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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF EU FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TOWARD CIVIL SOCIETY SECTOR IN TURKIYE UNDER IPA I AND IPA II¹

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Abstract

The EU provides a considerable amount of financial assistance to candidate countries, including Türkiye. Civil society sector receives assistance from the EU both through specific programs and other partnership initiatives. This study aims to identify any meaningful change in the composition of the assistance toward civil society in Türkiye between IPA I (2007-2013) and IPA II (2014-2020) financial periods, and to determine whether the change correlates with the broader transformation in the EU's enlargement policy. European studies point to a

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slowdown in EU enlargement, and in the mid-2010s, a change in the EU's strategy from a focus on promoting democracy towards simply managing relations. It is likely that this change might have yielded such outcomes as a decrease in EU's support to democratic governance-related projects in candidate countries. This article, based on a categorisation of the assistance projects according to aim and focus, aims to identify the sub-sectors that received more attention across the financial periods. The data set was derived from primary institutional documents, and a systematic content analysis was carried out to classify programs according to 4 dimensions which were derived from the literature, namely economic, environmental, social, governance related. Comparisons between the IPA I and II financial periods were made based on the level of support under each dimension. The findings demonstrate that, although there is an increase in financial assistance for Turkish civil society organizations under IPA II, there is a greater level of support for general concerns in the social dimension compared to political issues falling under the governance dimension. This result is consistent with the trend in changes in the EU's enlargement strategy.

Keywords: EU financial assistance, Türkiye-EU Relations, Civil society organizations, EU enlargement strategy, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA).

IPA I ve IPA II Kapsamında Türkiye’de Sivil Toplum Sektörüne Sağlanan AB Mali Yardımının Karşılaştırmalı Bir Analizi

Öz

AB, Türkiye’nin de aralarında yer aldığı aday ülkelere önemli miktarda mali yardım sağlamaktadır. Sivil toplum sektörü, özel programlar ve diğer iş birliği girişimleri aracılığıyla AB’den yardım almaktadır. Bu çalışma, IPA I (2007-2013) ve IPA II (2014-2020) mali dönemleri arasında Türkiye’de sivil topluma sağlanan yardımın yapısında anlamlı bir değişim olup olmadığını ve varsa bu değişimin AB genişleme stratejisindeki daha geniş bir dönüşüm ile ilişkili olup olmadığını belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Avrupa çalışmaları, AB genişlemesinde bir yavaşlamaya ve 2010’ların ortalarından bu yana AB stratejisinde demokrasiyi teşvik etme odağından ilişkileri yönetmeye evrilen bir değişime işaret

etmektedirler. Bu değişimin, aday ülkelerde demokratik yönetimle ilişkili projelere yönelik AB desteğinde bir azalma sonucu doğurmuş olması beklenebilir. Bu makale, desteklenen projeleri amaç ve odaklarına göre sınıflandırarak, söz konusu iki mali dönemde hangi alt sektörlerin daha fazla ağırlık kazandığını tespit etmeyi hedeflemektedir. Veri seti birincil kurumsal belgelerden elde edilmiş ve programları literatürden türetilen 4 boyuta (ekonomik, çevresel, sosyal, yönetim) göre sınıflandırmak amacıyla sistematik bir içerik analizi yürütülmüştür. IPA I ve IPA II mali dönemleri her bir boyutta sağlanan destek düzeyi açısından karşılaştırılmıştır. Bulgular, IPA II kapsamında Türkiye'deki sivil toplum kuruluşlarına yönelik mali yardımda genel bir artış olmakla beraber, sosyal boyutla ilişkilendirilen genel konularda verilen desteğin, yönetim boyutu altındaki konulara kıyasla daha yüksek düzeyde olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu sonuç, AB'nin genişleme stratejisindeki dönüşüm eğilimi ile tutarlılık göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: AB Mali Yardımı, Türkiye-AB İlişkileri, Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları, AB Genişleme Stratejisi, Katılım Öncesi Mali Yardım Aracı (IPA).

INTRODUCTION

The European Union (EU) provides pre-accession assistance to candidate countries. Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), the EU's current financial tool to support the candidates' reform processes, was introduced in 2007; however, this evolved over time in response to shifts in the EU's enlargement strategy. The EU has increasingly turned its attention to internal affairs amid crises, and Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission from 2014 to 2019, himself declared a halt in enlargement in 2014. Juncker's commission was characterised by a "doing less" approach (Schneider, 2019, p. 19), in which "realpolitik" rather than "objective criteria" dominated external relations (Wallden, 2017, p. 18). These changes have been accompanied by a decrease in the EU's ambition towards strengthening the democratization process in candidates. The Union rather pursued a strategy of navigating relations by focusing on mutually beneficial areas in the absence of a credible membership prospect. The European Commission's (EC) new focus was on helping states and societies to build "resilience".

This trend has led to a new, and so far, understudied topic in the literature - whether the change in the EU's engagement with candidate countries is reflected in the direction and content of pre-accession assistance. According to Koeth (2014), the introduction of IPA II in 2014 brought a major restructuring of the funding system, allowing actors to focus on the "non-political" aspects of engagement. The new sector approach gave both sides the opportunity to redefine priority areas. Beneficiary countries were able to become actively involved in the process in accordance with their needs, by setting sectoral strategies and targets. More recently, Rabinovych and Pintsch (2023) identified a shift in the EU's policies vis-a-vis its Eastern neighbours, moving away from a concern with common values towards sustainable development with a focus on development assistance. This article aims to contribute to this growing literature by focusing on the changes in the assistance provided to the Turkish civil society sector, and supports the argument that the introduction of IPA II represents a break, reflecting the EU's shifting strategy away from helping candidates in fitting into the *acquis*, to a more general process of building resilience.

The EU embraces civil society organizations' (CSOs) involvement in the enlargement process (European Commission, June, 2022) and, since 2004, has taken steps to actively engage with them in the candidate countries (Zihnioğlu, 2013; Ketola, 2013, pp. 74-79) An active civil society is considered as a guarantor of democratic and pluralistic institutions and norms (European Commission, 2011a, p. 3). Civil society actors are considered to support the promotion of the EU's fundamental values, which are necessary for membership (European Commission, June 2022, p. 3). The EU has therefore supported CSOs through financial assistance and opportunities, as well as technical assistance (Zihnioğlu, 2013) via the instrument of the Civil Society Facility (European Commission, 2007, pp.14-15). Civil society sector is therefore chosen as the focus of this study for its specific role in EU membership and democracy promotion. Also, the existence of a wide range of CSOs in Türkiye presents funders with a

wide range of choices, making the analysis of civil society in this context well-suited to identifying the existence of thematic transformation.

Various studies have examined Turkish civil society and EU financial assistance, including studies focusing on changes in actors, institutional and procedural changes (Arıcan, 2019), perceptions of civil society (Battaglio and Horasanlı, 2018), and the effects of depoliticisation (Zihnioğlu, 2019). However, there is a lack of empirical work focused on thematic and temporal comparisons. The main aim is to identify the occurrence of any meaningful change in the composition of assistance to civil society projects between IPA I (2007-2013) and IPA II (2014-2020) financial periods. The study also aims to contribute to the studies linking pre-accession assistance to the EU's evolving strategy of engagement with candidate countries. To achieve these aims, it is necessary to understand whether there has been clear thematic transformation across the two financial periods, i.e., to determine whether some sub-sectors received more attention than others.

The abovementioned study of Rabinovych and Pintsch (2023) provided the methodological inspiration for this study, which draws on their four-dimension classification of for sustainable development: economic, environmental, social, governance. The data set was derived from primary institutional documents, which were subjected to systematic content analysis. This allowed the classification of programs according to Rabinovych and Pintsch's (2023) dimensions. The amounts of support under each dimension were determined by employing equal allocation method, and comparisons were made between the two financial periods. However, it should be noted that this study's scope does not cover a qualitative analysis of the actual impact of financial assistance on the democratic capacity of civil society.

The study is divided into five sections. It starts with a brief description of recent developments in EU enlargement process and strategy. The next section describes the characteristics of the financial assistance provided to Türkiye, and the positioning of civil society within the structure of IPA across the two periods. The third section consists of the introduction of

the data collection and codification framework, and the justification for arraying assisted civil society projects in economic, environmental, social, governance and uncategorized dimensions. The following two sections introduce the findings for IPA I and IPA II respectively. The last section compares the findings for the two periods, and draws some implications.

European Enlargement and Financial Assistance in the Age of Polycrisis and Change

Specific dynamics in the relations between the EU and Türkiye, as well as the EU's broader enlargement strategy and policy, potentially influence the direction of financial relations. Türkiye has received EU financial assistance since the Ankara Agreement, signed in 1963. This agreement aimed to increase the level of social and economic develop via three financial protocols to which another protocol was added later. However, until the establishment of the Customs Union in 1996, Türkiye did not receive the full allocated funds (Karataş, 2010, pp. 70-72).

Türkiye became a candidate country following the historic decision taken at the Helsinki Summit held on 10-11 December 1999, which substantially increase the level of the assistance. The years between 2000 and 2005 witnessed a reform process in Türkiye, in which a more cosmopolitanist approach was taken towards rights and freedoms (Rumford, 2003, pp. 384-387) to comply with membership requirements. Following 2005, the reform process continued in some selected areas in line with the political agenda although less progress was made in some problematic areas (Alpan, 2021, p. 119).

Soon after the EU witnessed its greatest enlargement round in 2004, known as 'the big bang enlargement', new accession criteria were set, conditionality became stricter, and the prospects for membership declined. The EU's new consensus focused on strengthening the EU's capacity to integrate new members (European Council, December 2006, p.3). The membership process was increasingly defined as a 'journey'

(European Commission, November 9, 2005b, p. 3). In the meantime, despite stagnation in the relations between the EU and Türkiye between 2010 and 2025 due to a series of crises, cooperation continued in certain areas. From this time onwards, there was a change in the EU's focus. The EU witnessed a 'polycrisis', including the Eurozone crisis, the rise of populism, migration, and EU-exit campaigns, which influenced the integration process (Juncker, June 21, 2016; Ott, 2024; Müller, Pomorska, and Tonra 2021; Hooghe and Marks 2009; Oğuz 2013; Wallden, 2017). After these, the EU's focus gravitated towards its internal affairs, and Jean-Claude Juncker, former EC President, clearly indicated that no further enlargement would take place during his term (Juncker, July 15, 2014).

According to Rabinovych and Pinetsch (2023), the EU began to explicitly shift its objective to pursuing a non-political agenda, moving away from former efforts to promote democratic consolidation and change in national contexts. Its new focus was now on issue areas that provide benefits to all parties while, as far as possible, avoiding political problems. Principled pragmatism became the new principle in the EU's foreign policy, a catalyst for moving toward a bottom-up approach, away from the top-down promotion of "liberal peace" (Juncos, 2017, p. 2). The EU Global Strategy clearly indicated this shift towards the pursuit of principled pragmatism, with its reference to solving problems 'in their contexts', and using a resilience strategy to resolve political problems in uncertain conditions (European Union Global Strategy, June, 2016, pp. 7-8; European Commission, June, 2017, p. 3). The stress on the "resilience" of both state and society created new opportunities for a focus on managing relations (European Commission, June 2016; Juncos, 2017, p. 2). 'Resilience' is a term favoured by the EU for its vagueness, and thus encompassing a wide range of engagements, from investment to defence cooperation, as currently observed in the case of Ukraine (Özkoç, October 15-16, 2025).

Pre-accession financial assistance is inevitably shaped by these developments. IPA II reflected the EU's strategy, which focused on

building candidate countries' resilience, rather than on forcing them to comply with the *acquis*. According to Koeth (2014), introduction of the new IPA was well-suited to reorganizing the assistance system. Beneficiary countries were now more actively involved in the preparation phase, and were able to promote the sectors that most needed support via national sectoral strategies and targets. The process had focused on the "non-political" side of the engagement (Koeth, 2014, p. 14).

In the light of the abovementioned literature, this article aims to identify the nature of the changes in the civil society sector during IPA II in comparison IPA I. This sector was chosen for its key function in democratization and for its diversity, making it appropriate for observing thematic transformation. The EU itself sees civil society as an important actor in the process of democratic consolidation. The EC indicates that CSOs are important in protecting democracy, upholding human rights and the rule of law, and increasing accountability (European Commission, 2011a, p. 3). The EU aims to increase the active participation of non-state actors in the enlargement process, and the pre-accession strategy, incorporated in the 2004 European Council Conclusions, promotes civil society dialogue between Türkiye and the EU, in addition to meeting the Copenhagen criteria and adapting to the *Acquis Communautaire* (European Commission, June 29, 2005a, pp. 2-4). The next section describes the characteristics of the financial assistance provided to Türkiye in the two phases of IPA until 2020, and the position of civil society in the wider structure of financial assistance.

Evolution of the Conduct of Ipa in Türkiye

IPA consolidated diverse financial assistance programs into a single instrument in 2007. The IPA periods are composed of seven-year plans in the EU budget. Three IPA periods have been introduced since 2007. In IPA I, between 2007 and 2013, the total amount of assistance for Türkiye was 7.7 billion Euros, allocated to the ministries responsible, under five

components: transitional support and institutional restructuring, cross-border cooperation, regional development, human resource development and rural development. The Ministry of EU Affairs was responsible for components related to the projects on the harmonization and application of the EU *acquis*, and cooperation on economic and social development projects³.

The 2012 EC Communication increased the emphasis on civil society particularly in external relations and discussed priorities and preconditions for financial assistance and monitoring activities (European Commission, September 12, 2012). This direction was taken due to the potential of civil society to create effective, long-lasting policies aligned with sustainable and inclusive growth and democratization (European Commission, September 12, 2012, p. 1).

IPA II was introduced in 2014 with four specific objectives: to provide support for political reforms; to provide support for economic, social and territorial development; to increase the ability of potential and actual candidate countries to align themselves with the Union *acquis*; and to increase the level of regional integration and territorial cooperation (European Union, August 20, 2020). This direction was also designed to align with the Sustainable Development Goals, targeting socio-economic development and the accession criteria (European Commission, October 12, 2011b). A new process was initiated, involving preparing country indicative strategy papers in consultation with the national authorities of candidate countries, which were adjusted in accordance with the inputs. The EU were responsible for considering updates and comments (Regulation of the Parliament and of the Council, March 11, 2014, p. 12). During the preparation period, the EC and the EU Delegation for candidate countries convened with other external incentive actors, such as international financial institutions, in consultation meetings (p. 12). For Türkiye, relevant national authorities were involved in creating a sector

³After 2018, the Directorate for EU Affairs under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established and replaced the Ministry of EU Affairs.

focus: Priority areas identified by the EU were passed to Turkish authorities for consultations with the civil society organisations to discuss their needs. This dynamic process determined the country’s priorities, and then these were reported to the EU to find common areas of agreement to develop⁴.

While IPA II shared common goals with IPA I, a key difference was the replacement of components by sectoral approach, designed to increase the level of active management and use of the assistance (Regulation of the Parliament and of the Council, March 11, 2014). This approach is seen as a way to increase local ownership, sustainability, capacity, and effects of projects (Ministry for EU Affairs, October 24, 2017b, p. 4). The process involved determining work packages within each sector, and the responsible authorities. Calls were made by the relevant public authorities, and applications for projects were made by CSOs, along with local administrations, chambers, enterprises, unions, and education institutions. The amount of assistance for IPA II was 4.453,9 billion Euros (European Commission, August 26, 2014)⁵. It is important to note that IPA II identified civil society as a separate sub-sector under Democracy and Governance Policy, separate from its regular reform and union programs. Table 1 shows the location of civil society within the IPA structure in the two IPA periods.

Table 1. *Civil Society Sector in the Structure of the IPA I and II*

Financial periods	IPA I	IPA II
Titles		

⁴Indicative Country Strategy Paper for Türkiye for the IPA II period (2014) includes explanations on needs and capacities in the sectors and other relevant information such as number of associations in Türkiye (more than 98.000).

⁵ During IPA II, some reductions were made in the face of political problems.

Main title in the structure of IPA	Component I: Transition Assistance and Institutional Building	Sector A: Preparatory Reform for Membership in the Union
Subtitle and Responsible Institution	The implementation of the Copenhagen criteria and adoption and implementation of the EU acquis (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)	Democracy and governance (Directorate of EU Affairs) Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Directorate of EU Affairs)

Source: Directorate of EU Affairs, Programming Department,
https://www.ab.gov.tr/programlama-daire-baskanligi_51626.html

Methodology

This study involved the examination of 24 public calls and program guides and 11 project reports in order to collect data necessary to make a comparison of financial assistance provided to the civil society sector and its sub-sectors across the IPA periods. These documents provide detailed information on programs, projects and the amount of financial assistance, and are published online by the Ministry for EU Affairs, the Delegation of the EU for Türkiye and the Central Finance and Contracts Unit.

The data analysis involved content analysis, defined as a systematic coding process of qualitative and quantitative data, based on themes and categories (Cohen et al., 2007; Fraenkel et al., 2012). This analysis allows the extraction of previously uncovered patterns, themes, and content within a given dataset, resulting in reliable and valid findings. Content analysis requires a framework of assessment and codification to transform raw text to thematically organized data. The assessment framework was determined after an examination of programs and their

categorizations. Different classifications of project content were found, creating considerable complexity in data to use. For example, the EU-Türkiye Civil Society Dialogue Program III's projects, aiming to establish a connection between Turkish CSOs and their counterparts, were divided in media and political criteria categories (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, January 1, 2017). In contrast, Civil Society Support Program II's projects included judiciary and fundamental rights, social policy and employment, education and culture, and environment, agriculture, livestock and food categories (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022a, p. 5). Besides these diverse categorisations, some programs did not have categorization or thematic classification. In addition, there are questionable, even arbitrary, classifications in primary documents. For example, one project is related to psychological support for social harmony, but it is included under the governance-related Justice, Freedom and Security category (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022b, p. 85).

To determine the codification scheme, in addition to these primary documents, secondary literature was also reviewed. Studies have been found that focus on the type of CSOs (Mahoney and Beckstrand, 2011), the type of general funding programs and projects classified according to expected results (Stretton, 2014) and specific areas -agriculture, environment and anti-poverty- in line with the actors' preferences (Kröger, 2018).

This study is substantially based on the coding categories used in Rabinovych and Pintsch (2023), who identified four dimensions—economic, environmental, social and governance-, which reflect certain key aspects of the integration process. The reason for using Rabinovych and Pintsch's (2023) dimensions, created to analyse rhetorical change in the EU towards the Eastern Partnership countries, is that they cover all major fields of action. The EU accession process aims to establish economic unity, create an environmental regime, advance social

development and build closer relations among societies, and adapt national governance in line with the EU's governance rules and norms.

In this study, program titles, aims and project categories were examined and categorized under these dimensions. An extra dimension was added, named 'uncategorized', to refer to programs with no specific association with any of the other four dimensions. These include projects that have a focus too broad to be categorized, projects without sufficient information, and/or micro-funding projects with low budgets and no specific category. Table 2 presents the dimensions, categories and notions identified by the author.

Table 2. *Dimensions and Categories*

Dimensions	Categories	Concepts
Economic	Economy, agriculture and fisheries, energy, consumer rights, business, enterprise and industrial policy, employment, social policy and employment	"agriculture, food security", "veterinary and plant health", "business communities", "energy efficiency", "renewable energy", "right to establish a business and freedom to provide services", "livestock", "smart cities", "consumer rights", "enterprise and industrial policy", "employment", "agriculture and fisheries", "customs union", "fishing", "rural development", "enterprise", industrial policy", "participation and employment", "energy" efficiency", "renewable energy".
Environmental	Environment, agriculture and fisheries, energy, climate action	"agriculture, food security", "veterinary and plant health", "nature conservation", "climate action", "energy efficiency", "renewable energy", "environment", "agriculture and fisheries", "fishing", "agriculture and rural development", "livestock", "smart cities", "recycling".

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Social	gender equality and women's rights, culture and art, migration, education, youth, sensitive groups, justice, freedom and security, social policy and employment	"culture-art", "intercultural dialogue", "cultural heritage", "public health", "immigration", "asylum", "education", "combat early school leaving", "life learning", "professional and pedagogical development", "pre-school education", "adult training", "social policy", "protection of consumer and health", "agriculture and rural development", "sensitive groups", "sport and art", "heritage preservation".
Governance	political criteria, media, administrative issues, public dialogue, regional policy, coordination of structural instruments, civic participation, harmonization	"assist the government to increase and facilitate women's access to municipal, social and judicial services", "finding solutions to problems with partners including public authorities", "partnership between authorities and CSOs on combating violence against women", "understanding of EU acquis relevant to fight against discrimination, human rights, democracy and the rule of law", "sustainable dialogue on media", "human trafficking", "planning in regional development and coordination of structural investments", "common database for regional designs", "monitoring and assessment of development policies", "partnership in regional development", "judiciary and fundamental rights", "information society", "enabling legal and financial environment", cooperation between CSOs and public sector".

Uncategorized	micro funding, dialogue (without a specific theme), cooperation (without a specific theme)	“cooperation, partnership and networking”, “collective action”, “capacity development”, “development of institutional and organisational capacity”.
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Source: Prepared by the author, based on the four dimensions stated by Rabinovych and Pintsch (2023)

Some categories were used more than once if they are linked to more than one dimension. For example, while the agriculture and fishing category can be found in both the economic and environmental dimensions, the human rights category can be found in both the social and governance dimensions. To eliminate the double-counting problem, projects with categories falling under two dimensions are assessed according to the equal allocation method; i.e., the financial assistance was divided equally between the relevant dimensions. This method is preferred as an alternative to proportional allocation, in the face of difficulty in decoupling subjects and distributing ratios. This method is a practical solution to the problem of cross-cutting categories among dimensions, and reduces subjective research bias due to overrepresentation or marginalisation, which may be caused by alternative weighting systems. Although it is important to acknowledge that this approach also has its limitations, it has the advantage of treating each cross-cutting category equally. Applying this method to the periods in the same manner creates a degree of consistency. Programs having different categories in more than two dimensions are also considered; in this case financial assistance is divided according to the number of dimensions deemed relevant.

After determining the amount of financial assistance provided for each dimension, a comparison was made to reveal which civil society sectors are more supported than others during their financial periods. To finalise the findings, a comparative horizontal analysis of dimensions across the two financial periods shows the trends in changes over time using absolute and percentage change techniques. The absolute change calculation is found through subtracting the financial assistance provided under IPA II from the assistance under IPA I. These figures provide

insights into sub-sectoral changes in the two periods and percentage change increase or decrease can reveal statistically significant changes.

FINDINGS

A. Civil Society Programs During the IPA I Period

During the IPA I period, various programs were initiated and included CSOs. This study involve the analysis of a total of 21 programs and 405 projects conducted by CSOs, listed in Appendix I. The financial assistance was allocated by the Ministry for EU Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the General Directorate of Local Administrations, TOBB-Eurochambers, and the Civil Society Development Center. The majority of the program titles directly refer to civil society organisations, but a few refer to these only in the content. Table 3 shows the categories within each dimension, along with the number of programs and projects, and the amount of financial assistance provided.

Table 3. *Dimensions and categories of IPA I civil society programs and projects with the total amounts of assistance*

Dimension	Category	Number of Programs	Number of Projects	Total Amount (Euro)
Economic	Agriculture and fisheries (*)	2	33	4,096,219.82
	Economy	1	21	2,520,000.00
	Consumer rights	1	8	1,100,000.00
	Energy (*)	1	7	1,100,000.00
	Business	1	2	284,000.00

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	Enterprise and industrial policy	1	9	1,200,000.00
	Total	7	80	10,300,219.82
Environmental	Agriculture and Fisheries (*)	2	33	4,096,219.82
	Environment	1	15	2,000,000.00
	Energy*	1	7	1,100,000.00
	Total	4	55	7,196,219.82
Social	Culture and Art	2	40	4,251,165.51
	Justice, Freedom and Security (*)	1	8	1,300,000.00
	Education	1	10	1,300,000.00
	Gender Equality and Women's Rights	2	56	5,921,837.21
	Total	6	114	12,773,002.72
Governance	Political Criteria	1	39	4,911,037.18
	Media	1	16	2,115,327.64
	Justice, Freedom and Security(*)	1	8	1,300,000.00
	Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments	1	9	1,200,000.00
	Civic Participation	1	23	199,575.90
	Total	5	95	9,725,940.72

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Uncategorized	Micro	1	57	276,576.84
	Dialogue without theme	2	52	2,055,550.86
	Total	3	109	3,332,127.70

(*) Agriculture and Fisheries, Energy, and Justice, Freedom and Security categories are analyzed under 2 different dimensions as explained in the methodology section. To illustrate, energy is linked to both the Economy and Environment dimensions as this category refers to both economic growth and productivity, and transition to renewable energy sources.

Table 4. *The equal allocation method results for programs during the IPA I period*

Dimension	Economic	Environmental	Social	Governance	Uncategorized
With Double Counting	10,300,219.8 2	7,196,219.82	12,773,002.7 2	9,925,516.62	3,332,127.70
Counting with the equal allocation method	7,702,109.91	4,598,109.91	12,123,002.7 2	9,075,940.72	3,332,127.70

Based on the analysis, the social dimension is the most favoured, with 12,123,002.72 Euros, and the least, is the uncategorized dimension. Governance is the second dimension followed by the economic dimension and the environmental dimension, respectively.

B. Civil Society Programs During the IPA II Period

9 programs and 231 projects, listed in Appendix II, were analyzed with respect to dimensions and categories, as shown in Table 5. The financial assistance was allocated by the Ministry for EU Affairs, Union of Provinces and Town Twinning, Yunus Emre Institute, TOBB-Eurochambers and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Table 5. *Dimensions and categories of IPA II civil society programs and projects with the total amounts of assistance*

Dimension	Category	Number of Programs	Number of Projects	Total Amount (Euro)
Economic	Agriculture and fisheries (*)	3	8	2,254,731.85
	Economy	5	64	3,359,733.19
	Social policy and Employment (*)	3	20	2,829,088.87
	Total	11	92	8,443,553.91
Environmental	Agriculture and Fisheries (*)	3	8	2,254,731.85
	Environment	6	70	6,605,068.36
	Total	9	78	8,859,800.21
Social	Culture and Art	8	64	15,853,830.15
	Social Policy and Employment (*)	7	30	5,621,441.76
	Youth	1	2	215,134.63
	Sensitive Groups	2	29	3,661,643.25
	Migration	2	5	806,967.99
	Total	20	130	26,159,017.78
Governance	Political Criteria	3	50	3,707,411.00
	Media	1	1	168,076.08

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	Administrative issue - harmonization	1	10	4,200,000.00
	Total	5	61	8,075,487.08
Uncategorized	Cooperation	4	58	4,822,870.22
	Total	4	58	4,822,870.22

(*) Agriculture and Fisheries, and Social Policy and Employment categories are analyzed under 2 different dimensions.

There are some differences in categories between IPA I and II, with some categories disappearing from programs, new ones being added. The social dimension was enlarged with new categories such as migration, youth, and sensitive groups. The environmental dimension remained completely unchanged but, the governance dimension included the administrative issue-harmonization category, which refers to adjustments in the civil society environment. The uncategorized dimension included programs referred to cooperation without a target sub-field. Financial assistance calculated in both forms, with double counting and counting with equal allocation, is shown in Table 6.

Table 6. *The equal allocation method results for programs during the IPA II period*

Dimension	Economic	Environmental	Social	Governance	Uncategorized
With double counting	8,443,553.91	8,859,800.21	26,159,017.78	8,075,487.08	4,822,870.22
Counting with the equal allocation method	7,009,515.41	6,573,513.25	22,231,956.40	8,075,487.08	4,822,870.22

The social dimension is the most favoured, with 22,231,956.40 Euros. This represents nearly three times the budget of the governance dimension, the

second most favoured. These are followed by economic and environmental dimensions. Projects having no categorization are less favoured than other dimensions with 4,822,870.22 Euros in assistance.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings indicated in Table 7 demonstrate an increase, 11,882,051.40 Euros, in total assistance provided to CSOs within the IPA II period, a growth of 32.26% over the IPA I period. There is no uniform total decrease or increase over all dimensions compared to the previous financial period: there is an increase in support for the social, environmental, and uncategorized dimensions, and a decrease for the governance and economic dimensions.

Table 7.

Comparative horizontal analysis of civil society programs conducted during the IPA I and IPA II periods

	Dimensions	IPA I (a)	IPA II (b)	Absolute change (b-a)	Change in percentage	Array
Financial assistance	Governance	9,075,940.72	8,075,487.08	-1,000,453.64	-11.02%	5
	Economic	7,702,109.91	7,009,515.41	-692,594.50	-9%	4
	Social	12,123,002.72	22,231,956.40	10,108,953.68	+83.38%	1
	Environmental	4,598,109.91	6,573,513.25	1,975,403.34	+42.96%	3
	Uncategorized	3,332,127.70	4,822,870.22	1,490,742.52	+44.74%	2
	Total Amount	36,831,290.96	48,713,342.36	11,882,051.40	+32.26%	

Projects organized on social issues received more funding than other issues in both periods. In the IPA II period, assistance in this dimension increased by 83.38%, meaningfully higher than the increase in other dimensions. This increase can be interpreted as an indicator of a shift in the EU's motivation in its assistance strategy to address candidate

countries' problems in their own contexts and increase local ownership of the process. The introduction of a sector-based approach and consultations with Turkish authorities appear to have played an important role in this outcome.

The uncategorized dimension ranks second in terms of the increase in the assistance percentage (44.74%). This shows that a wider variety of issues were taken into consideration during the IPA II period through the initiation of less restrictive programs. In addition, the calls announced the Civil Society Dialogue Program V, which has no theme restriction, allowing a wider range of applications. Such an approach to programming indicates a much wider scope. When a program can be easily categorized, this indicates that it is essentially target-oriented.

The total amount of allocations to environmental issues is lower than those in the governance, economic and social dimensions; nevertheless, the attention paid to these issues increased during the IPA II period. A 42.96% increase might be explained by the growing interest in the pressing ecological crisis. The economic and governance dimensions showed a downward trend. The decrease in the percentage related to the economy is 9%. The governance dimension remains the second most assisted within the scope of IPA II, despite showing the biggest decrease, 11.02%, compared to IPA I.

For the civil society sector, it can be said that the IPA II period is indeed arranged more flexibly. Women's rights programs and programs related to the media were favoured less in the governance dimension. New categories, such as the inclusion of migrants, were introduced in various civil society programs. A similar argument exists in the article of Ergun and Kazanoğlu (2024, p. 480), who indicate a fall in funds to CSOs working on women's rights and empowerment during the IPA II period, specifically within the scope of dialogue programs. Although this article focuses on the broader topic of financial assistance, it provides a supportive outcome for this argument. It also provides evidence that

environmental and climate action projects were privileged over women's rights projects.

The changes in strategy and motivation can be attributed to new perspectives emerging during the preparation phase of IPA II. In this respect, the EU's general strategy seems to have changed the way that the EU deals with the candidate countries and provides financial assistance. In particular, the new focus on solving problems and meeting needs in their local context appears to have increased assistance for the social dimension.

CONCLUSION

The civil society sector in candidate countries is increasingly the EU's focus of attention. In addition to its traditional roles, this sector is now seen as a guarantor of the consolidation of democratic rules and norms. Since the early 2000s, this has been a subject of relations between the EU and Türkiye, and the changes across IPA periods provide more explicit evidence of the growing inclusion of civil society in the harmonization process through various programs and legal amendments.

This study supports the view that the EU's changing strategies and mindset towards the candidate countries in the 2010s due to various crises may be reflected in its financial support for civil society sub-sectors. To test the correlation, IPA I and IPA II periods were compared by coding projects under economic, environmental, social, governance, and uncategorized dimensions. Certain conclusions about financial assistance were arrived at, including, that the CSOs working on social issues are privileged over others. Economic issues continued to receive financial assistance at the same levels. However, projects linked to governance issues have lost their privileged status, potentially reducing CSOs' capacity to establish and develop dialogue with the public sector, engage in advocacy, emphasize freedoms and free expression of ideas, and focus on the relationship between civil society and political criteria for membership. A major limitation of the article, however, is the absence of

a qualitative analysis of the actual effects of the financial assistance on the capacity of civil society. Nevertheless, the findings provide strong support for the argument that IPA II facilitated the pragmatic management of EU-Türkiye relations and a focus on local issues rather than the ideal of democratization.

This study provides a basis for future research on longer-term changes in financial assistance and the civil society sector. The analysis can be expanded by comparing these projects with those conducted within the ongoing IPA III to explore whether these changes in dimensions are continuing. In addition, more detailed analysis targeting programs within the uncategorized dimension can be conducted to provide a more precise assessment. Future inquiries could employ qualitative methods, such as interviews, particularly regarding changes in financial assistance from a civil society perspective.

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APPENDIX I: List of IPA I Civil Society Programs

Program Name and Year	Program	Authority	Budget	Number of Projects
2007 IPA I Transitionary Period Assistance and Institutional Structuring (TPAIS)	Development of Civil Society Dialogue Between the EU and Türkiye (CSDP) II - Agriculture and Fisheries	Ministry for EU Affairs	2,796,219.82	23
	CSDP II– Culture and Art		2,221,068.51	19
	CSDP II – Micro Funding I-II		276,576.84	57
	Empowering Women and Women's NGOs in Underdeveloped Regions of Turkey	Southeast Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration	2,951,901.74	36
2008 IPA I TPAIS	Civil Society Service Türkiye-EU Intercultural	Ministry of Culture and Tourism	2,030,097.00	21

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	Dialogue: Museums			
	The Development of Dialogue Among CSOs	Civil Society Developme nt Center	797,508.17	23
	Strengthening Civic Participation at the Local Level	Civil Society Developme nt Center	199,575.90	23
2009 IPA I TPAIS	Civil Society Dialogue (CSD) - EU Turkish Chambers Forum II EU- Türkiye Chambers Partnership	TOBB - Eurochamb ers	2,520,000. 00	21
	Strengthening the Capacity of Local and National NGOs in Combating Violence Against Women	Ministry of Internal Affairs, General Directorate of Local Administra tions	2,969,935. 47	20
2010 IPA I TPAIS	CSDP III- Political Criteria	Ministry for EU Affairs	4,911,037. 18	39
	CSDP III- Media		2,115,327. 64	16
2011 IPA I TPAIS	Development of Dialogue Among CSOs II	Civil Society Developme nt Center	1,258,042. 69	29

2015-2017	CSDP IV- Environment	Ministry for EU Affairs	2,000,000	15
	CSDP IV- Energy	Ministry for EU Affairs	1,100,000	7
	CSDP IV- Consumer Rights	Ministry for EU Affairs	1,100,000	8
	CSDP IV- Justice, Freedom and Security	Ministry for EU Affairs	1,300,000	8
	CSDP IV- Right to Establish a Business and Freedom to Provide Services	Ministry for EU Affairs	284,000	2
	CSDP IV- Regional Policy and Coordination of Structural Instruments	Ministry for EU Affairs	1,200,000	9
	CSDP IV- Business and Industrial Policy	Ministry for EU Affairs	1,200,000	9
	CSDP IV- Agriculture and Fisheries	Ministry for EU Affairs	1,300,000	10
	CSDP IV- Education	Ministry for EU Affairs	1,300,000	10

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Program Name and Year	Program	Responsible Authority	Budget (Euro)	Number of Projects
2019-2020	CSDP V- Judiciary and Fundamental Rights	Ministry for EU Affairs	288,046.94	2
	CSDP V-Social Policy and Employment		1,406,179.41	9
	CSDP V- Education and Culture		1,257,471.46	7
	CSDP V-Justice, Freedom and Security		532,929.84	3
	CSDP V- Information Society and Media		168,076.08	1
	CSDP V- Customs Union		154,378.53	1
	CSDP V- Protection of Consumer and Health		368,829.72	2
	CSDP V-Fishing		195,787.53	1
	CSDP V- Agriculture and Rural Development		1,406,179.41	2
	CSDP V- Business and Industrial Policy		580,880.56	3

	CSDP V- Environment		1,638,240.6 0	9
2021-2022	CSDP VI – Cooperation		1,614,998.6 5	10
	CSDP VI – Environment		797,443.9	5
	CSDP VI – Culture and Tourism		163,125.12	1
	CSDP VI -Youth		484,349.92	3
	CSDP VI – Sensitive Groups		2,064,115.4	14
2018-2021 Civil Society Support Program (CSSP) I	Cooperation and Networking for Strengthening Cooperation and Partnership between Public Sector and NGOs (Enhancing Public-CSO Cooperation, Increasing Efficiency of CSOs, Social Entrepreneurshi p, Women's Cooperatives, Developing Local Administrations , Establishing City Networks)		4,200,000	10

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	administrative			
	Grassroots CSOs (Networking and Capacity Building, Health and Environment, Culture and Art, Right-based Activities, Innovation, Disaster Management, Volunteering)		2,100,000	38
2019-2021 CSSP II	Civil Society Support Program (CSSP) II- Judiciary and Fundamental Rights		1,319,363.75	10
	CSSP II- Social Policy and Employment		1,153,423.46	9
	CSSP II- Education and Culture		632,620.78	5
	CSSP II- Environment, Agriculture, Livestock, and Food		652,764.91	5
2021-2022 CSSPIII	CSSP III- Sensitive Groups		1,597,527.85	15

	CSSP III- Cooperation		757,273.18	7
	CSSP III- Environment		767,489.19	8
	CSSP III- Culture and Art		180,810.7	2
	CSSP III – Education		215,134.63	2
IPA II	Local to Local Dialogue between Turkey and the EU (LtL) - Smart Cities	Union of Provinces and Town Twinning	424,474.10	3
	LtL- Environment and Recycling		877,420.57	7
	LtL- Migration		274,038.15	2
	LtL- Participation and Employment		269.486	2
	LtL- Capacity Development		350,598.39	3
	LtL- Tourism, Sport and Art		769,802.09	6
2019	EU-Türkiye Intercultural Dialogue	Yunus Emre Institute	3,000,000	4
2018	EU-Türkiye Business Dialogue	TOBB- Eurochamb ers	2,200,000	19
2019-2021	Common Cultural Heritage: Preservation and Civil	Ministry of Culture and Tourism	7,750,000	1

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	Society Dialogue Between Turkey And The EU (Phase II)			
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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The EU assists candidate countries, including Türkiye, in their accession process by providing pre-accession financial assistance. Since 2014, there has been an explicit slowdown in the enlargement process and the EU’s strategy appears to have transitioned away from democratization appeal towards relation management based on common needs. This change in strategy has strong potential to affect pre-accession financial assistance. Civil society is one of the key sectors supported under this assistance, therefore, this article focuses on the assistance provided to this sector in Türkiye, employing a comparison of financial assistance between IPA I and IPA II to investigate the effects on civil society sub-sectors. Since 2007, IPA has been the main instrument for providing assistance and its evolution closely reflects changes in the EU’s strategy. The EU’s strategy was influenced by many crises, ranging from the Eurozone crisis to EU-exit campaigns. The EU appears to have changed its focus to its own internal affairs to solve problems, rather than focus on enlargement, and, since 2014, has followed a ‘resilience’ strategy. This article, recognizing the existence of a strategy change, noted by Koeth (2014), argues that the EU has determined its pre-accession assistance through a policy of focusing on ‘non-political’ issues in the enlargement process. The civil society sector is important for the EU in the process of democratic promotion, serving as a guarantor of democratic institutions and norms, and therefore, Civil society organizations (CSOs) represent a fertile ground to test the study's claim. A comparison of financial assistance provided to CSOs was conducted to assess changes in the sector. Content analysis was used to interpret and analyze information gathered from the primary resources -programs’ calls, guides and project reports- published by three organisations: the Ministry for the EU Affairs, the Delegation of the EU for Türkiye and the Central Finance and Contracts. For the purposes of comparison, it was decided to select four dimensions, responsive to every aspect of the membership process: economic, environmental, social and governance. These were identified by Rabinovych and Pintsch (2023) which claims EU policy change

towards Eastern European countries following 2014. In addition, an ‘uncategorized’ dimension was added to include programs which have a very broad focus, have no specific emphasis for aim, provide insufficient information, and/or have micro-funding projects with low budgets and no specific category. After the categories were determined through coding, the financial allocations were calculated. The equal allocation method was used to eliminate the double-counting problem and bias for categories used in more than one dimension, for programs connected to more than one dimension, and for programs included more than one category. Findings support the argument that although the EU continued to provide financial assistance to CSOs in Türkiye, there is a reflection of the EU’s strategy in the sector. The comparison supports the claim that the EU has a changed mindset towards the candidate countries, which is reflected in the civil society sub-sectors supported. There are significant changes in supported sub-sectors. While CSOs working on social issues are supported more, the projects linked to governance issues have lost their privilege. This result supports the argument that IPA II provided a basis for managing relations, whereas previously, the aim was promoting the ideal of democratisation. In other words, the pre-accession assistance continues, but with a rather different approach. This study provides a clear basis for research on strategic changes in financial assistance and the civil society sector. It contributes to the empirical studies of this particular field, which is currently understudied. The dimensional analysis and equal allocation method offer a methodological contribution. The main limitation is the absence of an effective qualitative analysis related to the financial assistance in civil society, which was beyond the scope of the study. To further understand these changes, future studies should compare the financial periods with IPA III, analyze programs under uncategorized dimensions deeply, and use qualitative methods, such as interviews.

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

AB, katılım öncesi mali yardım sağlayarak, Türkiye de dahil olmak üzere aday ülkeleri katılım süreçlerinde desteklemektedir. 2014 yılından itibaren genişleme sürecinde belirgin bir yavaşlama yaşanmakta ve AB’nin stratejisinin, demokratikleştirme çağrısından ortak ihtiyaçlar temelli ilişkilerin yönetimine dönüştüğü görülmektedir. Stratejideki bu değişimin, katılım öncesi mali yardımı etkileme potansiyeli yüksektir. Sivil toplum, bu yardım kapsamında desteklenen

sektörlerden biridir; bu nedenle sivil toplum alt sektörlerine etkilerini incelemek amacıyla IPA I ve IPA II dönemlerinde mali yardımın bir karşılaştırmasını sağlayan bu makale, Türkiye’de bu sektöre sağlanan yardıma odaklanmaktadır. IPA, 2007 yılından itibaren desteğin sağlanması için temel araç olmuş ve gelişimi AB stratejisindeki değişimleri yakından yansıtmaktadır. AB’nin stratejisi, Euro bölgesi krizinden AB’den çıkış kampanyalarına uzanan birçok krizden etkilenmiştir. AB’nin dikkatini genişlemeden ziyade sorunların çözümü için içişlerine odaklanmaya kaydırıldığı ve 2014’den itibaren bir dirençlilik stratejisi yürüttüğü gözlenmektedir. Bu makale, Koeth (2014) tarafından vurgulanan strateji değişikliğini kabul ederek, genişleme sürecinde AB’nin ‘siyasi olmayan’ konulara odaklanma politikası ile katılım öncesi yardımı belirlediğini ileri sürmektedir. Demokratik kurumların ve normların garantörü olarak hizmet eden sivil toplum sektörü, AB için demokrasi geliştirme sürecinde önemlidir; bu sebeple, sivil toplum kuruluşları çalışmanın argümanını test etmek için uygun zemin sunmaktadır. Sektördeki değişimleri değerlendirmek için sivil toplum kuruluşlarına sağlanan mali yardımın bir karşılaştırılması yapılmıştır. İçerik analizi, AB İşleri Bakanlığı, AB Türkiye Delegasyonu ve Merkezi Finans ve İhale Birimi olmak üzere 3 kurum tarafından yayımlanan birincil kaynaklardan - program çağrıları, rehberleri ve proje raporları- toplanan bilginin yorumlanması ve analiz edilmesi için kullanılmıştır. Karşılaştırma için üyelik sürecinin her yönüne karşılık gelen dört boyut -ekonomik, çevresel, sosyal ve yönetim-seçilmiştir. Bu boyutlar, Rabinovych ve Pintsch (2023) tarafından 2014 sonrası Doğu Avrupa ülkelerine yönelik AB politika değişiminin varlığını öne süren çalışmalarında tanımlanmıştır. Ayrıca ‘kategorileştirilememiş’ bir boyut, geniş odağa sahip olan, amacı için özel bir vurguya sahip olmayan, yeterli bilgi sağlamayan ve/veya fonlanan düşük bütçeli ve özel kategoriye sahip olmayan küçük projeleri içeren programların değerlendirilmesini yapmak için eklenmiştir. Kodlama ile kategorilerin belirlenmesinin ardından finansal dağılımlar hesaplanmıştır. Eşit dağılım yöntemi, çift-hesaplama sorununu ve birden fazla boyut içerisinde yer alan kategorilerde, birden fazla boyutla ilişkili olan ve birden fazla kategori içerisinde yer alan programlarda sapmayı engellemek amacıyla kullanılmıştır. Bulgular, AB’nin Türkiye’deki sivil toplum kuruluşlarına mali yardımı sürdürmesine rağmen, AB’nin stratejisinin sektörde bir yansıması olduğunu desteklemektedir. Karşılaştırma, AB’nin aday ülkelere yönelik sivil toplum alt sektörlerine etki eden zihniyetini değiştirdiği ve bu değişimin desteklenen sivil toplum alt sektörlerine etki ettiği iddiasını kuvvetlendirmektedir. Desteklenen alt sektörlerde önemli değişiklikler

mevcuttur. Sosyal konular üzerine çalışan sivil toplum kuruluşları daha fazla desteklenirken, yönetim konuları ile ilişkili projeler ayrıcalıklarını kaybetmiştir. Bu sonuç, daha önce amacın demokratikleştirme idealini gerçekleştirmek olduğu, buna karşın IPA II'nin ilişkilerin yönetilmesi için bir zemin sağladığı argümanını desteklemektedir. Başka bir deyişle katılım öncesi yardım devam etmektedir, ancak farklı bir yaklaşımla. Bu çalışma, mali destekte strateji değişikliklerini ve sivil toplum sektörünü araştıran çalışmalar için bir temel sunmaktadır. Alanda, şu anda az çalışılan ampirik çalışmalara katkı yapmaktadır. Boyutsal analiz ve eşit dağılım yöntemi yöntemsel katkı sunmaktadır. Makalenin temel sınırlılığı, sivil toplumda mali desteğin niteliksel etkisine ilişkin analiz eksikliğidir. Gelecek çalışmalar, bu dönemler ile IPA III dönemini karşılaştırabilir, kategorileştirilememiş boyuttaki programları derinlemesine analiz edebilir, ve görüşme gibi nitel metotları kullanabilir.

Etik Komite Onayı: Bu araştırma için etik kurul izni gerekmemektedir.

Hakem Değerlendirmesi: Dış bağımsız.

Yazar Katkıları: Bu makalenin araştırılması, yazarlığı ve yayımlanması tek yazar tarafından yürütülmüştür.

Çıkar Çatışması: Yazar(lar); bu makalenin araştırılması, yazarlığı ve yayımlanmasına ilişkin herhangi bir potansiyel çıkar çatışması beyan etmemiştir.

Finansal Destek: Yazar(lar); bu makalenin araştırılması, yazarlığı ve yayımlanması için herhangi bir finansal destek almamıştır.

Yapay Zekâ Kullanımı Bildirimi: Yazar (lar); bu makalenin araştırılması, yazarlığı ve yayımlanması için herhangi bir yapay zekâ aracından faydalanmamıştır.