

CLASH OF NORMS: THE LIMITS OF EU'S NORMATIVE POWER IN GENDER EQUALITY*

Sinem BAL**

Abstract

*The European Union's (EU) gender equality norms are an important part of the EU's identity, as enshrined in many formal documents. The scope of the EU's gender equality approach has been broadened by agents, including feminists, transnational advocacy groups, national women NGOs, feminists in the European Parliament, and the European women's lobby. Despite these European-based feminist agents' ideational contributions that challenge socially constructed gender inequalities, EU policies and *acquis* privilege women's empowerment in the labor market, instead of combatting gender-based discrimination in every sphere of life. This market-based equality paradigm can also be seen in the enlargement documents of Turkey-EU relations, in which both the progress reports and the financial assistance programmes-such as IPA- prioritize women's economic independence as a solution for altering socially-constructed gender roles in Turkey. Even though in feminist understanding-women's empowerment within the context of labor market approach lacks a conceptualization of gender equality as a human right, this paper aims to analyze the degree of EU's norm promoter role through transference diffusion in the female labor market participation. It is argued that due to the public institutions' entrenched resistance and the lack of consent at the local level for ideational change; the EU-driven norm clashes with the local realities of Turkey and this challenges the EU's potential normative power in terms of human rights norm promotion*

Keywords: *Gender Equality, EU-Turkey Relations, Normative Power, Women Empowerment, IPA Financial Assistance.*

* This article builds on the author's Ph.D. dissertation entitled "The EU as a Normative Power? The EU's Gender Equality Norm Diffusion in Turkey".

** Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Nottingham, School of Politics and International Relations, e-mail: sinem.bal@nottingham.ac.uk

NORMLARIN ÇATIŞMASI: AB'NİN TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYET EŞİTLİĞİNDEKİ NORMATİF GÜCÜNÜN SINIRLARI

Öz

Avrupa Birliği'nin (AB) toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği normu bir çok resmi dökümanın konu başlıkları arasında yer almasından dolayı, AB kimliğinin önemli parçalarından biri olarak kabul edilir. AB'nin toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği yaklaşımının alanı içerisinde feministler, ulusötesi savunma grupları, ulusal kadın sivil toplum örgütleri, Avrupa Parlamentosu'ndaki feministler ve Avrupa Kadın Lobisi gibi grupları içeren aktörlerce¹ genişletilmiştir. Avrupa temelli bu aktörlerin toplumsal olarak inşa edilmiş cinsiyet eşitsizliğine karşı çıkan düşünsel anlamdaki katkılarına rağmen, AB günlük hayatta cinsiyet temelli ayrımcılıkla mücadele etmek yerine kadının emek piyasasında güçlendirilmesini öncelikli tutan politikalar ve müktesebat geliştirmiştir. Bu piyasa temelli eşitlik paradigması aynı zamanda AB-Türkiye ilişkilerindeki ilerleme raporları ve kadının ekonomik bağımsızlığının Türkiye'de toplumsal olarak inşa edilmiş cinsiyet rollerini değiştirici bir çözüm olduğunu önceliğini taşıyan IPA finansal destek programları gibi genişleme dökümanlarında da gözükmektedir. Her ne kadar feminist anlayışta, kadının emek piyasasında güçlendirilmesi yaklaşımı toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğinin insan haklarının bir parçası olduğu kavramsallaştırmasında eksik kalsa da, bu çalışma AB'nin finansal destek aktarımı yoluyla kadınların emek piyasasına katılımındaki norm düzenleyici rolünü inceleyecektir. Çalışmada, kamu kurumlarının köklü karşı direnci ve yerel halkın normun beraberinde getirdiği düşünsel değişime karşı gösterdiği rızasızlığın, AB menşeli normların Türkiye'nin yerel gerçeklikleri ile çatıştığı ve AB'nin insan hakları bağlamında potansiyel bir normatif gücünü zorladığı iddia edilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Toplumsal Cinsiyet Eşitliği, AB-Türkiye İlişkileri, Normatif Güç, Kadının Güçlendirilmesi, IPA Finansal Destekleri.*

Introduction

In EU-Turkey relations, gender equality, along with other human rights and equality norms, is undoubtedly contentious. Within the context of the Normative Power Europe argument, an ideational change in gender equality may occur, when Turkish state transfers this norm into its domestic law, constitutionalizes and socializes it through proper policies. Turkey is expected to comply with these universally-driven human rights norms along with EU's procedural diffusion, which is actualized through normative justification. Indeed, before and during the accession process, Turkey implicitly accepted

¹ 'Agent' kavramının Türkçede tam karşılığı olmadığı için, burada 'aktör' olarak çevrilmiştir.

many universal values through signing international conventions, passing reform packages and constitutional amendments, for a specific or more limited period. These universal norms are considered as touchstones of the EU's 'identity' or 'self'; hence, if any 'other' wants to be a part of this 'self' then it should adopt and practice this identity and socialize these norms.

However, in order to diffuse the EU-driven gender equality norm in Turkey, the EU also transfers financial assistance to domestic agents to expedite the socialization of the transmitted norm in the local context. In addition to the procedural diffusion's conditionality in gender equality, Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) that addresses to all local agents and European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) funding for civil society actors are provided by the EU as another alternative source to ameliorate inequalities. By doing this, apart from the state's effort in socialization, the EU enables these domestic actors both to make the local familiar with the new norm and associates with civil society to pressure on the state for compliance of the EU conditionality.

In the financial assistances, EIDHR fund is allocated to the women NGOs for awareness raising activities on women rights; whereas in the IPA funding gender equality has not been implemented in every sector but is limited to the education, violence and mostly employment. Although women's economic independence alone is not enough to combat against any gender-based discrimination in society, taking this EU-driven norm into account, it is crucial to scrutinize the role and capacity of IPA funding in socializing the equal opportunities for men and women in the labor market. This paper aims to explain the EU's normative power, if any, through this transference diffusion; how the domestic agents properly conduct women empowerment in the labor market projects and the response of the local to the EU-driven norms.

In order to unravel the extent of NPE with in social constructivist perspective, interviews with the local agents that completed IPA funded projects are made. Interviews are important to understand social construction of the gender equality norm through project completion, the projects' sustainability, the limits of the diffusion and obstacles facing in socialization and internalization of gender equality norm. Between the years 2007-2013², the EU directly endorsed 250 beneficiaries from both public institutions and civil society, which completed 300 projects in several realms. Of these, a representative sample of 15 beneficiaries that completed more than one women's employment project were selected as the interviewees. They were selected for interview, considering their EU project experiences, the size of

² Especially this timespan is preferred as to reveal the sustainability of the completed projects.

their grant, and regional distribution of the fund. In the thematic issues the projects that received financial assistance more than others are preferred, but due to some of the beneficiaries' hesitation over giving an interview, other beneficiaries are also considered. In this field research, semi-structured interviews were preferred and the questions were formulated to determine the EU's normative influence, public institutions' attitudes, civil societies' struggles, and the degree of ideational change in terms of gender equality. Open-ended questions were used, requiring lengthier responses than one-word answers. The open-ended method enabled to learn more about beneficiaries' intention on the EU project applications, the struggles of the beneficiaries, and sustainability of the outcomes. The interviews were conducted between 2015 January to July 2017. Interviews with local agents in Ankara, Diyarbakır and Kayseri were done via Skype, two interviews were done in Istanbul via face to face conversations and interviews with the local agents in Hakkari, Erzincan, Hatay, Tokat, Van, Rize, Bayburt, Çorum, Bingöl and Elazığ were done by phone calls.

Pouvoir Normatif in Action through Transference Diffusion

Ian Manners' Normative power Europe (NPE) is characterised by the EU's use of common principles, in which the EU intentionally or unintentionally aims to legitimize 'normal' and create an ideational change in third parties' *status quo*. By considering ideational change as the expected effect, Manners locates the NPE argument among other power definitions: "idée force, power over opinion, or ideological power" (Manners, 2002, p.239). These approaches, which are far from state-centric interests, are not only derived from the EU's historical background but also products of the United Nations and the European Charter of Human Rights (Diez, 2005). The EU, then, integrated them into the Union's identity construction while simultaneously contributing to and consolidating the United Nations Charter's principles.

Manners shows off EU's normative power by giving Turkey's abolition of the death penalty as an example, because Turkey accepted and internalized this universal human rights norm by re-arranging its judicial system. Here, an ideational change occurs when judicial system started to be implemented and state practices related policies, hence the transmitted human rights norm sustains lifelong and taken for granted by the society. Manners defines this 'power' in terms of EU actions and their effects. As he indicates, this type of power is called *pouvoir*, which is the normative form of power based on EU's performance in practice. In considering internalization of a human rights norm as one impact of EU actions, it is, then, plausible to clarify the *pouvoir* normatif of the EU by looking at its external relations. This French word *pouvoir* helps "to examine in more detail the different mechanisms of normative power as a vehicle for wielding influence" (Forsberg, 2011, p. 1191). *Pouvoir normatif* in

action happens in two ways: by conditionality clauses through normative justification and by grassroots engagement where the EU financially supports the local public institutions and NGOs in particular cases.

Normative justification is embodied by principles appear through actions that have impacts to influence the principles that produces an on-going mutual constitutiveness. In the external relations, normative justification is reified within procedural diffusion, in which the EU diffuses its internal norm as external to create legal and institutional change in the target country. For instance in the enlargement process, procedural diffusion is derived from accession criteria that the candidate country is conditioned to fulfil. Through this conditionality, the EU aims to legitimize the transmitted norm whereas the candidate state is expected to respond and implement progress reports and accession partnership documents.

Financial assistances- technically designated as Transference Diffusion by Manners- on the other hand, is based on material incentives in which the EU sponsors new norms by funding the projects that are conducted by the target state's local agents. Hereby, the EU engages in the construction of 'force for good', not only by diffusing moral norms but also by applying irreversible material resources. Hence, "ideational and material forms of power come together in explaining the peculiarities of the EU's normative power in Europe" (Haukkala, 2007, p. 3).

In the enlargement process, the EU's norms are supposed to be socialized by actor constellation composed of candidate state, national NGOs and public bodies. When the government can not or does not socialize the norm properly, the EU engages in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local public institutions through financial assistances, which are composed of 'Instruments for Pre-accession' (IPA I and IPA II) and 'European instrument for Democracy and Human Rights' (EIDHR). Through these financial assistances, the local agents are obliged to produce projects to socialize the norm at the local level. Their project methodology should contain as sustainability strategy as to internalize the norm at the local level and create an ideational change against the existing status quo. However not every norm is internalized as such a specific time nor is the local bureaucracy always keen to legitimize it. This might be because local does not consent to the new norm and stigmatize it as contrary to their culture or due to the government's negative influence and pressure on local public institutions about the new norm. In this circumstance NPE argument becomes questionable and contentious in constructing 'normal'.

The Scope of Gender Equality in the Instrument for Pre-Accession

Since the year 1999, when Turkey gained a candidate state status for the EU membership, Turkey and the EU have been conferring on various economic, political and legal adjustment as to harmonize and converge Turkey with the EU standards. As a condition, gender equality is covered in the Employment and Social Policy Chapter within the context of equal opportunities for men and women, whereas women's rights are considered in political criteria's human rights title. The main aim of this diffusion is to reform candidate states' existing ill-functioning and incompatible parts and to promulgate a normative influence, which in turn would produce long or short-term changes in the architecture of the candidate state. The implications might range from epochal transformations like the abolition of the death penalty to limited changes in social policy. In the misapplication of the norms, the EU expresses its inconvenience in the progress reports and specific other policy documents, or with its bureaucrats' discourses.

The regulation concerning pre-accession financial assistance for Turkey entered into force in December 2001. The purpose of this framework was to simplify procedures for programming and implementing the conditioned priorities for local authorities and NGOs. Beginning in 2007, Turkey received EU financial aid under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), which provides financial assistance to candidate and potential candidate countries. The aim of IPA assistance is to support the achievement of EU pre-accession strategy goals, as described in the Accession Partnership Document (APD) and constantly mentioned in the progress reports. Based on the priorities of the APD, the Secretariat General for EU Affairs on the Turkish side, and the European Commission Delegation and European Commission Enlargement on the EU side, formulate strategies as to which projects will be supported with EU funds.

IPA funding 2007-2013 (IPA I) is based on five different components:

- Transition Assistance and institution building
- Cross-border cooperation (with EU member states and other countries eligible for IPA)
- Regional development (transport, environment, regional, and economic development)
- Human resources (strengthening human capital and combating exclusion)
- Rural development

In addition, EU-funded projects support a functioning market economy and increased competitiveness; the adoption, implementation, and enforcement of

EU legislation; civil society dialogue between the EU and Turkey; and preparation for managing structural Funds. The sectors that the EU gives funding for are agriculture, food, fisheries, and rural development; business environment; social policy (education, health, culture, employment); environment, transport, and energy; public administration, reform, and governance; justice, home affairs, and fundamental rights (including civil society); diversification and development of rural economic activities; investments in processing and marketing of agricultural and fishery products; restructuring agricultural holdings.

In terms of gender equality, through the use of IPA funding, the public institutions and women's NGOs can increase gender mainstreaming, which is a strategy and analyses how gender relations are shaped and constructed by the social roles of women and men (Lister, 2006). It also emphasizes the roles of both women and men in planning and incorporating the development agenda into the IPA for candidate countries, like Turkey. The EU has provided more than €36 million to support gender mainstreaming programmes aimed at promoting gender equality, strengthening women's NGO networks, combating violence against women, supporting women's entrepreneurship, and this funding towards on-going or planned projects with the following objectives:

- Empowerment of women and women's NGOs in least developed regions by incorporating a gender sensitive approach into the service provision policies of government organizations, local administrations, and NGOs, and improving their organizational and technical capacities
- Promoting gender equality in working life to address gaps in labour and social security legislation as well as improving staff competence in institutions.
- Promoting women's employment by increasing the capacity to design and implement effective labour market measures
- Strengthening pre-school education and increasing enrolment rates to help promote women's participation in the workforce through improved childcare services
- Increasing enrolment rates for girls in secondary education and vocational training, reducing drop-out rates, and raising parents' awareness of the importance of education, especially for girls.

Direct Funding titles in the Central Finance and Contracts Unit's project database:

- Empowerment of women and women NGOs in the least developed regions
- Increasing School Enrolment rates especially for girls

- Promoting Women's employment
- Strengthening Capacity of National and Local NGOs on Combating Against Violence Grant Scheme

Indirectly:

- Civil Society Dialogue Program
- Civil Society Dialogue III - Political Criteria Grant Scheme
- Developing Civil Dialogue among CSOs grant scheme
- Developing Civil Dialogue among NGOs

The legal entities that can benefit from this financial support are mostly universities, public institutions (municipalities, special provincial administration, unions for providing services for villages, vocational high schools, and public training centres) and non-governmental organizations (chambers of commerce and industry, trade associations, cooperatives, associations, foundations, federations, and clubs).

This financial support helped to disseminate gender awareness, female labour market participation, representation of women in politics, and the fight against gender-based violence. A range of civil society organizations were the main addressees that would provide gender awareness activities and increase pluralism by respecting cultural diversity. This financial assistance included transfers of material and immaterial assets, such technical assistance, "but it is equally likely to be the result of more 'grassroot' engagement of EU agencies and support for NGOs on the ground" (Manners and Whitman, 2013, p. 191). There is more that can be done through public policy and transference to facilitate greater numbers of value interpreters.

The Limits of Constructing 'Normal' in Local Realities

In terms of procedural diffusion, EU-driven gender equality norm should primarily be socialized by the government. In Turkey, the Justice and Development Party (AK Party or AKP) government is considered as a liberal, moderate Islamist party. This synthesis has tended towards a more conservative party ideology, in which the discourses of state leaders, party policies, and the government's distant relations with rights-based NGOs specify the place of women in the society. In their conservative policies, women continued to be coded along with family and motherhood, and apart from some specific areas such as family violence, government does not necessarily endorse women's economic dependency or shaping and equality for men and women. Hence, in the procedural diffusion the EU as a condition-maker could have acted more

prescriptive and force the government to implement the gender equality norms more properly.

Through the norm socialization with the EU financial assistance, on the other, one of the potential challenges facing local agents, especially rights-based women's NGOs, is that "the woman is viewed as the mechanism for protecting the cultural boundaries that set the community apart from other societies" (Baç-Müftüler, 1999, p. 305). While diffusing the norm locally, cooperation among local actors, such as women's NGOs, municipalities, and universities in cities, are crucial because these agents boost ideational change in terms of equality between men and women. According to Mühlenhoff (2014), especially rights-based and service-based NGOs acknowledge the EU as a material endowment that fosters their training activities and acts as a service association. Rights-based NGOs are agents that raise awareness and advocate a specific human rights norm in the society, whereas service-based NGOs provide social services in those areas where social policies are not properly implemented by the state. Rights-based NGOs use this financial assistance for moral justification, where justifiability is essential for legitimation because people legitimize a new norm when it is justified in terms of their beliefs, values, standards, and normative expectations (Aydın-Düzgit, 2018).

In doing so, rights-based NGOs, which view rights as an ongoing product of political struggle, have become the essential addressee when the state is reluctant or local people resist ideational change. Hence, it is important to establish a right-claiming civil society that can ultimately lead to right-getting mechanisms. In line with EU standards, a Law on Associations entered into force in Turkey in November 2004, since when increasing numbers of NGOs have been established. According to Usul (2011), the reason for the rise of women associations in the public space is the government's desire to show the EU that it is taking steps towards consolidating democracy. Accordingly, at the local level, municipalities are the agents that people can easily reach or benefit from their services. Municipalities-as develops more reliability when compared with NGOs-can mainstream gender equality through training activities, workshops, outreach programs, specific meetings, and establishing equality bodies and shelters.

Both these local agents were benefitted from EIDHR and IPA grants and conducted projects between 2007 and 2013. They are composed of 250 institutions running 300 projects. However, the EU's transference diffusion in terms of women empowerment in labour market is only allocated by the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) funding. Among these beneficiaries, a representative sample of 15 were selected for interview, whom were conducted female labour market participation projects by using IPA funding. According to

Central Finance and Contract Unit's (CFCU) data, the amount of the funding and the beneficiary categories are as follows;

- 714.932 € was transferred to Public Training Centres
- 920.474 € was transferred to Cooperatives
- 1.047.290 € was transferred to Special provincial Administration
- 1.199.607 € was transferred to Vocational High Schools
- 1.671.600 € was transferred to Universities
- 2.365.288 € was transferred to Public and Private Unions
- 2.868.432 € was transferred to Chambers
- 3.479.055 € was transferred to Municipalities
- 16.213.391 € was transferred to Rights-based and Service-based NGOs

Financial assistance in terms of gender equality was given in three areas:

- promotion of women's rights and violence against women,
- female labour market participation
- political participation.

Of these, the great amount of the financial assistance was given to women empowerment in the economic realm and vocational training projects. Apart from some of the right-based NGOs' human rights-based projects, rest of the beneficiaries had been conducted activities that aimed to increase female labor market participation.

Beneficiary/City	Subject
Civil Society Organization	
KAGIDER (Women Entrepreneurs Association)/ İstanbul	Employment
Anatolian Development and Education Association/ Elazığ	Employment
Olive Branch Women Cooperative/ Ankara	Employment
TEPAV (The Economic and Policy Research Foundation/Ankara	Employment
Hitit Academy Association/ Çorum	Employment
Semi NGO-Semi Public Institutions	
Chamber of Industry/ Bayburt	Employment
Chamber Chamber of Industry and Commerce/ Bingöl	Employment
Central Anatolia Development Association / Kayseri	Employment
Public Institutions	
Yüksekova Municipality/ Hakkari	Employment
Bağlar Municipality/ Diyarbakır	Employment
Special Provincial Administration/ Erzincan	Employment
Samandağ Union for Providing Services for Villages/ Hatay	Employment
Nıksar Public training Center/ Tokat	Employment
Çay Vocational High School (Vocational School of Health)/ Rize	Employment
Yüzüncü Yıl University /Van	Employment

The interviews shed a light on the achievements and difficulties in carrying out projects, the degree of local consent, the legitimacy of the newly-transmitted EU gender equality norm and the potential sustainability of the outcomes. Before the interviews, the contents and the categories of the selected projects were analysed to better grasp the context of the EU's funding of these institutions. It was predicted before the interviews that the larger the grant received, then the more that norm would be socialized at the local level. During the interviewee selections, if the targeted interviewee could not be reached, other beneficiaries were selected, although the amount of the financial assistance was lower than the previous one.

Transference Diffusion to Increase Women's Employment

The greatest EU financial assistance was given to women's employment projects as the prevalent assumption of both the EU and service-based NGOs is that women's economic independence can reduce gender inequality. The agents build their projects through vocational training activities, which not only transfers technical knowledge but also actively socializes people in the given norm (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). From state bureaucracy to local councils, these beneficiaries and their training programs aim to generate more professional staff and aware individuals on gender mainstreaming. States may

be unwilling to fulfil the expected norm through legal implementations and policy developments so EU-funded projects are available tools to close this administrative gap. These local actors are also local epistemic actors at various levels, and new subjects of the socialization process who actively try to promote EU norms and practices for several reasons. They offer technical solutions and employment opportunities for local women who have never experienced being an employee or are excluded from the labour market. According to TUIK data on women's employment, before the allocation of financial assistance started, women's overall employment rate in terms of marital status was 27.8% and in terms of education the average was 31.2%. In Turkey, approximately 31% of working-age women are economically active whereas the rest are inactive, unregistered workers, or housewives. Of the working women, most are educated and single because "women's status in Turkey is the most distinctive area to examine employment, in which women are almost mostly invisible" (Dedeoğlu, 2013, p. 5).

Five of the 15 beneficiaries of EU women's employment financial assistance are NGOs that mostly conduct projects on societal issues, including women in poverty. According to them, the common problems of these local women are the struggle against poverty, social oppression in terms of honour, and emotional labour, all of which exclude women from the labour market. The project coordinators argue that EU project priorities do not meet the requirements of local women, although NGOs and other public institutions write and conduct these projects to improve women's professional skills at least. Another common problem these NGOs face, except TEPAV, is the municipalities' attitudes on gender equality or women's empowerment projects. Municipalities act pragmatically and envisage the local approach to newly-transmitted norm before carrying out EU-funded projects. For instance, most do not want to participate in violence against women projects in order to avoid complaints from male voters. However, women's empowerment projects for employment and entrepreneurship need a public institution partner to introduce the project, reach more of the target group, and sustain the outcomes.

Menşure Işık, the project coordinator of Olive Branch Women Cooperative, said that many local agents cannot maintain EU projects because their priorities do not match their NGO framework or because of bureaucratic and technical liabilities. According to Işık, the EU should tackle the gender equality issue more in the context of women's empowerment because this would ameliorate many of the struggles that women in poor regions face, including violence. In their projects, women in Ankara's tenement districts received a professional skill in at least one specialization, even though many women provide their own source of income. Having a job empowers them ideationally. Like the Olive Branch Cooperative, TEPAV also conducts women's empowerment projects in

the poor districts of Amasya in conjunction with Amasya Municipality. Ülker Şener, the project coordinator, noted that women in tenement districts share similar problems that are intensified by poverty and class identity. Even poverty itself has a gender. TEPAV conducted projects for home-based working women. Although home-based work prevents the socialization potential of these women, they work part-time due to their child-care work and preference to be independent workers. However, if the household's income is enough, they prefer not to work. On the other hand, many of these women receive a vocational training certificate but have no awareness about the importance of this document or prefer to work in gender-segregated jobs, such as bakeries.

Amasya is a conservative place. The municipality was involved in many women's empowerment activities and endorsed these women while getting a job. However these jobs were gender-segregated jobs because their local culture allows women to work in specific areas, not more. The main obstacle in the norm's diffusion is the lack of any women's NGO or small/loose groups of women organizing. For instance, there is no shelter in Amasya because the culture considers violence as a private matter. Although violence is a common problem worldwide, employment varies. (Ülker Şener).

In women's entrepreneurship, the Hitit Academy Association, the Anatolian Development and Education Association, and KAGİDER emphasized the need to inform and encourage women on how to further their entrepreneurial capacities. In contrast to the first two associations, KAGİDER, being İstanbul based, took a liberal feminist approach by establishing special links with the private sector and the EU women's lobby. Due to their far-reaching relations with several national and international agents, KAGİDER carries out neoliberal economic projects in which they encourage women to participate in the labor market as entrepreneurs rather than dependent workers. They train wealthier local women in budget management and service economy principles. They create networks with these women and many of their projects are completed successfully. Regarding sustainability, they continue links with these women as long as they are involved in working life, while they also monitor the gender mainstreaming strategies of large companies.

In contrast, the Hitit Academy Association and the Anatolian Development and Education Association are small, local NGOs that were established for different purposes. Although gender equality is not their priority, they conduct entrepreneur projects to create awareness in the society. Both NGOs have encountered problems in their conservative regions in that women's empowerment efforts did not resonate at the local level. Consequently, the sustainability of the project outcomes was weak. The Hitit Academy's project

aimed to ameliorate peasant women's conditions and serving styles in market places. Peasant women were trained in how to sell their products according to more appropriate modern standards. However, during the project, the association had struggles with Çorum Municipality, which hindered the process due to electoral concerns that local people might consider it as being the EU's public speaker. Municipality hesitated to join the project and signed a protocol with the association in which the association guaranteed it would not demand any funds from the municipality during or after the project. However, such regional, small-scale civil societies need municipality support for sustainable outcomes and norm internalization.

There is a difference between metropolitan and Anatolian municipalities. Anatolian municipalities still have the rural culture. Women's employment is linked with the concept of honour whereas Istanbul municipality consider women's empowerment projects as a contributing to women in Istanbul and prestige for the municipality. Besides, Anatolian municipalities categorize NGOs and acknowledge them as suspicious agents in their purposes. Hence, the EU's universal aims in norm diffusion do not get consent at the local level because these projects do not explicitly fit local people's approach (Dr. Ahmet Mutlu, project coordinator).

Similarly, the Anatolian Development and Education Association aimed to train women to produce grapes for sale in the central markets of Elazığ. However according to the project coordinator, Osman Akarçay, the conservative attitudes of Elazığ people prevented women from joining the project. For instance, their husbands would not allow them to participate. This conservatism could also be seen in the municipality's discouraging approach, which made the projects unsustainable. In addition, the lack of commerce and investment in the city impeded further projects. Ultimately, the women who participated in the project were trained but then returned home.

Bayburt Chamber of Industry and Bingöl Chamber of Industry and Commerce, which are both semi-public and semi-civil society organizations, conducted EU-funded projects to empower women in the public sphere. In these cities, the project coordinators aimed to improve social and economic inclusion for subordinated women, whose husbands or other male family member seclude them from the society. According to Önder Karaoğlu, Head of the Bayburt Chamber of Industry, women should join the common-mind of the locality. However, the cultural codes of the society and political discourse that endorses women's oppression reinforce women's lack of self-confidence. On the other hand, as he stressed, violence against women in Bayburt is not high because of a belief in the sacredness of motherhood rather than individual

rights. The target group of Bayburt Chamber of Industry's project was mothers, who are considered the essential addressee to counter gender discrimination. Using a diverse actor constellation, including NGOs, academicians, and private institutions, Bayburt Chamber trained more than 2,000 women in the textile sector and informed both men and women participants about gender equality, women's rights, and the importance of women's employment. Nevertheless, few of the women participants were subsequently able to find jobs.

Like Bayburt's project, Bingöl Chamber of Industry and Commerce also trained women in the local textile sector. Bingöl is also a city where women's unemployment is high because of the conservative society and male family members' seclusion of women and their lack of occupational experience. Regarding the sustainability of these projects, only 2 or 3 % of participants gained employment. According to the project coordinator, Netice İnak, women in these small places need a promoter to increase their visibility in the society. According to İnak, although EU financial assistance provides an opportunity for improving women's social inclusion, these projects or financial assistance do not guarantee the sustainability of registered employment. Given that many of these women work in the informal sector, the EU should institute a monitoring and auditing mechanism.

The circumstances were different regarding EU financial assistance for Yüksekova Municipality in Hakkari and Bağlar Municipality in Diyarbakır. Both localities are governed by the People's Democratic Party (Halkların Demokrasi Partisi-HDP)/Democratic Regions Party (Demokratik Bölgeler Partisi),³ which is a leftist party with policies supporting gender equality.⁴ Thus, despite these localities' conservative characteristics and high levels of honour killings and forced marriage cases, the two municipalities consolidated a gender equality approach that aimed to reach EU standards. They benefitted from many EU grants to provide empowerment opportunities for women. Yüksekova Municipality's project coordinator, Siddık Karagöz, noted that women in the locality do not work or even do not socialize, being dependent on male family members. Therefore, to socialize these women, the municipality implemented a women's employment project for women already doing handiwork. The project envisaged making the products more market-orientated and encouraging these women to become artisans. Although the project was conducted in cooperation with public and semi-public organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce and public training centres, only 10% of the women became artisans. The other participants either continued to stay at home or worked informally. However, according to Karagöz, women's subordination has gradually decreased in the

³ The Project Coordinator used the People's Democratic Party and Democratic Regions Party interchangeably.

⁴ More information can be found here: <http://www.hdp.org.tr/parti/parti-tuzugu/10>

region due to an increase in girl's schooling and the People's Democratic Party's (HDP) stance on gender equality. While the EU has had a partial influence, it has been the region's political consciousness that has promoted ideational change. That is, HDP's leftist ideology has shaped the normative justification to legitimize the gender equality norm locally.

Similarly, Diyarbakır Bağlar Municipality conducted a very specific project to tackle women's empowerment and eliminate gender segregation. Among the EU-funded projects, this was particularly designed to create ideational change in gender-segregated jobs. Even though driving jobs are usually associated with men in Turkey, the Bağlar municipality project trained 30 women for the class E heavy vehicle driving license, of whom 15 started work for several Diyarbakır county municipalities as bus drivers, and 90 women for the class B driving license, of whom some became taxi drivers in the city. According to Funda İpek, the project coordinator, although the idea of gender equality was strengthened in the region, challenges still exist because there are many disadvantaged women in South-eastern Turkey who are excluded from social life and labour market, or work unregistered.

We want to break down the prejudices and perceptions in the working areas attributed to men. If it is said that a woman could not be a heavy vehicle driver then she would never tend to see her potential. We wanted to show these women that they can enter a certain type of employment that men and women can equally enjoy in practice (Funda İpek).

The remaining six public institution interviewees were a high school, public training centre, university, development union, special provincial administration, and a services union. All carried out vocational training projects focusing jobs that were gender segregated due to the local patriarchal structure of constructed gendered roles. For instance, husbands do not let their wives work, especially alongside other men. As the project conductors were public institutions, unlike the case of NGOs, they partially benefitted from other public institutions' support. Some of them, such as the special provincial administration, even received a micro-credit assistance from the governorship to promote the outcome's sustainability. The common narrative of these institutions is that although the disadvantaged women participants were enthusiastic about vocational training, almost none could find jobs. Nevertheless, these projects enabled the women to become socialized in the public sphere and gain self-confidence. Yet some of the interviewees such as academician Kenan Gülle (Van Yüzüncü Yıl University) reported that the projects should have re-arranged by considering the local's cultural context, otherwise women would not participate into the activities. According to him, the projects would be sustained when the gender equality issue is on the

government's agenda. He also noted that women's employment should not deteriorate women's 'motherhood role', which is sacred and should be sustained. Because women empowerment subverts the family cohesion.

On the other hand, technical problems continued to appear in the process. For instance, Murat Çelik, coordinator of the Special Provincial Administration project, and Hakan Yiğit, coordinator of Central Anatolia Development Union, both reported that municipalities did not participate the projects as EU procedures conflicted with Ministry of Finance regulations. The EU's imposition of its own regulations can paralyze a project. Hence, the inter-institutional network was weak during the implementation, so the project's outcomes were not long-lasting. Local agents did not aim to diffuse the new norm and were unaware about the transmitted norm. Hence, the projects barely influenced a limited group because local people and public institutions were reluctant to accept ideational change.

It can be understood from the interviews that when the state hesitates to socialize the norm from national to local, local people remain unaware of this newly-transmitted norm, and do not consent to any direct EU gender equality norm, because the norm clashes with their structured cultural codes. Such individuals do not see themselves as part of these European values and its collective identity. After the completion of the projects, they still are insufficiently aware that any violation of women means a violation of human rights. In conservative localities and in the AKP government, women are not seen as independent individuals; rather, women's subordination is believed to be normal. On the other hand, norm's local internalization is incomplete due to the lack of support from local public agents – especially municipalities. One reason is the dominance of leading positions by men, who do not necessarily consider norm change in terms of gender roles. Especially in conservative localities, mayors do not want to lose local support and seek to work compatibly with the cultural context. They follow the same ideology as the central government and prefer not to contradict party ideology. Hence, it is important to encourage women's political participation in municipal and parliamentary elections, and increase the number of the femocrats and women MPs.

Conclusion

Norms are of abstract quality and it is hard to observe the actual normative change in one state's *status quo*. One method that might help to detect the new norm transition is to observe practices of the norm-receiver state. If the state accepts and socializes the transmitted norm through developing policies and amending its domestic law, then it can be argued that the norm sender has a normative power, as it changed the ideas at the national level. Nevertheless, this

does not mean the local unmitigatedly internalize this new norm, which means a normative role of the norm-sender agent is uncertain, unless local consents for its justification.

However, Ian Manner argues that the EU has a normative power in its external relations because it promotes universal norms based on moral and normative justifications to shape the normal in the global politics. This NPE role conception of Manners is a highly contested issue, as the concept itself is too categorical and depends on specific cases in EU actions. According to Manners, one of the EU's most prominent norm promoter role can be seen in Turkey's accession process because, in order to fulfil the EU's conditionality on human rights, Turkey has abolished the death penalty and amended its constitution and legal system regarding other critical human rights issues. He argues that such role of the EU means, it creates an ideational change in Turkey in terms of human dignity because Turkey legitimized the 'normal'. Indeed, NPE approach overburdens the EU and conditions it to act consistently, which leaves no margin for error. On the other hand, this approach and its exemplifications based on specific cases whereas there are other human rights issues that are interwoven with complex realities in which the EU falls short to have an influence, such as gender equality.

Through procedural and transference diffusion channels, the EU aimed to promote its gender equality norm, which includes the EU's own internal gender norms and universal principles. Through the procedural diffusion, Turkey accepted gender equality norm and committed to socialize it within specific time periods in its national programs. With the onset of the negotiation process since 2005, Turkish woman policy makers, academicians, and the women's movement have further impetus to overcome the stalemates in gender equality. Besides, in order to strengthen local services for women and mainly to mainstream the gender equality idea, the EU transfers financial assistance to local agents to legitimize its gender equality norms. However, enduring implementation of gender equality norms requires political coherence supported by political transformation through reforms that create an environment to construct the new transmitted norm. It can also be said that EU funding of Turkish civil society has enabled the public to become more aware of violations of human rights and pressure governments to affirm their commitment to these norms to maintain legitimacy. Yet, the norm's socialization process hardly impelled to local internalization due to various problems hindering the norm construction. NGOs directly encountered municipality obstructionism as well as local people's unwillingness to consent to the EU-driven norm. Moreover, NGOs constantly found that EU priorities did not meet the exact requirements of their localities because EU norms were sometimes considered counterfactual by local people. This suggests that it is unrealistic to create ideational change in

the target country without comprehensively supporting a rights-based civil society.

Hence, social construction of gender equality knowledge clashes with the social reality of the local based on patriarchy. However, this reality also socially constructed through a collective process, and mutual construction of gender equality in the local needs extra mechanisms. It is overt that there is a capability and expectation gap of the EU that degrades the EU's credibility. As to be called a normative power in gender equality, the EU *should* re-develop its gender equality conditionality and diffusion methods for candidate countries because, in its procedural diffusion, the EU is lack in pressuring states to shape the normal in gender equality and does not exert sufficient effort to develop extra mechanisms between the state's norm socialization and local internalization. It can therefore be concluded that there are the following important obstacles to norm socialization and internalization: the reluctance of state and local public institutions, insufficient NGO capacity, lack of investment in Turkey, local discontent regarding the EU's norm, and the content of the transmitted EU-driven norm.

References:

- Aydin-Düzgüt, S. (2018) "Legitimizing Europe in Contested Settings: Europe as a Normative Power in Turkey?", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 56(3): 612-627.
- Baç-Müftüler, M. (1999) "Turkish women's predicament", *Women's studies International Forum*, 22(3): 303-315.
- Council of Europe (1998) "Gender mainstreaming: Conceptual framework, methodology and presentation of good practices", Final report of Activities of the Group of Specialists on Mainstreaming, Strasbourg: Council of Europe.
- Dedeoğlu, S. (2012) "Türkiye'de Refah Devleti, Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Kadın İstihdamı" in Dedeoğlu, Saniye and Adem Yavuz Elveren (eds.). *Türkiye'de Refah Devleti ve Kadın*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık).
- Dedeoğlu, S. (2013) "Veiled Europeanization of Welfare State in Turkey: Gender and Social Policy in the 2000", *Women Studies International Forum*, (41): 7-13.
- Diez, T. (2005) "Constructing the Self and Changing Others: Reconsidering 'Normative Power Europe'", *Millennium-Journal of International Studies*, 33(3): 613-636.
- Eerdewijk, A. van and Roggeband, C. (2014) "Gender Equality Norm Diffusion and Actor Constellations: A First Exploration", in Anna van der Vleuten, Anouka van Eerdewijk and Conny Roggeband (eds.), *Gender Equality Norms in Regional Governance: Transnational Dynamics in Europe, South America and Southern Africa*, (UK: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Elveren, A. Y. (2018) "The Transformation of Regime and Gender Inequality in Turkey", a chapter in "*Brain Drain and Gender Inequality in Turkey*". Palgrave Pivot, Cham
- Finnemore, M. (1996) "Constructing Norms of Humanitarian Intervention", Peter J., (eds.), "*The culture of national security: Norms and identity in world politics*", (Columbia: Columbia University Press).
- Finnemore, M. and Sikkink, K. (1998) "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change", *International Organization*, 52 (4): 887-917.
- Forsberg, T. (2011) "Normative power Europe, once again: a conceptual analysis of an ideal type", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 49(6): 1183-1204.
- Haukkala, H. (2007) "A normative power or a normative hegemon? The EU and its European Neighbourhood Policy", A paper in EUSA 10th Biennial Conference in Montreal, Canada, 17-19 May 2007, Panel Session 9I: Normative Power Europe II: Global Perspectives.

- Haukkala, H. (2011) "The European Union as a Regional Normative Hegemon: The Case of European Neighbourhood Policy" in Richard G. Whitman, *Normative Power Europe: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Kardam, N. (2004) "The emerging global gender equality regime from neoliberal and constructivist perspectives in international relations", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 6(1): 85-109.
- Lister R. M. (2006) "Gender and European Union Development Policy" in Maurizio Carbone and Marjone R. Lister (eds), *New Pathways in International Development: Gender and Civil Society in EU Policy*, (Ashgate Publishing: Hampshire, UK).
- Manners, I. (2002) "Normative power Europe: a contradiction in terms?", *JCMS: Journal of common market studies*, 40(2): 235-258.
- Manners, I. (2006) "The constitutive nature of values, images and principles in the European Union", in Sonia Lucarelli and Ian Manners, (eds) "*Values and principles in European Union foreign policy*", (New York: Routledge).
- Manners, I. (2015) "The European Union in global politics: normative power and longitudinal interpretation", Kennett Lynggaard, Ian Manners and Karl Löfgren (eds), *Research methods in European Union studies*", (UK: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Manners, I. and Whitman, R. (2013) "Normative power and the future of EU public diplomacy", in Davis K. Mai'a and Jan Melissen (eds.), *European Public Diplomacy: Soft power at Work*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Mühlenhoff, H. (2014) "Funding democracy, funding social services? The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights in the context of competing narratives in Turkey", *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, 16(1): 102-118.
- Pető, A. and Manners, I. (2006) "The European Union and the value of gender equality. Values and principles in European Union foreign policy", pp: 97-113.
- Political Reforms in Turkey (2007) <<http://www.ab.gov.tr/files/pub/prt.pdf>>.
- TUIK (2008) "Female Labour Market Participation", <<http://rapory.tuik.gov.tr/06-06-2018-00:41:15-180779740244231502443636807.pdf>>, (9 September 2017).
- TUIK database on Women Labour Force in terms of Education <<http://rapory.tuik.gov.tr/06-07-2018-00:15:50-14053744851102485507387931202.html>>, (5 November 2017).
- TUIK database on Women Labour Force in terms of Marital Status, <<http://rapory.tuik.gov.tr/06-07-2018-00:17:43-18570489861763624625574584374.html>>, (5 November 2017).

- TUIK guideline on Statistical Indicators 1923-2011, <www.tuik.gov.tr/IcerikGetir.do?istab_id=158>, (7 August 2018).
- TUIK (2013) "Gender Statistics 2013", <<http://kasaum.ankara.edu.tr/files/2013/02/Toplumsal-Cinsiyet-Đstatistikleri-2013-TUĐK.pdf>>, (9 September 2017).
- TUIK (2014) "Gender Statistics 2014", <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/Kitap.do?metod=KitapDetay&KT_ID=11&KITAP_ID=294>, (9 September 2017).
- Turkstat (2013) http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=1013 (9 September 2017).
- Usl, Ali R. (2011) *Democracy in Turkey: the impact of EU political conditionality*, (New York: Routledge).

Interviews

- Anatolian Development and Education Association (Elazığ), Interview with Osman Akarçay, June 2017
- Bağlar Municipality (Diyarbakır), Interview with Funda İpek, January 2015
- Central Anatolia Development Association (Kayseri), Interview with Hakan Yiğit, February 2015
- Chamber of Industry (Bayburt), Interview with Önder Karaoğlu, May 2017
- Chamber Chamber of Industry and Commerce (Bingöl), Interview with Netice İnak, July 2017
- Çay Vocational High School and Vocational School of Health (Rize), Interview with İsmail Koç, June 2017
- Hitit Academy Association (Çorum), Interview with Ahmet Mutlu, June 2017
- KAGİDER (Istanbul), Interview with Doğa Tamer, February 2015
- Niksar Public training Center (Tokat), Interview with Menderes Kaya, May 2017
- Olive Branch Woman Solidarity Cooperative (Ankara), Interview with Menşure Işık, January 2015
- Samandağ Union for Providing Services for Villages (Hatay), Interview with Kadir Özbay, June 2017
- Special Provincial Administration (Erzincan), Interview with Murat Çelik, May 2017
- TEPAV (Ankara), Interview with Ülker Şener, January 2015
- Yüksekova Municipality (Hakkari), Interview with Sıddık Karagöz, May 2017
- Yüzüncü Yıl University (Van), Interview with Kenan Gülle, January 2015