for learning cultural aspects of a language and relaxing after a long day. I especially enjoy TV shows centering on a profession like medicine or law. My favorites are Grey's Anatomy, Suits and House.