Actor or ally?

Exploring Sweden's involvement in Turkish gender politics through the Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul

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Abstract

The aim of this project is to study the implementation of Sweden's feminist foreign policy through its gender equality enchancing foreign aid to Turkish civil society, managed by The Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul. Through a multi-methods study based on document analysis of project grant cases in 2019, and in-depth interviews with Consulate staff and representatives from partner organizations, the study maps a web of different actors and processes of change in Turkish gender politics: states, civil society, segments of the public and the international community. Using the theoretical framework of feminist international relations regarding the role of the state and the global gender equality regime, in dialogue with postcolonial critique of Western involvement in the name of feminism, the study discusses the role of Sweden balancing practices of missionary feminism and alliances of solidarity.

In between a frozen EU accession process and an authoritarian Turkish state, the study concludes that the Swedish efforts continue to have an impact through their support to democratic and feminist forces in civil society who manage to create and sustain progressive undercurrents for gender equality that challenge the repressive and conservative political climate.

Key words: gender equality, feminist foreign policy, civil society, Turkey, EU accession

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1. Introduction

"An important part of our democracy drive is to continue our efforts to ensure that women enjoy the same rights, resources and representation as men. The Government will continue to pursue a feminist foreign policy – wholeheartedly, throughout the world."

Margot Wallström, former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Statement of Government Policy
(Government Offices of Sweden 2019)

During an internship at the Consulate General of Sweden in Istanbul during the fall of 2018, I got a firsthand experience of how the feminist foreign policy was understood and practically implemented through The Section for Turkish Swedish cooperation. "The Section" supports the Turkish civil society through project grants, as part of the ongoing, but currently frozen, EU accession process. Strengthened gender equality is a central pillar in their work, along with democracy, human rights and freedom of expression.

In the same Statement of Government Policy, the Foreign Minister explained that the "developments in Turkey are very worrying. The EU must both cooperate with, and place demands on, Turkey" (Government Offices of Sweden 2019). Hence both gender equality and Turkey are hot topics in Swedish and European foreign affairs. This study explores how Sweden is promoting and supporting gender equality in Turkey through the Consulate General in Istanbul, as part of a web of actors involved in gender politics in Turkey.

The time at the Consulate raised several questions that I consider to be theoretically interesting and practically important to highlight: How is the mission to promote gender equality understood and implemented in this specific context? What role does Sweden has in international gender politics? What role does civil society play in the struggle for gender equality, and how do the Swedish diplomatic personnel navigate the Turkish context with its growing institutionalized conservatism? What results and challenges are there? The more I got to know about the Turkish political situation, the more I understood the division between the kind of gender equality in line with the EU accession standards, and the conservative vision of gender justice promoted by the government and their allies, which made me question what strength the EU have in the domestic

political development. In sum: who are the actors of feminist change at this point in Turkey? Furthermore, I also got interested in how different actors understand gender, feminism, gender equality and gender mainstreaming, questions leading to explore not only if, but also what kind of gender equality Sweden supports within the framework of the feminist foreign policy. In order to explore these questions, I decided to stay in Istanbul after I finished my internship to meet some of the organizations supported by the Consulate. This also gave me the opportunity to meet my former colleagues for longer interviews and deeper conversations about the role of a gender perspective in foreign aid, and Sweden's role in international gender politics[1].

1.1. Background

In order to grasp the current situation in Turkey and the political climate in which the Swedish financial and political support works, I sketch a brief historical overview describing the struggle for gender equality and how the recent political development and democratic backslide have affected the situation for civil society. I understand civil society in line with Eldén and Levin (2018), who categorize civil society organizations – CSOs – as associations, foundations and religious communities (Eldén & Levin 2018:28), but I also include private universities and unions. The background chapter ends with an explanation of Sweden's reform cooperation with Turkey, including a section about the feminist foreign policy and the result strategy guiding the Swedish support in Turkey.

1.1.1. Turkey's democratic decline

Turkey is, since the last decade, experiencing an increasingly authoritarian political climate. The Gezi protests in 2013 marked a serious acceleration of President Erdoğan's authoritarian governing, something that took a dramatic turn with the Coup d'État in 2016 (Eldén & Levin 2018:43-44). Previously seen as a rising economic star and admired for the combination of democracy and Islam (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017:614), Turkey can now be described as a

[1] I use the term gender politics to discuss policies, practices and actions that have, or aim to have, an impact, in equal or unequal directions, on gendered relations along social, political and economic lines. According to my definition, gender politics are performed by states, activists, and international institutions.

"middle-democracy trap" (Center for American Progress 2017:2). There is currently a lack of fair elections, restrictions of freedom of press and expression, and harassment of political opposition (Yilmaz & Bashirov 2018:1813). Following the events in 2013 and 2016, this also includes a "shrinking space" for civil society and a constant fear of arrest (Eldén & Levin 2018:19). As a result of this democratic decline, the EU negotiations are de facto frozen (Eldén & Levin 2018:15).

At this point, the rights-based organizations promoting human, women's and minority rights face the hardest repression (Center for American Progress 2017:15). Arbitrariness and unpredicted moves from the government creates a fear of arrests which tends to lead to a self censorship among CSOs, both in content of projects and collaborations with other organizations. This leads to a fragmented and weakened CSO community and has an impact on both domestic and international organizations (Eldén & Levin 2018:53-55,57-58). This climate makes the independent civil society, as in the opposite as governmentally connected civil society, heavily relying on international funding from states and foundations. With the risk of being accused of being a foreign agent, this is a "necessary risk" (Eldén & Levin 2018:79). The EU is heavily involved in Turkey both on a state and a civil society level, and is the major financial actor among international donors, with its Instrument for Pre-Accession Program (IPA) budget of 4.45 billion euros during 2014-2020. 1.58 billion of this money is allocated to democracy, governance and the rule of law, and is partly supporting civil society actors (Center for American Progress 2017:32,19).

1.1.2. The struggle for gender equality

The struggle for gender equality in Turkey can be traced back to the Ottoman era and includes a diversity of questions and actors[2]. At the beginning of the AKP era in the early 2000s, when the EU membership was one of the central political goals, several projects were put forward to strengthen some aspects of gender equality. The EU agenda focused on equality in family life, political representation and participation, freedom from gender-based violence and equality in professional life (Kıvılcım Forsman 2004). Broad coalitions that brought together women from diverse political, geographical and ethnic backgrounds in combination with international treaties

[2] This study does not have enough space to explain this interesting history, for more information, see: Özkan Kerestecioğlu 2004; Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017; Berktay 2004; Uçan Çubukçu 2004.

and the EU pre-accession process played significant roles during this time in the mainstreaming and institutionalization of gender equality regarding the new Civil Code and violence against women (Özkan Kerestecioğlu 2004:76,79; Çağatay 2018). Despite the legal efforts to strengthen gender equality, little practical progress on these issues can be seen. This cannot be explained by a lack of resources or knowledge, but rather by the lack of political will (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017:614-615). Güneş-Ayata and Doğanğün (2017) describe the current political discourse and the limping policy implementations concerning gender issues as part of a "religio-conservative gender climate" that since 2007 has replaced a more egalitarian discourse (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017:611).

The neoliberal economic policies of the EU actually combined with the AKP's ambition to "strengthen family" since the policies lifted social responsibility from the state, making people more dependent on the family institution as the provider of care (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017:617-619). According to Çağatay, women's empowerment within the EU accession process became equal with women's entrepreneurship, and the women who could benefit from the EU gender policies were mostly urban, upper-class women (Çağatay 2018:66-67). As the authoritarian tendencies of the political power grew stronger, the EU membership prospect got weaker. In the governmental gender discourse, women's rights got translated into gender justice (Çağatay 2018:73). Motherhood and protection of traditional family life is central to AKP's conservatism. Women are encouraged to first and foremost be a wives and mothers, and to put the family, and in the larger picture the nation, first (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017:616). Since the family also is the only arena for sexuality, family planning and abortion is getting harder to access (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017:617-619). In political speeches by the president, young people are encouraged to avoid premarital sex, but then to marry and have at least three children. The achievements of politicizing the private sphere by the feminist movement in the 1980s are now rolled back and the home is once again considered to be best taken care of within the family, according to the hegemonic political discourse (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017:620-622). With little prospect of progressive gender politics from the current Turkish state apparatus, parts of civil society work more intensely on gender equality. Their space to act, and impact, is however limited.

1.1.3. Sweden's reform cooperation

Sweden's reform cooperation with Turkey dates back to 1992, but got further deepened and specified in 2002. As explained in the guiding policy document for the foreign aid to Turkey, Sweden is one of the strongest advocates for an EU enlargement among the member states (Utrikesdepartementet 2014:6). The term "reform cooperation" is used by Sida (Swedish International Development Agency) and the Swedish MFA (Ministry for Foreign Affairs), which makes sense since Turkey is a very untypical country receiving Swedish development aid. The aim of the collaboration has since the beginning been political reforms rather than fighting material poverty (Eldén & Levin 2018:73). It has always focused on democracy and human rights, but gender equality and the rule of law were added when the EU accession process was initiated in 2005 (Eldén & Levin 2018:70).

Three authorities are responsible for managing the reform cooperation with Turkey – Sida from the Embassy in Ankara, the MFA through the Consulate General in Istanbul and the Swedish Institute. The current model of the Swedish forein aid to Turkey is what Eldén and Levin call the "seed/core funding model", in which the support to Turkey is divided between the Embassy and the Consulate General (Eldén & Levin 2018:71). During the seven years of the current strategy explained below, the Consulate General in Istanbul will manage 49 million SEK (Utrikesdepartementet 2014:2). The Consulate General is supposed to focus on civil society, and has a mission to create dialogue and facilitate political and cultural exchange between Swedish and Turkish actors, as described in an interview with the Consulate staff. The difference between the support from the Consulate and the Embassy is partly the size of the grants, party the aim of it. Smaller and younger organizations that do not fulfill the requirements by Sida can be supported by the Consulate for specific projects, and the smaller grants can work as a way towards larger and more long-term funding. With the recent political developments in Turkey, it has become increasingly problematic to support state institutions. Thus, Sweden and the EU have shifted from bilateral to multilateral collaborations and support to civil society (Eldén & Levin 2018:80). Despite the fact that Turkey is moving in the opposite direction of an EU membership, the financial support from Sweden and the EU is still in place. Eldén and Levin do not consider Sweden and the EU to have a realistic impact on a bilateral level to strengthen democracy in Turkey today, and argues that the support currently is functioning as life-sustaining efforts rather than reforms in a

changing sense (Eldén & Levin 2018:74,20). In the current situation of a shrinking space for civil society and other democratic forces in Turkey, support for organizations working on gender equality and democracy is both a necessity and a challenge in the Swedish development cooperation (Eldén & Levin 2018:19). According to Eldén and Levin, Sweden is the most significant bilateral donor in Turkey at this point, and plays a crucial role for the Turkish right-based civil society (2018:29).

The foreign aid provided by the Consulate in Istanbul is guided by the "Results strategy for Sweden's reform cooperation with Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans and Turkey 2014-2020", in which the necessary results for an EU accession are laid out (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2014). The Swedish reform cooperation is supposed to push and support Turkey to meet the Copenhagen criteria that have to be fulfilled in order to become a member of the EU. These criterias include having institutions respecting democracy, the rule of law and human rights, and certain financial and administrative standards (Utrikesdepartementet 2014:7). As of 2014, when the current result strategy was formulated, the aim of the Swedish support was to improve the respect for fundamental human rights, to reduce gender-based violence, to promote non-discrimination and the same power by women and men to shape society and their own lives (Utrikesdepartementet 2014:5). In order to deal with these issues, MFA encourages Turkey to fulfil international treaties on human rights and gender equality and Sweden to push gender equality forward on a political agenda (Utrikesdepartementet 2014:17).

The result strategy explains that Sweden should focus on issues where is has certain know-how, experience and credibility. The "key Swedish values" are explained by the Swedish MFA to be human rights, democracy, LGBTI rights and gender equality (Utrikesdepartementet 2014:8). In case of a lack of interest and willingness from the state to engage in mentioned issues, Sweden should find alternative partners (Utrikesdepartementet 2014:9). In the case of Turkey, civil society is considered to be a key actor in social and political change and democratic accountability, which is why Sweden aims to support and help to build a capable and sustainable civil society (Utrikesdepartementet 2014:17).

1.1.4. Sweden's feminist foreign policy

Sweden as an actor in Turkey, through the work of the Consulate General in Istanbul, should be seen in the light of the feminist foreign policy, and the overall strategy for Sweden's foreign aid. The feminist foreign policy was launched in 2014, and aims to integrate a systematic gender perspective in all aspects of foreign policy. Gender equality is described by the Swedish MFA as a goal in itself, but also as an important tool for peace, security and sustainable development (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018:9). In this work, the Swedish MFA wants Sweden to function as an international role model (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018:18). The Swedish policy formulates its focus through the framework, or toolbox, of the three Rs – representation, rights and resources (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2018:11). Since the policy was launched, it has sparked a heated debate and political controversies, but also broad international support (Egnell 2016; Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond 2016). Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond see Sweden's feminist foreign policy as an attempt to "re-politicize the gender-security nexus on global politics", in the era of de-politicization of gender mainstreaming and a broad consensus of the WPS agenda[3] (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond 2018:37,39). Several countries have followed and integrated the WSP agenda into their foreign policy, among them Australia, Canada and Norway (Aggestam & Towns 2019:10).

To formulate an explicit feminist foreign policy was a bold step to take, even though the policy builds on a longer tradition of gender perspectives on international relations, as well as a Swedish tradition of being a humanitarian, or moral, superpower (Egnell 2016:565,571,582; Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond 2016:326). This is argued to be connected to the social democratic welfare domestically, and a relatively high budget for foreign aid, resting on "ethics of care" for others (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond 2018:42; Aggestam et al. 2019:30). The Swedish agenda should also be understood as part of a global trend where an ethical framework of equality and peace has grown stronger, and where international norms and laws have a more central position. Hence, what is new, is neither the focus nor the arguments new but the strong emphasis on feminism (Egnell 2016:583; Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond 2016:323).

The 2019-2022 Action Plan for the feminist foreign policy directs the work of the Foreign Service for the following four years, at the MFA in Stockholm and at the missions abroad (Ministry

[3] UN resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

for Foreign Affairs 2018). In sum, the MFA formulates political goals of equal legal rights for men and women, women's equal representation and participation in political decision making and conflict resolution, as well as equal access to education, decent working conditions and reproductive rights (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019:3-10). Gender mainstreaming and an intersectional perspective are explained to be useful tools in the gender equality work, both in internal and external relations (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019:14-15). According to the MFA, men and boys must be included in the transformative work towards gender equality, both as a right for men, and as a necessary strategy to reach sustainable change (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019:12). An international framework of actors such as the EU, the UN and OECD, and international conventions and commitments, is put forward in the Action Plan as an important part of strengthening gender equality (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019:5-7). Also, other actors from the whole range of society should be included in this work, and specific attention should be given to civil society actors to strengthen women's and LGBTI individuals' political participation (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2019:14,17). Reading the policy documents guiding the work by the Consulate, I realized the need to follow the policy to actual implementation, and see how these ambitions and recommendations are understood and put into practice in order to better understand Sweden as an actor in international gender politics.

2. Aim of the study

The aim of this project is to study the implementation of Sweden's feminist foreign policy through its gender equality enchancing foreign aid to Turkish civil society, managed by the Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul. With the point of departure in the Swedish Consulate, I explore what role Sweden as a nation state with ambitions of gender-just external relations (Aggestam et al. 2019:34) can play in relation to Turkish civil society actors, the Turkish state and the EU accession framework, and pay attention to different processes of change. By exploring the specific case of the Swedish support to Turkish civil society, the study contributes to a larger discussion of international gender politics. Furthermore, the study pays attention to what gender equality and strengthened women's rights mean to involved actors, something I argue is a fundamental question in the current mainstreaming of a gender perspective. In times of women's rights being under threat, and with a continuing political, economic and social discrimination in different forms around the world (Khader 2019), it is of both theoretical and practical matter how this can be challenged, and who the central actors and methods are in a sustainable and anti-imperal struggle for gender equality.

2.1. Research questions

The thesis is guided by one main research question, and three sub questions.

- How is Sweden involved in Turkish gender politics through the Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul?
    - How do the staff at the Consulate General in Istanbul understand, implement and argue for the feminist foreign policy in their support and promotion of gender equality in Turkey?
    - What actors and processes of change are present through the gender equality work by the Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul?
    - How do the Consulate's civil society partner organizations work with gender equality in Turkey?

3. Previous research

I position this study in relation to two main fields of research – Sweden's feminist foreign policy and gender equality in the EU enlargement, in order to see what impact these actors and processes have on gender equality. The latter discusses the potentials and limitations of the EU and the enlargement process as an actor in gender politics, whereas the former explores the Swedish feminist foreign policy in terms of ambition and reception. In my opinion, the literature on the Swedish foreign policy lacks research on the practical implementation and collaborations on a local level, which is why I argue that my study has an important role to play in exploring the implementation and impact of the feminist foreign policy through a case study. In the following, I draw a picture of what the existing research presents, as well as how I position my study in relation to it.

3.1. Feminist foreign policy

The research on Sweden's feminist foreign policy is not very extensive yet, most probably because the policy is still quite young. Nevertheless, some scholars have contributed with important research on the connection to the UN agenda on women, peace and security, the varying reception of the policy, and on some of the contradictions in this political ambition. These scholars also point out directions for future research (see Egnell 2016; Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond 2016; Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond 2018; Aggestam & Towns 2018; Aggestam et. al 2018). This literature is mainly security-oriented which makes me argue that the field would gain from studies on other aspects of the feminist foreign policy, especially exploring the role of Sweden in relation to local actors.

Exploring whether the Swedish feminist foreign policy can have a serious impact on international politics, the literature brings up some central discussions on how the feminist foreign policy has been perceived and understood, which also point at some of the contradictions in the policy. The critique is a mixture of arguments of the policy being too soft – political opponents question how women's strengthened roles will contribute to a safer environment when there are military aggressions from for example Russia and ISIS – and the opposite, a critique of the combination of advocating feminism and peace and the use of military means to achieve it (Egnell

2016:569; Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond 2018:34). The Swedish government has been questioned for their, according to the political opponents, double standards on peace and arms trade, but also for being too controversial, creating diplomatic crises and trade difficulties when Wallström criticized Saudi Arabia for disrespecting human rights (Egnell 2016:578). The way the Swedish migration policy dramatically changed in 2015 has also sparked criticism, pointing at how the new laws leave women and children behind in refugee camps when the right to family reunification got heavily restricted (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond 2016:329).

In order to understand the impact beyond the content of a policy, there must be more focus on the implementation process, including actors, working methods and argumentation strategies. All examples given in the literature, both efforts and controversies, are security oriented with the UNSCR 1325 as point of departure, and with the Swedish Foreign Minister and the Swedish government as central actors. Egnell stresses that despite the spotlight on the official content of the policy and the Foreign Minister, in the end it is up to the implementing authorities to interpret and put into practice the political ambitions, in which he sees a risk of a lack of comprehensive knowledge on these issues (Egnell 2016:566, 574). I bring his reasoning into this study when I look at the less visible everyday implementation by a foreign mission, and how the feminist foreign policy is understood and worked with by the Consulate in Istanbul. I find the existing research to be mainly theoretically and literature oriented, why I think there is a need of more concrete and case based studies in the field. Looking at the new Action Plan for the feminist foreign policy for 2019-2022 referred to in the introduction chapter, the focus of the policy is much broader than only peace and security issues, which is why I argue for a broader research focus.

A broader focus includes more issues, sites and actors. Aggestam and Towns point at how traditional bilateral diplomacy has been replaced by transnational relations that today include other actors than the state. The authors mention how women's organizations and individual activists formulated the WPS agenda and mobilized states who shared the views in order to eventually make the UN Security Council to adopt the resolution as an illustrative example of this broader spectrum of actors (Aggestam & Towns 2019:11-12). This turn also requires the academic research to explore diplomacy from a broader perspective, including non-state actors, as I do in this study when exploring civil society as actors of change. Aggestam et al. (2019) call for research of the feminist foreign policy that combine the tradition of feminist IR and ethical foreign policy, with a special interest in the so called "good states" and their ambition to transform global justice.

Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond call for feminist research to "evaluate the normative and feminist contents of states' international orientations, identities, and concrete policies" (Aggestam & Bergman-Rosamond 2016:332). I would like to add an evaluation of the outcomes, not only the contents. They stress a focus on women and other subordinated groups' situation in war and conflict, but as I argue in relation to the existing research, I see a need of attention to the role of the feminist foreign policy in non-conflict areas as well. The authors stress the importance of a sensitivity toward the "others" in a "other-regarding" foreign policy taking on such a responsibility, and suggest the concept of "empathetic cooperation" to capture weather aspects of care, the act of listening and dialogue are present in gender-just external relations (Aggestam et al. 2019:26,33-34).

A feminist perspective on international relations is according to Aggestam et al. a fruitful entry for studies of a feminist foreign policy, since it sees international cooperations and civil society as key actors of change. "Hence, a critical investigation into the transformative potentials of feminist foreign policy takes account of the linkages between political elites and civil grass root movements". They encourage researchers to pay attention to state feminism and its relation to civil society actors, to see how these collaborations can bring about change (Aggestam et al. 2019:27). That is the very focus of this study.

3.2. EU enlargement

One of the identified actors of change in this study is the EU, since Sweden works within the framework of the EU accession process. This process is officially still in place, but is currently frozen, mainly due to the political situation in Turkey. Despite the current status, the EU still plays a role through the ongoing support to civil society, both through the member states, and the central Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance program (IPA). Before dicussing the existing literature on gender equality and the EU enlargement process, I want to emphasize that I do not intend to draw a picture of the EU as a feminist or non-feminist actor, but rather discuss certain practices and how these function in specific settings. The EU is the institution of support to feminist organizations, as well as brutal migration policies, a neoliberal economic foundation and growing right-wing parties in the member states. This is important to bear in mind when discussing gender equality and the EU.

However, it is both interesting and fruitful to see the Turkish EU accession process in the light of previous EU enlargement processes when exploring actors and processes of change in gender politics. The process of integrating and strengthening gender equality in the scope of the EU accession and membership is a complex process that to up to this point consists of success, as well as examples of when gender equality and women's rights have been left behind (see Bretherton 2001; Chiva 2009; Roth 2004; van der Molen & Novikova 2005; Dobrotić et al. 2013). Roth argues that the EU enlargement process is contradictory from a gender perspective, since the policy reforms both include neoliberal policies deconstructing social services and pushing women out of the labour market, and gender mainstreaming policies that combat discrimination (Roth 2004:122). Gender mainstreaming and gender equality policies have struggled in the neoliberal and patriarchal context of the EU. The preoccupation among diplomats with 'high politics' like national security, at the expense of 'low politics' like gender equality, has been a challenge to put gender issues at the center of the political agenda (Bretherton 2001:73-74). Roth (2004) and Bretherton (2001) both stress that gender issues were left behind by the EU, and that the union did not show enough interest, nor put enough pressure on accessing countries to meet the gender equality criteria in previous enlargement processes (Roth 2004:122).

Even though the EU might have common goals and directives, the social and political context of the specific countries has a big impact on the outcome (Roth 2004:119). The CEECs countries and Croatia faced similar challenges as Turkey in regard to gender equality in the period leading up to their EU membership, and went through a process where the EU standards of gender mainstreaming were not always easy to combine with the domestic political climate of a "re-traditionalization" of gender issues (Dobrotić et al. 2013:221; Bretherton 2001). The Post-communist countries went through a dramatic political period with fundamental changes after 1989, in which women's status was redefined and in some aspects declined. Unemployment rates and a decrease in social welfare hit women specifically. The socialist ideal of the working woman was replaced with a conservative and traditional ideal of the mother (Bretherton 2001:63; van der Molen & Novikova 2005:140). A parallel between the Turkish secular policies and the CEEC socialist policies implemented from above in a rigorous state project but with strong conservative and traditional sentiments embedded among the population, is not too distant. In both cases, the Polish and the Turkish in particular, the religion has gained more institutionalized power in the recent decades, which has had a severe impact on political gender discourses (Stivachtis &

Georgakis 2011:80). Roth sees the EU as an important partner to the women's movement in more conservative countries where the transnational network can offer allies and support, but the failure to prioritize a gender mainstreaming process has meant that the EU let down the local women's movement in the enlargement process (Roth 2004:127; Bretherton 2001:75). What role the EU enlargement process plays for the different actors in the struggle for gender equality in Turkey is one of the concerns in this study.

As for Turkey specifically, the EU accession has according to several researchers had an important impact on some political reforms, but also struggled in the domestic political climate. When Turkey initiated the official membership negotiations in 2005, several important steps were taken. The removal of reservations in the CEDAW convention, and the new Civil and Penal Codes were considered important steps in the accession process, and for the struggle for gender equality (Kıvılcım Forsman 2004:156-157; Stivachtis & Georgakis 2011:84). The Europeanization meant an influx of EU funding to the growing CSO sector, and connected parts of the Turkish feminist movement to the EU accession program, as well as to European foundations and Embassies (Çağatay 2018:72). The legal changes were results of pressure from both the EU Commission, and from domestic movements such as Turkish Penal Code Women's Platform. According to Kıvılcım Forsman, the accession process has hence worked as an important momentum for the women's movement and their impact on decision making (Kıvılcım Forsman 2004:163). At the same time, Stivachtis and Georgakis bring up the significant difference between "enacting legislation" and "implementing legislation", pointing at the Turkish challenge to turn the policies into practice, with obstacles both in politics and regarding social norms (2011:87). One of the clearest examples of the gap between the regulations and outcome is the level of domestic violence (Stivachtis & Georgakis 2011:89). An interesting question in relation to changed social norms is where that change comes from, which is discussed further on in the thesis.

Since the AKP had their clear limits on how much influence from the feminist movement they could tolerate, a large group of feminist activists and organizations found themselves in what Çağatay calls the counterpublic sphere, and became significant elements in the overall opposition to the government (Çağatay 2018:67,69). What remained in the dominant sphere were broad issue-based platforms putting pressure on the state in regard to violence and employment. Despite common issues, these platforms struggled with agreeing on methods to solve problems as their understanding of gender equality, patriarchy and state violence differed (Çağatay 2018:69).

There is not much written specifically about the Swedish presence in Turkey, but Eldén and Levin (2018) present an important up-to-date report on the status of the Swedish support in the shrinking democratic space currently affecting Turkey. Their study shows how Turkey moves in an authoritarian direction, away rather than toward an EU membership, despite an extensive ongoing EU accession program. The recent developments in the country question the strength of the EU accession as a democratic force, but also sheds light on the importance of identifying the diversity of actors in political and social transformation when the state becomes difficult to cooperate with. Civil society plays a central role in the Turkish prospects for strengthened democracy and gender equality, according to the authors. At the same time, they see little room for change by these actors. As for the impact of the EU accession process, and the Swedish support in particular, Eldén and Levin stress the crucial role of the international support for the survival of an independent civil society in Turkey. They argue for a continued support even though the negotiations are stalled, since they see the value of keeping the civil society alive until there is more room for change (Eldén & Levin 2018:15). Çağatay applies a wider perspective than the state focused view of feminist politics and processes of change, and argues that feminist politics thrive in the counterpublic sphere, in parallell with the conservative hegemonic political discourse and frozen EU accession (Cagatay 2018:58). She opens up for a wider understanding of actors and processes of change.

4. Theory

Turkish gender politics is an arena of several domestic and international actors, with various understandings and visions of women's rights and roles. In order to discuss the role of Sweden in Turkish gender politics, I turn to feminist theory of international relations discussing different actors in gender equality politics. This focus follows the call by Aggestam et al (2019), to pay attention to collaborations between what they call state feminism and civil society actors, and guides the analysis of the potential of change by the Swedish and Turkish states in relation to civil society actors and the international framework of the EU accession. Postcolonial literature on Western interventions to defend or improve women's rights adds important critical perspectives to the discussion of Sweden's presence in Turkey.

4.1. State as an actor of change

What role do states as political, economic and legal entities play in gender politics? It differs depending on the political direction, of course, but state as a theoretical concept is used in this thesis to discuss the Turkish and Swedish states and their involvement and impact on gender equality in Turkey. In this study, I look at states both as a pushing and constricting actor in gender politics. Even though feminist research often pays attention to other dimensions and actors than state, state still matters (Kardam 2004:86). The role of state becomes a complex theoretical concept in this study, since there are two states involved, with different political agendas and different relationship to the civil society actors involved in the gender politics.

True (2018) argues that gender is central to the structure of the modern state. The concept of the "gendered state" can shed light on both conflicts and social changes, as "changing gendered social relations are at once an embodiment of, and a threat to sovereign statehood and political order" (True 2018:34). In the case of Turkey, Güneş-Ayata and Doğanğün point out how women in Turkey have been a brick in the modernization project since the nineteenth century, and gender issues continue to be highly debated in relation to modernization, westernization and Islam (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017:616). I would argue that the same applies to the gendered state of Sweden, even though the current national discourse, as well as many practical issues, differ greatly.

Feminist theory on international relations has been preoccupied with state as a feminist actor from different angles (Agius 2018:69). Some scholars question state as a successful actor of feminist politics, while others argue that state, despite its patriarchal foundation, can be an actor of change in feminist politics. If so, how can this be done? (Parashar et al. 2018). Exploring the role of state, in the case of the EU enlargement in general, and Swedish support to Turkey in particular, this study asks if *another* state can be an actor of change in gender politics.

Despite the critique of the state as masculine and deeply gendered at the expense of women and marginalized groups, feminist IR theory has also highlighted how the liberal democratic state at this point is the only institution that can provide the rights, structure and goods that feminists require. Feminist hence have to learn how to work with the state, as Tickner puts it (2018:26). Harrington opposes what she sees as the general feminist objection to liberal states, and suggests that the liberal state in fact is not only a necessary, but rather a central, actor of feminist politics. Liberal in this context should be understood as democratic, as the opposite to authoritarian, illiberal state (Harrington 1992:65). Responding to the critique of the liberal state as a protector of the ruling classes and a patriarchal society, and the calls for "denationalization", i.e. dismantling of the sovereign state system, Harrington instead encourages feminists to collaborate with and utilize the power of the state, not despite, but because of its role as a protector. Harrington acknowledges the mistakes, the violence and oppression of states throughout history, but also points at the ways states have used its power to manage and secure rights, as well as economic and social support. According to her, this is a sign of the potential of feminist political change by state as an institution (Harrington 1992:66). I bring this perspective into the analysis when I investigate the ways the Swedish state aims to be a feminist actor, but also how civil society organizations collaborate with, or have the ambition to collaborate and utilize the power of, different states.

While Harrington believes in the liberal state as a successful actor in gender politics, both domestically and internationally (Harrington 1992:79), Duriesmith argues that liberal states should take on the role as feminist allies rather than actors (Duriesmith 2018:62). Developing the question of what role men can play in a feminist struggle, and taken to a macro level, Duriesmith asks: what role can manly states play to strengthen women's rights on an international level (Duriesmith 2018:59)? He argues that taking on the role of an active agent of feminist questions, argued for by Harrington, risks ending up in a masculine role of the protector that does not serve any emacipatory purposes (Duriesmith 2018:54). Duriesmith criticizes Harrington's faith in the liberal state,

warning for acting on behalf on women and feminist claims, and points at the colonial base of such a position (Duriesmith 2018:58). Being an ally would according to him include policies supporting feminist goals, respect and support of an autonomous women's movement, staying accountable to marginalized groups and giving up space and power to non-state actors (Duriesmith 2018:65). He suggests civil society actors as the driving force of change, even though they might be dependent on the support from the state apparatus. The role of the ally, instead of the actor, also captures the inevitable fact that nation states gain from the patriarchal international order of sovereign states, meaning that a state cannot be feminists in its fundament (Duriesmith 2018:59). This notion is particularly important to take into account when examining the case of Sweden as a feminist actor. Considering the critique to the project of Sweden's feminist foreign policy presented in the chapter of previous reserach regarding arm trade and restricted migration policy, it also becomes clear that a state can behave very differently depending on context and interests. Their acts are not all throughout feminist, nor the opposite, but vary. This is why I pay attention to specific practices rather than a general evaluation.

4.2. Global gender equality regime

As an increasingly important part of the international legitimacy of states, gender equality and women's rights have become a symbol of modernity and progress (True 2018:36). Gender equality as a common concern in international cooperation and diplomacy has opened up the arena of gender politics to international actors (Kardam 2002:422).

While some of the scholars presented above see the potential of feminist politics in sovereign states, other see it in international governance and institutions, within the framework of a global gender equality regime (Kardam 2002). Walby argues that a window of opportunity for a human rights discourse on human development opened up after the East-West division fell apart, which led to a re-positioning of the nation-state as transnational institutions grew stronger, something that was utilized by feminists in their advocacy work targeting states (Walby 2002:551). The emergence of the global gender regime through a global women's movement and international institutions, grew stronger through UN conferences and conventions (Kardam 2002:430). Epistemic communities created through expert formation became increasingly important due to the status of scientific knowledge in politics and advocacy work (Walby 2002:547; Kardam

2002:424). The global gender equality regime is according to Kardam "contractual rather than confrontational", based on incentives rather than force. What often lags behind in this transformation is the practical implementation, which is further complicated by varying perceptions of discrimination and what gender equality means (Kardam 2002:434-435). This is according to Kardam especially clear in Turkey, where different political, religious and social traditions coexist (Kardam 2004:99). In Turkey, the "reputational effects" of the gender regime are undermined by the state with the argument of gender equality as something Western and foreign (Kardam 2002:431).

Local women's organizations, supported by multilateral and bilateral donors, are according to Kardam the best maintainers of a global gender regime implemented in local practices, even though she also acknowledges the risks of lifting the responsibility from governments, as well as creating a donor-focused civil society (Kardam 2002:436). Kardam also calls for more specific case studies: "More systematic case studies on how and under what conditions global gender equality norms being implemented across the world [are needed]" (Kardam 2002:438). I see this as one of the tasks of this study.

4.4. Dominant and non-dominant feminisms

Çağatay points out how the opportunities of the global gender regime recently have been challenged by neoliberalism and authoritarian regimes, and certainly so in Turkey (Çağatay 2018:58). In parallel with the process of Europeanization during the last two decades, Islamization has functioned as an important process defining Turkish politics and has opened up to different actors to have an impact on gender politics (Çağatay 2018:66). The EU membership negotiations as part of the global gender equality regime initially created space for the Turkish feminist movement to "translate their local demands into a universalist language of rights". Despite the recent political development complicating feminist change in collaboration with the state, Çağatay argues that feminism in Turkey thrives (Çağatay 2018:58). In other ways, she claims that there is a strong feminist movement regardless of the political orientation of the government, or the status of the EU accession process. An analysis that goes beyond the feminism in collaboration with the state sheds light on other powerful actors and strategies involved in gender politics (Çağatay 2018:59).

In order to understand the current Turkish situation, Çağatay (2018) proposes the framework of dominant and non-dominant feminisms as a useful tool to grasp the full landscape of actors of gender politics and the plurality of issues, methods and sites of action. The division has to do with different groups' relation to the state. Çağatay emphasizes that the locations of domination are not static, and they do not permanently hold certain political views or issues, but changes dynamically due to changes in the state. Access to state influence depends on intersectional identity and engagement with the global gender regime. According to her, the global gender regime builds on a one-dimensional gender only analysis, which often serves the interests of the hegemonic social group (Çağatay 2018:61-63).

The position of the dominant feminism is part of what Çağatay calls the "state-civil society-transnational governance tripartite cooperation"[4] and has a close connection with the state. The non-dominant feminisms act in the counterpublics, and often reflects an intersectional representation which is different from the dominant groups in society. The concept of counterpublics builds on Nancy Fraser's notion of counterpublics as spaces where subordinated communities create counterdiscourses (Çağatay 2018:59). In practice, the division is not as clear cut, since both dominant and non-dominant feminisms are in touch with the international governance involved in gender politics. It is furthermore not unusual that the counterpublic feminisms address and target the state, but do not have established cooperation as such (Çağatay 2018:63). Also within the non-dominant sphere, there are hierarchies among organizations, due to connections and capacity to reach international funding (Çağatay 2018:71).

As for now, both the dominant and non-dominant gender politics spheres in Turkey use the global gender regime to win access to state influence and the struggle over definition of women's rights (Çağatay 2018:62). It is not unusual with alliances between dominant and non-dominant feminisms, especially when the space for domination is shrinking (Çağatay 2018:71) In this way, Çağatay concludes that feminist counterpublics in Turkey are important elements in gender politics, despite the state (Çağatay 2018:74-75). In the landscape of a reactionary Turkish state, the EU accession actors trying to uphold a struggling gender regime and the spectra of dominant and non-dominant civil society feminisms, I ask what role Sweden inhabit in this web of actors, and how they collaborate with different actors.

[4] Çağatay uses the term transnational as I use international. This should not be confused with the section below, even through her arguments and research is in line with it.

4.4. Under Swedish Eyes?

Discussing Sweden's feminist foreign policy, and international involvement for gender equality, one cannot ignore taking into account the neocolonial aspect of Western[5] involvement in gender politics in other parts of the world, and how feminist ambitions can become vehicles for imperialism (Khader 2019:5). As part of a global, but Western-directed, agenda, gender has functioned as a reason for intervention, based on certain standards of gender equality (True 2018:39). While some scholars and activists see potential in the global gender regime and international gender politics carried out by nation states and international institutions, transnational feminist scholars oppose the belief in a global, universal sisterhood based on universal experiences and struggle and call for transnational communities of solidarity (Mohanty 2003; Martinsson & Mulinari 2018; Khader 2019). A critical postcolonial perspective sheds light on the neocolonial, or imperialist dimension of feminist involvement in other countries and so-called developing settings, and makes me ask whether the Swedish involvement in Turkey might be subject to critique from a postcolonial perspective.

Mohanty (2003) and Khader (2019) are both critical of a one-dimensional view of the Other woman, while Western women are understood to be educated, knowing and liberated. This dynamic is reproduced in academy, politics and aid projects and builds according to Khader on "missionary feminism" imposing a Eurocentric political agenda upon Others (2019:23). A critical analysis of foreign aid raises several questions: who has the power to formulate the agenda, who has the power to direct the actors? And what roles are ascribed different actors, in other words: how are the dynamics between the giving and receiving. This makes me ask to what extent the Turkish actors supported by Sweden are put under Western eyes, to use Mohanty's (2003) words, or more specifically: under Swedish eyes.

Mohanty has been read as opposing all cross-national research and political struggles, but she strongly condemns this reading of her work (Mohanty 2003:224). She suggests transnational feminist solidarity as both a necessity and full of potential, if carried out with respect and attention to micro level agency. Khader also sees an urgent need for cross-border feminist activism, but points at the central dilemma of how to find a way to combine anti-imperialism with feminism, in

[5] I find Khaders use of the term Western useful: "I mostly use the term "Western" to refer to commitments associated with Euro-American positions of cultural, economic, and military dominance" (Khader 2019:18).

an era with continuing problems of “imperialism in the name of feminism” (Khader 2019:2,1). As for transnational feminism, Martinsson and Mulinari (2018) oppose the "methodological nationalism" focusing on nation states in transnational feminist praxis, and proposes an ontological focus on certain social and political locations across national borders. I read Khader (2019), also committing to transnational feminism, as opening up to discuss also states and their actions in terms of transnational praxis. She clearly calls for critical analysis of nation states, but she also points out a direction that international institutions and nation states can learn from in international gender equality work.

Key is according to Khader to move away from the Western universalism, with norms and methods found on a Western ground, but still gather around feminism as a universal opposition of sexist oppression and support of justice. She underlines that an anti-imperialist universalism must have vague but rooted ideas of advantages and disadvantages when formulating a universal normative claim for gender equality (Khader 2019:40). In her critique of Eurocentric universalism, Khader opposes the idea of “the West as the gender-just endpoint” *to* which women are saved (Khader 2019:28,24), and instead proposes the concept of non-ideal universalism based on normative feminist politics without Western domination (Khader 2019:3). She emphasizes the importance of acknowledging complexities instead of looking for a one fits all-recipe based on “justice monism” where certain cultural expressions, like the veil, are read as symbols of oppression (Khader 2019:30,41). A postcolonial perspective adds to the discussion of the Swedish, and the European, involvement and role as actors in Turkish gender politics, and makes me ask whether the Swedish involvement works within the scope of an imperialist universalism, or succeed to engage in international gender politics based on non-ideal universalism?

5. Methodology

As this study explores actors involved in gender politics, and pays attention to the Swedish foreign policy claiming to be feminist, I aim to position this study within the feminist academic tradition. I understand the specificities of feminist research to be a question of both content and form, a question of both what and how. The basis of feminist research is according to Ramazanoglu and Holland the aim to shed light on, and produce knowledge about, "gendered social existence" and to "tell better stories" about gendered existence (Ramazanoglu & Holland 2002:139,116). To me, this includes telling "better stories" of the ambitions to improve gendered existence as well. As important as presenting feminist perspectives on traditional and patriarchal institutions, policies and discourses, I argue that feminist research must pay attention to feminist claims and critically examine gender equality policies, in formulation as well as implementation. This has a special importance in the current era of gender mainstreaming in which the discourse of gender equality and women's rights is getting broadly institutionalized and adapted by various actors.

5.1. Critical policy research

The commitment to social justice through research is not unique to feminist research. I find inspiration in critical policy research, and more specifically in critical policy ethnography. Critical policy ethnography pays attention to policy settings, agencies, practices, organizations and processes (Dubois 2015:462-463,466). Looking at policies beyond the pre-decided outcomes stated in the policy documents, critical policy ethnography can contribute to our understanding of policy implementation (Dubois 2015:476). The field of critical policy analysis also values social movements of democracy, in a wide sense, and pays attention to how experts can challenge ruling elites. Social movements are not seldom taking on this kind of expert role (Fisher et al. 2015:6,7). In this study's focus on the relationship between the Swedish Consulate, Turkish civil society and the current Turkish political climate, this study sheds light on different actors having impact in different ways. I argue that my focus on following up the policy implementation through the implementing institution, by the policy actors of the Consulate personnel and the implementing projects, I broaden the policy research of the current feminist foreign policy.

In relation to the discussion above, I want to emphasize the inspirational aspect from policy

ethnography, and stress that this study is not an ethnographic study, despite the fact that I conducted research in a known context, with people I had known for some time, and with interviews as part of the data production. Even though my interest, previous knowledge and access to the field stem from my semester as an intern at the Consulate in Istanbul, my material and the way I have conducted the research make up a multi-methods study of in-depth interviews and document analysis. The material used for this study was collected in the role of a student, not an intern. I want to emphasize this both for legal and ethical reasons. As an intern, I have signed a contract of professional secrecy, which legally constrains me from referring to discussions I have had with my colleagues and partners to the Consulate outside of my data collection. In addition, I consider it ethically questionable to conduct research without the consent from the participants. They do not contribute to this study with things they have said behind closed doors, but through voluntary participation in interviews, and with information from official documents. Aiming for an overt and dialogue based research process, I have tried to clearly differ between the work carried out as an intern, and as an independent student (O'Reilly 2009:9). Since my data collection started after I finished my internship, it was easier than if I had done it simultaneously. Nevertheless, my role as a previous intern has inevitably affected the research process and the way I have interacted with the field. I entered the research process with questions that came to me during my internship, and I do not know if I would have been able to go through with this project if I did not know the procedures of the Consulate beforehand. I would probably not have gotten the same access without my former colleagues functioning as gatekeepers, giving me access to the field and keeping me up to date with the process of the project grants (O'Reilly 2009:132).

5.2. Situated knowledge

With the background as an intern, I have followed my own struggle to find my voice with interest. For a long time, I found myself writing, instead of a thesis, a report on behalf of the Consulate, where I followed the goals formulated in the policy documents down to a perfect example of implementation. I realized that I was still in my role as an intern, having worked with communicating the Consulate's work. I am naturally impacted by having worked at the Consulate, and I want to underline that the results and my conclusions in this study are partial and situated (Haraway 1988). My embodied, partial vision as a researcher is deeply situated in my experience from the Consulate, as well as my personal background – which means some limitations in my

contextual knowledge and a lack of knowledge in Turkish. As the material for this study is located in the Swedish Consulate in Istanbul, it has a partial focus on their perspectives and their collaborations. I closely study the Swedish efforts, but also discuss the surrounding context through the Swedish work. The material is thus "instruments of vision" and impacts the study accordingly (Haraway 1988:586). The study presented here is certainly not a full represention of the struggle for gender equality and feminist movements in Turkey, it is neither a full representation of the Swedish efforts in Turkey. This is not said as a critique of the study, rather to situate it, and hence claim its feminist objectivity (Haraway 1998:581).

6. Method

As I have made clear, this is not an ethnographic study. Still, I draw inspiration from critical ethnography in my methods, since I consider the tradition to offer useful advice on interview method, reflexivity and purpose of the research, which is why I recurrently refer to Karen O'Reilly (2009) while describing my choices of methods, the process of the data collection, and the material that lays the ground for this study. To begin with, I want to discuss the field.

My field is broader than just the specific places where the interviews took place. It is a complex and multilayered setting that took some time to get to know. As pointed out by O'Reilly, it takes time to understand references, understand a setting in which people work and struggle, and to come up with the important questions (O'Reilly 2009:209). In this way, my fieldwork started already in September when I arrived in Istanbul and started to get to know the city, the work at the Consulate, people and the context, and the first months of my fieldwork coincided with my general gathering stage (O'Reilly 2009:5). My fieldwork consists of conversations in parties, listening and learning from my colleagues, chit chats during lazy evenings with my roommate, and political discussions with friends and tinder dates. The latter is a recommended method to get to know a new city. These informal and spontaneous encounters are as important as initial reading to understand your field. I am glad I had the chance to get to know the field in this way before I started conducting interviews. The reactions I got when telling people about the focus of my research also strengthened my motivation. Some people were critically suspicious, asking why Sweden was involved in Turkey, others were interested, asking how it was done. Some were cynical, saying that nothing would change anyways, while others were hopeful, underlining the importance of not being left alone during difficult times. I understood that there are many perspectives, opinions and questions about feminism, international gender politics and the EU accession. I inhabit several contradictory opinions and questions myself, and have hence been driven by a growing curiosity in the topic throughout the research process.

6.1. Material

The material in this study derives from project grants in 2019 by the Swedish Consulate in Istanbul and consists of project cases and interviews with Consulate staff and representatives from

supported organizations. The project cases include a project application from the organization, and a background memorandum and decision from the Consulate. In addition to the projects for 2019, I also look at the projects from 2018 which time period span over 2019. In total, I have looked at 19 projects. The interview material is ten interviews in total, with Consulate staff and representatives from civil society organizations. I choose not to tell the ratio between the Consulate and organizations due to confidentiality reasons, but in total I interviewed nine women and two men. One of the interviews was with two people. Nine of the interviews are now fully part of the material.

The annual call for project applications for 2019 was published in September, with the deadline set in late October. It was published on the Consulate's website in English, Swedish and Turkish, and spread through the network of the Consulate via email and social media. The applicants have to be legally registered associations, which means that individuals and companies are not eligible. The application is to be submitted in English.[6] Through the open call for projects for 2019, the Consulate received a bit more than one hundred project applications from which around 20 were chosen to be granted.

6.1.1 Document analysis

The documents concerning the grant procedure are open to public access which enabled me to include document analysis in this study. According to Dubois, documents are important material for critical policy ethnographers (Dubois 2015:471). Since I had worked with the grant procedure that I now analyze for this study, I knew exactly what documents to ask for. The Consulate staff shared them in physical form or by email as they were ready. Knowing how these documents were written, and what routines and other policy documents they refer to, indeed made the analytic process easier.

I had to draw a line somewhere in order not to end up with too much material. I chose 2019 projects since I had been involved in the discussions on deciding what projects to grant and hence already knew a fair bit about the projects. Each project case includes the application form submitted from the organization in which they lay out the purpose, plan and aims of the proposed

[6] See the current call for applications for projects for 2020 for the same information: "The Section for Turkish Swedish cooperation hereby announces its call for applications for projects in 2020". https://www.swedenabroad.se/en/about-sweden-non-swedish-citizens/turkey/development-and-aid/cooperation-in-turkey/section-for-turkish-swedish-cooperation/

project, and the background memorandum and the decision written by the Consulate. The Consulate saves some money for ad hoc applications throughout the year, which means that there will be projects for 2019 that are not included in this study, but what follows are the numbers as of March 2019.

Seven of the projects are explicit gender equality projects, meaning that their central goal is to strengthen gender equality. This study pays more attention to the gender projects, but also analyzes the gender dimensions in the other twelve projects that are focusing on human rights and democracy in a broader perspective. Twelve of the organizations are getting continued support, whereas three organizations get the Swedish grant for the first time. Four of the projects in the material are projects with support that continue from 2018. Seventeen of the organizations are Turkish organizations, and three are international organizations with projects or branches in Turkey. Thirteen organizations are based in Istanbul, two in Ankara, two in other cities in Turkey and two of them abroad.

I see the documents as the foundational material of this study, as they enable me to map the support for one year. The interviews compliment and deepen the understanding of my research questions. This study is not only a multi-methods study in terms of material and methods, but also in perspectives. Including both the perspective of the Consulate and the supported organizations gives a more nuanced insight into policy implementation and enables me to include more perspectives.

6.1.2. Interviews

Following my internship at the Consulate during the fall 2018, my two months of data collection in Istanbul began in January 2019. Since I had been involved in the process of choosing organizations to be granted for 2019, I already knew about the shortlist, and could therefore send interview requests per email in late December, continuing early January. Since the applications to the Consulate are to be submitted in English, my emails were in English as well, as I thought it would be enough. I later realized I should have sent my interview requests in Turkish as well to make sure to be understood by everyone.

In collecting a sample for interviews from the supported organizations, I was aiming to reach both the ones working explicitly with gender equality, and others who worked on other issues, but with an integrated gender mainstream perspective in the organization and activities. The organizations range from very young, to more established organizations that have been supported by the Consulate for many years. I used a purposive sampling method since I had a target group of participants I wanted to talk to, based on the criteria of being supported, the focus of the project and location (O'Reilly 2009:196-197). In some cases I asked for a specific person, but mostly I just asked to meet someone from the organization who had time and interest to meet me. The final selection of the interview participants is due to practical reasons. Since I was based in Istanbul, I had to meet organizations located there. In my opinion, face to face interviews are always to prefer over Skype or telephone interviews. I had no chance to travel to Ankara or other cities where other organizations are based. This is of course a limitation of my study. The selection process also follows the interest shown in my project. Some organizations simply did not get back tome.

Through close contact with my gatekeepers at the Consulate, I could reach out to more organizations as the grant decisions were made. I experienced a genuine interest in my project, and the people I approached made an effort to find time to meet me, something I appreciate a lot since I am aware of the heavy workload of many civil society workers. I did emphasize, both in my initial email and at the beginning of the interview, that I was an independent researcher and no longer connected to the Consulate. Despite this, a note on dependency is in place. I cannot know for sure if my connection to the Consulate and the fact that I had met, in my role as an intern, several of the people I later ended up interviewing, have had an impact on people's will to participate in my study, but I think it has. I cannot ignore the fact that I believe I got special access to the field through my connection to the Consulate. I do think some dimension of owning something to the Consulate, or at least a strong will to take care of the collaboration plays in here. At the same time, and this is important in order not to get trapped in too critical thoughts of the researcher as exploiting and using participants – the people I interviewed work professionally or voluntarily with projects they are professionally, politically and not seldom personally involved with. To spread their work and message is important to them, as I interpret the situation. One person told me she was grateful that her organization got the chance to be part of the representation of the feminist movement in Turkey in my thesis, and several participants said they wanted to be

as open as possible about their work. Their hard work and engagement have given me confidence and inspiration throughout the whole research process.

Based in the library at the Swedish Research Institute sharing garden with the Consulate, I went all over Istanbul to meet people for interviews. Istanbul is a hectic and unpredictable city, which is why it was important to be flexible about time and space, and to always be prepared for unexpected delays or changed plans. I never scheduled more than one interview per day. One interview turned into a lunch, another went on for over three hours, and being able to tag along these unexpected turns is key in successful field work. Some of the interviews were done in the offices of the organizations, some in public cafés. The interviews were conducted in Swedish or English, two of them with translation support from colleagues to the interview participant. One interview was done over Skype. I recorded all the interviews after getting permission from the person being interviewed. Most of the interviews lasted for around one and a half hours, depending on the flow of the interview and how much time people had to spare. With the intention of having in-depth semi-structured interviews feeling like a conversation rather than a hearing, I structured the interview around a thematic interview guide that I followed more or less strictly (O'Reilly 2009:126). The interview guide was based on three themes – the work of the organization in general, and more specifically the project granted money, the way the organization works with gender equality, which included achievements and challenges, and the relation and collaboration with the Swedish Consulate. The questions to the Consulate personnel focused on the implementation of the feminist foreign policy, the focus and aim of the project support and strategies in communicating the importance of gender equality. In some cases where I felt a bit of hesitation about the aim of my research, I sent the interview guide beforehand.

Mid-through the process of writing this thesis, I got to know that one of the interviewed organizations was not getting support due to various reasons. It was on the shortlist for support, is a former partner of the Consulate, will most probably get support again, and offered very important insights into the questions I explore. This put me in a difficult dilemma. According to my selection of projects, this interview should not be included. At the same time, according to my knowledge of the support, it is representable for the Swedish support. I have therefore included some aspects from this interview into my analysis, since it sheds an important light on the current situation in Turkey. I clearly explain when I refer to this material.

6.2. Analytical process

Letting the research questions guide the thematic coding of both the documents and the interview transcripts, this study presents a thematic analysis mapping and discussing the actors I identify through the material, as embodied and explained by the Consulate and the supported organizations. This includes attention to collaborations, argumentation strategies, results and challenges. Starting this study with the field work, the research process has been what O'Reilly call a spiral approach to analysis, in which focus goes back and forth between data collection, theoretical formulation, and coding and analysis (O'Reilly 2009:15). The theoretical framework was not set by the time of the interviews, nor was the exact analytical approach. All aspects of the research have developed throughout the research process, which is very clear in my field notes that I have kept during all these months. They are a mixture of an academic and personal diary, discussing different theoretical paths, evaluating interviews and reflecting on challenges along the way. Despite its messy structure, reading them afterwards have surely helped me reflecting on the research process.

A limitation of this study might be that I do not consider the work of Sida, managed from the Swedish Embassy in Ankara, which is the biggest part of Sweden's foreign aid to Turkey. I have chosen to only focus on the work by the Consulate, managed by the Swedish MFA. If I would have included Sida, it might have given me a broader understanding of the Swedish support. At the same time, I look at the project support for 2019 as an "instrumental case study", meaning that I believe that this example can serve as an illustrating example of the work by the Swedish missions in Turkey (O'Reilly 2009:25). Though only representing the smaller part of the Swedish support to Turkey, this focus still enables me to explore and present how the practical implementation of the feminist foreign policy and concrete support to gender equality projects can be carried out, as well as offering insight in the web of actors involved in Turkish gender politics.

6.3. Ethical aspects

Turkey is a special place to conduct research in. With the current political climate, constantly referred to as "you know how it is", one has to reflect not only on the current situation, but also on the coming times. During my fieldwork, security and confidentiality have been an ongoing discussion, since I have been asked to be careful both by the Consulate and by other researchers. I have been torn on how to deal with it. On the one hand, the organizations are open with their work

through their websites and in the interviews I conducted. Detailed information is also public through the official documents from the Consulate. On the other hand, just because something, due to Swedish laws, is public, it does not mean that a researcher or anyone should spread this information irresponsibly. I have spent a fair amount of time thinking about how detailed I should be in the analysis, i.e. how detailed I can describe the organizations and connecting answers to certain people. I have decided to avoid connecting criticism of the government or the Consulate to representatives from specific organizations, and as far as possible instead draw a picture of the conditions of civil society, with the acknowledgement that this is a limited representation. When not relevant, I do not relieve the connection of a comment to a certain organization. I have also taken the decision not to write what position the people I have interviewed have, in order to protect their identity. When possible, I combine the answers and information of the organizations when they align. Furthermore, I have chosen not to name the participants, or even to give them other names, since they talk in the role of a representative of an organization, and not primarily as people sharing their personal opinions or experiences. I am aware that these decisions have the consequence that some valuable analytical points get lost, since certain positions come with certain perspectives, and there are some important differences between different organizations.

As for practical research ethics, I have consulted the Swedish Research Council which outlines four requirements for ethical research: information, consent, confidentiality and use of the research (Swedish Research Council 2017:6). In line with the first requirement, I aimed at giving as clear and specific information as possible – in the initial interview proposal, while starting the interview, and anytime the participants had questions. This included information about my project, how I would use the information they shared with me, what participation meant, how to contact me to add or change anything, or to withdraw participation. Through sharing information, I could get informed consent from the participants. When ensuring confidentiality in handling the material, and in the final thesis, I told them I would not name them or the organization, but I also had to inform the participants about the fact that it is possible to trace the organizations through the official documents from the Consulate. This was not a problem for anyone, and was more of a worry for me than for them, as I understood the situation. All the recorded material has during and after the writing process been kept safe, and separated from the transcripts and documents to avoid identification. During the time of the fieldwork, I sometimes got questions about who else I interviewed for my study, which put me in a situation of having to break the open conversation

about my project, as I could not reveal the other participants. I also plan to follow the Swedish Research Council's recommendation to provide the participants with the final thesis, something many were interested in (Swedish Research Council 2017:15).

7. Actors of change

In order to answer the main research question, how Sweden is involved in Turkish gender politics through the Consulate General in Istanbul, with the sub questions of the implementation of the feminist foreign policy, and what actors and processes of change that are visible through the project support, the analysis is structured around different actors, both in a pushing and a constricting sense. According to the Swedish MFA, as formulated in the Consulate's background memorandums in the project cases, the central actors in the Swedish work for an improved gender equality are explained to be a pluralistic civil society, including a strengthened capacity of the women's movement, EU-connected organizations and EU member states. The Consulate also mentions a general political debate among decision makers and the public as key elements in a strengthened gender equality. I explore how the collaboration between the Swedish Consulate and these actors looks like through the project support in 2019.

To begin with, I discuss Sweden as an aspiring actor of change working through the Consulate in Istanbul, and how the feminist foreign policy is implemented through promotion of, and support to, gender equality. Then I turn to the role of civil society through the organizations supported by the Consulate, and continue to discuss the target groups identified by those organizations. The Turkish state is also discussed in relation to change in gender politics, as well as the role of the EU and the international community. An initial step in exploring actors and processes of change is to understand actors of *what*, why the analysis presents the gender equality projects for 2019, as well as the gender mainstreaming dimension in the non-gender projects. I give importance to the organization as a whole, as well as the specific projects. A discussion of challenges and results ends this section. All the information presented in the analysis resonates from the material – interviews and the documents, when not clearly stated through literature references. When I refer to the 'Consulate', I refer to information that has been shared with me in interviews with the staff, or from the document analysis. When I refer to Sweden, I mean the official state of Sweden represented by the Swedish mission in Istanbul.

7.1. Sweden as an actor of change

The promotion and support of gender equality carried out by the Consulate is two-folded – through what they call promotion of values and through the foreign aid. Discussing one of the questions I proposed in the theory chapter – whether *another* state can be an actor of change in gender politics, I will discuss the Swedish involvement in the feminist struggle in Turkey in the light of the concepts of actor and ally (Duriesmith 2018). Sweden's involvement in Turkish gender politics can be understood as part of the global gender equality regime (Kardam 2002) based on an argumentative framework of women's rights as human rights and operated through an international infrastructure of collaborations and funding. It is internationally legitimized through the EU accession process, as well as the larger international discourse of universal women's rights and gender equality (True 2018). As described by the Consulate staff, and supported by the results in this study, the Swedish support is quite broad in its focus on gender equality. Unequal economic and political power, low or inaccurate representation and participation in the public debate, and gender based violence are broadly speaking the questions that are brought up in both the advocacy work and in the project support. According to the interviews with the Consulate, the Swedish notion of gender equality is that men and women have the same rights and opportunities, the same obligations and responsibilities. They further explain that women should be legally and socially treated as individuals, not as mainly part of the family collective, and claim that women should have the same power as men in decision making – in politics, in companies and in the family.

When I asked about the current status of Sweden in Turkey, and whether Sweden is controversial in the Turkish political context, the Consulate staff pointed at them monitoring trials against activists and journalists as possibly controversial, but gender equality as a relatively safe topic, currently. Sweden has a good reputation in Turkey, according to the Consulate themselves, seen as neutral, open and democratic, with "qualitative goods and nice and accommodating people". Despite its involvement in an oppositional civil society, Sweden still has a good reputation in the Turkish state apparatus since Sweden continues to promote a Turkish EU membership, the Consulate staff further explains. They also have a good reputation among civil society actors since Sweden has been supporting the Turkish civil society for many years as part of the EU accession process. This, they explain, gives them room to act.

Even though there has been a gender equality dimension in Swedish foreign aid, and in the EU accession process, for quite a long time, the launch of the feminist foreign policy has according

to the Consulate concretized and clarified the political mission, and has enabled larger targeted support to organizations working specifically on gender equality. It is also a matter of internal work. As for the Swedish foreign service, this means gender equality on leading positions in the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and hence among the Swedish representations abroad. They also strive for equal gender representation among participants in panels or other guests invited to the Consulate. The missions abroad are obliged to report gender quotas back to Stockholm. By the time of my internship and fieldwork, all the leading positions at the Consulate in Istanbul were held by women. It is important to not only express the message of gender equality, but to embody it, as explained by an employee at the Consulate. The female embodiment of national projects is seen in various settings. Women become symbols of both conservative family values and modernization in Turkey, as argued by Güneş-Ayata and Doğangün (2017:616), as well as in the narrative of the "most modern, developed and gender-equal nation in the world", i.e. Sweden (Martinsson & Mulinari 2018:14). The external work to promote and support gender equality is mainly the project support, which is discussed in detail further on, but also through advocacy and awareness raising about gender equality in different interactions with Turkish actors, as part of putting "gender equality on the political agenda", as the Consulate describes their work.

The framework of the feminist foreign policy has positioned women's rights and gender equality as a field of expertise, being part of a feminist epistemic community of international relations (Walby 2002) – which is both an opportunity and a challenge. Some findings in my study resonate what Egnell (2016) brings up regarding challenges in implementation. The Consulate staff experience some difficulties in implementing the political mission, since it can be a bit unclear what the theoretical and technical terms of gender mainstreaming and intersectionality mean. Discussing intersectionality, one employee reflected on the meaning of the word, but then explained that she "was not there yet" in using the concept in the practical work, summarizing their efforts as "we do our best". A gender perspective is easy to leave behind when there is a lack of knowledge on gender issues, she further acknowledges. Being a field of special knowledge, as climate or conflict, gender equality cases gain from expertise, but the Consulate which operates under the Swedish MFA does not have access to expert advisors in the same way as in the Sida procedures. The feminist foreign policy is for this reason an ongoing process of internal competence development, further training is encouraged through documents and advice sent out via email. Still, as one person acknowledges, it is somehow depending on one's interest and time.

As Egnell (2016) points out, the actual outcome of a policy depends on the implementing institutions and their staff. With the mainstreaming of intersectionality, which I argue that this use is, there is a risk of the concept getting stuck on a buzz-word level, and not being used as an analytical tool with practical outputs. As I understand the intersectional approach by Crenshaw (1991), it is a very practical tool in developing and evaluating policies, and would be, despite a different setting than the origin, a useful tool in ensuring access to projects on equal grounds.

7.2.1. Strategies of argumentation

Looking into the lines of argumentation by the Consulate, both explained in the interviews and in the decision documents, my findings follow how Egnell (2016) describes the Swedish strategy as framing gender equality with a mix of rights-based and instrumental arguments (Egnell 2016:564). An interview participant from the Consulate exclaimed that gender equality is "given" in any matter, in order to reach and include everyone, almost surprised by my question of why gender equality matters in foreign aid. As an instrumental argument, gender equality is framed by the Consulate as a method for more effective and accurate work, in order to improve people's living conditions. Economic empowerment is according to the argumentation by the Consulate important for both social and political empowerment, but also for society at large. The low participation of women in the labour market is framed as "an economic waste", since Turkey has a large young population and, according to the Consulate staff, is in need of economic growth. Gender equality is also explained in the document material to be the basis of a "sustainable" society, where equal opportunities to participate in the public sphere is necessary to ensure democracy. Economic empowerment is emphasized in the interviews as both a method and a goal in the struggle for gender equality, and so is the right and opportunity to make women's voices heard, politically and through culture.

In order to make people listen and for Sweden to spread their agenda on gender equality, the Consulate staff emphasize the importance and concrete gains of gender equality proven through so called "good examples" and scientific proof from around the world. With the help of MFA's material, the Consulate staff find it is easier to communicate the content to non-experts, both to employees expected to implement the policy and to external partners. Many of the good examples come from Sweden, and how the country functions domestically is important in order to build reliability and to be trustworthy in discussions. The Consulate says that they want to communicate

what there is to learn by Turkey on how Sweden has tackled gender inequality and increased women's economic and professional independence. One example they put forward is the role preschools have played in enabling women's participation in the labour force and, through this, the economic and social gains for the whole family that come with gender equal responsibility for home and children.

Even though Sweden is presented as one of the "good examples" of the gains of gender equality, the Consulate staff adds that the mission to promote gender equality is not to "brag" about Sweden. Staying humble about the fact that Sweden is far from "done" or perfect in the field is important. The correct strategy, as they see it, is rather to focus on how Sweden got to the current situation through political decisions and welfare reforms etc., but also to underline how Sweden still is working with gender equality, since it is a constant struggle for everyone. "It is a journey", as one of my previous colleagues expressed it. As part of trying to be humble, one of the Consulate employees says that there might as well be lessons learned for Sweden from the Turkish context, for example about how women take leading roles in businesses, as Sweden is still dealing with low representation of women in business boards. This specific example is a comfortable example to give by someone representing the Swedish state, as it focuses on the Business sector rather than drawing attention to gender politics by the Swedish government.

Despite the words of staying humble, the official image of Sweden is undoubtedly quite proud and full of success. In the gendered state of Sweden, gender equality is positioned as a core in the Swedish state, both as a practical matter and as a "core value", which finds its way to the global arena through the foreign policy True (2018:34). One practical tool used by the Consulate to promote and bring gender equality to the political agenda is something called "Sweden promotion" (Sverigefrämjandet), a collection of campaigns and projects by the Swedish Institute that the missions abroad are encouraged to use, through which the so called "Swedish values" are communicated. One example is a photo exhibition called "Swedish dads". This was shown in Turkey both as a Swedish and Turkish version, and was aimed to draw attention to equal parenthood. When it comes to communicating Sweden™, and using the role of Sweden in advocacy work, the Consulate personnel explain that the image of Sweden sometimes might be meatballs and beautiful nature, but more importantly the society of today, and how Sweden can be a role model in gender equality. The self-imposed position of the role model, more than just the ambition of strengthening gender equality, evokes the question whether the Swedish foreign

policy, despite efforts to ground the work in local contexts, is managing "under Swedish eyes" (Mohanty 2003). The official Swedish notion of gender equality is presented as the goal and main method to strengthen gender equality. In this way, Sweden positions itself as a strong actor in Turkish gender politics, based on the belief of states as feminists providers. From a historical perspective, it is important to know that many of the legal and social rights for women and LGBTI individuals were not kindly given by the Swedish state, they were gained through years of advocacy work and struggle by activists and political coalitions. As for now, many gender equality reforms are economically and legally provided by the Swedish state, but the absence of an acknowledgement of non-state actors in the Swedish struggle for gender equality is noteworthy since the foreign aid by the Consulate in Istanbul supports civil society just because its role as important political actors.

Sweden's ambition of being a role-model is a good example of what Khader discusses in terms of ideal and non-ideal universalism of feminist struggle (Khader 2019:3). On the one hand, the above line of argument position Sweden as a "gender-just endpoint" or at least way closer to the endpoint than Turkey, with a lot to teach others how to reach gender equality in certain ways (Khader 2019:28). Some examples are the specific convictions of the importance of economic growth and capitalist accumulation, as well as individuality before community. The way of reasoning also creates the official image of Sweden as a monolithic unit of feminist values, as if the whole country agrees on the importance of gender equality and acts in a feminist way all the time. On the other hand, might some goals be what Khader would call non-ideal universal advantages, such as freedom from violence, economic stability and freedom of expression – advantages that an international feminist struggle can gather around, while staying open to local specificities. Supporting the latter argument would be the fact that the project support is grounded in local organizations, to which we now turn.

7.2.2. Sweden as an ally

Following Duriesmith's (2018) concepts of states as feminist actors or allies, I would argue that Sweden combines the role of an actor with the agenda of being a role model spreading the Swedish core values, with an allyship through the support of a diverse civil society based women's movement (Duriesmith 2018:62).

In the support to civil society, Sweden has a role partly as being an international donor,

partly being specifically Sweden. As pointed out by Eldén and Levin (2018), and supported in my material, Sweden's presence is at this point increasingly important from a financial perspective, since many other donors have moved from Turkey, either voluntarily or under pressure from the Turkish authorities. Almost every organization supported by Sweden is heavily dependent on international funding, since the domestic governmental funds are ideologically far from the projects seeking support from Sweden. Both the Consulate and some of the partners describe Sweden to be known for supporting organizations working with gender equality.

Aggestam et al. stress the importance of being sensitive toward the "others" in a "other-regarding" foreign policy taking on such a task, and suggest the concept of "empathetic cooperation" to capture weather aspects of care, the act of listening and dialogue are present in gender-just external relations (Aggestam et al. 2019:26,33-34). When talking about their relationship to the Swedish Consulate, many interviewed organizations describe the Consulate as a partner, with whom they share the same political visions and priorities. One participant explained how her project and the Consulate share the same view about gender equality being the driving force for a bigger change in society at large. Many participants point out the equal relationship as very important, and describe the relationship with Sweden as warm and personal, but still with a professional core. Before making the final decisions for the project grant, the Section of Turkish Swedish Cooperation has a dialogue with the organizations about the planned activities, the budget, potential risks of the project and gender mainstreaming, a dialogue that has been described very positively by the organizations I have interviewed. This dialogue has in several cases been a way to improve the projects, according to the interview participants from the partner organizations, and has expanded some projects in terms of ambitions and possible collaboration partners. Sweden functions not only as a financial partner, but also as a "motivational partner" as formulated by one partner organization. This two-fold relationship was mentioned as an important aspect of the collaboration both by the Consulate staff and the partner organizations. To be seen, understood and supported is as important as funding, according to an interview participant. The Consulate sees the need of being someone who listens and cares when many civil society organizations go through hard times. "It's a little bit like being a psychologist" as a Consulate employee puts it.

In what I argue to be an allyship, partner organizations can use Sweden's strength of being a state in further collaborations. Support from Sweden is explained to add credibility and good reputation to a project or organization, and is positively mentioned by several organizations since

it will help in collaboration with larger donors like the UN. One interview participant appreciates that Sweden is "brave" to invest in young organizations. The Consulate is also appreciated among the people I interviewed for its interest in what an interview participant calls genuine projects, and not projects that are applied just for the grant. Several of the people interviewed for this study emphasize that they did not plan a project based on the chances to get funding, but rather found a suitable funder for their project.

To sum up Sweden's role as a possible actor, I argue that Sweden through the Consulate in Istanbul attempts to work both as an actor and ally in Turkish gender politics. The role as an actor is exercised through the promotion of gender equality, in which Sweden is presented as a good example of a political journey toward gender equality where political decisions and reforms are explained to lead the struggle. The actual impact is however little, according to the Consulate, which is why I think Duriesmith's (2018) term of state as a feminist ally points at the core of Sweden's gender equality work in Turkey. As the following analysis shows, an actual change toward a more gender equal society does not come from Sweden itself, but through the partner organizations and their target groups.

7.3. Civil society as actors of change

Civil society actors working with women's rights and gender equality issues are clearly considered by the Swedish Consulate to be the central actors of change, since the Swedish resources are invested in civil society. The importance of an independent and pluralistic civil society for democracy and gender equality is also clearly stated in the Action Plan for the feminist foreign policy, and in the Reform Cooperation Strategy. According to the Consulate personnel, the Turkish civil society is a good partner for Sweden in gender equality work since there is a big engagement in and understanding of the political and economic arguments for a strengthened gender equality. Several people I interviewed from CSOs underlined the need of non-state initiatives to push regulations or provide education or support on certain issues due to the lack of action or initiatives from the state. The civil society is also an important partner to the Consulate, the staff explain, to stay informed about the quickly changing situation in Turkey, both in order to target the support as accurate as possible, and for the political reporting back to Stockholm.

In deciding what organizations to grant, several aspects were taken into account – to put together a balanced portfolio between the focus areas, to balance the budget, being able to follow

up the projects properly, the need for the grant by the organization as well as the need to continue a previous support to enable organizations to establish properly. The projects that do not get support do, according to the interviews with the Consulate, often lack a clear idea of what they are going to do, which makes them question the demand by the target group. In projects aiming to support a target group, the Consulate staff emphasize that it is very important to base this on a self expressed need or interest from the group itself. The projects with target groups for advocacy follow another logic of course. Applications from organizations with an understanding of women and gender equality that does not align with the Consulate's understanding of gender equality is another reason for not getting support. One example of this is the belief that it is women's responsibility to secure a peaceful home without violence. When it comes to formulating a clear application, the language barrier might be an issue, since the applications are to be submitted in English. An interview participant touched upon this, how difficult it can be for smaller organizations to reach international funding due to lack of capacity to write grant applications in general, and applications in English in particular. Following a trend since years, there were many project applications concerning refugees. These projects are not supported by the Consulate since there is a specific Swedish Syria strategy with its own budget covering the support to Syrian refugees in the region.

I include this description of the application process since it highlights the limits of the material that is the base of the discussion of "civil society". It is clearly a specific part of civil society represented in the material, and I do not claim it to be a comprehensive representation of the entire independent civil society or feminist movement in Turkey. Since many smaller organizations lack the capacity of applying for funding from Sweden, one organization calls for more flexibility and suggest that Sweden should broaden its focus on whom to support, and not stay stuck in "the system" as they formulated it. What they point at is that the rigorous requirements to get funding, despite the ambition of functioning less so than Sida, create barriers.

With the division between the state supported GONGOs and the state independent, but internationally connected, civil society, it is of both practical and theoretical importance to discuss what kind of civil society that is represented in this study. Çağatay's (2018) framework of dominant and non-dominant feminisms is useful here. I categorize all the granted organizations as positioned in the non-dominant sphere, since they do not get direct support from the state, nor have access to direct political impact. At the same time, they are all involved in the international web

of the EU accession process, which Sweden is part of, which makes them dominant within the non-dominant sphere. Regardless, they embody the counterpublics in relation to the Turkish state, working with another agenda than the government, and hence a lack of direct political impact. At the same time, my study shows an indirect impact through the target groups identified through the projects. In the following sections, I describe the supported organizations and projects in order to understand how the issues the partner organizations work on are positioned in the counterpublics, to then move on to a discussion of the target groups and how they function as actors of change.

7.3.1 Gender equality projects

I categorize seven of the projects as gender equality projects since their main aim is to strengthen gender equality and combat discrimination and violence along gendered lines.

Gender equality in freedom of expression is supported in two projects. One organization works with women with disabilities, and their freedom and opportunity of expression in a media project. With the aim of enabling this group to take part in newsmaking, but also to cover and draw attention to discrimination of disabled women, this organization runs a media platform with content produced by women with varied functionalities. The trainings provided in this project are explained to equip the participants with skills that will prepare them for a professional career in journalism. The goal with this support is according to the Consulate to support equal participation in, and impact on, public debate.

The other project in this category is carried out by an organization that describes itself as Turkey's first Muslim feminist organization and aims to create a space in what they describe as the grey zone between the Muslim community and the secular feminism. Questioning the binary between religion and secularism, the organization wants to create a space for (mostly) young people to discuss religion, feminism and politics. The initiative started as a blog, and they soon realized the high demand for a space to discuss issues that fall between established agendas, like women's place for praying in the mosque, or sexuality and intimacy in relation to strict clothing guidelines in Islam. Experiences of getting educational or professional opportunities depending on whether you wear headscarf or not, or the way conservative gender roles keep women in the role of mother and wife and hence making it difficult to combine family and career are other issues at stake. They oppose the hegemonic political discourse of conservative family values. When the

government tries to combat divorce, this organization calls for a discussion and understanding of why the divorce rates are high. Being queer and Muslim is another topic that has not been discussed much in public, but definitely has an audience, something that motivates the organization to include this in their agenda. One of the founders explains: "As founders of the organization, we are open about it, and we don't have a kind of binary gender view, but in terms of the community we are working in, it's a bit early to vocalize and kind of doing an advocacy around it, but that's one of our secret agenda", and she laughs. According to her, the issues the organization wants to bring to discussion are well established thoughts among people, but not publicly discussed due to a lack of a platform and a community. Therefore, with the help from the grant from the Consulate, they will organize writing workshops to enable these questions to be discussed, published and spread through the blog. The theme will be women's sexuality, with specific focus on Muslim women's relationship to sexuality and body.

Opposing the idea of the impossibility of being both a Muslim and a feminist, and with the insight of the struggles of Muslim women, the organization wants to be an active, and equal, subject of the feminist agenda and movement in Turkey, and not "a case" as they experience the secular feminist movement to position them. They are sometimes accused of dividing the feminist movement, and sometimes experience a patronizing attitude towards Muslim women and their work as Muslim feminists. Replying to the way they are questioned as feminists due to their religion, the representative points at how all big institutions in society have become patriarchal – religion, state, family. Adding certain perspectives and contributing with knowledge from a specific position does not mean a threat to the feminist struggle, it rather broadens it, as the respresentative I interviewed explained. She argues that it is a patriarchal way of organizing the world to stay too put to definitions and established practices. Their ambiguous gray zone is hence a feminist zone, where they find space to discuss and redefine religious beliefs and social norms.

The support to the Muslim feminist organization, as well as to a center supporting grassroots organizations are argued by the Consulate to be important contributions to a pluralistic women's movement. The political polarization in Turkey is present also in the feminist movement, with a historical division between religious and secular feminists, something the Consulate sees as challenge to a broad feminist struggle. The support to the Muslim feminist organization intends to overcome ideological divisions, and to strengthen freedom of expression through increasing advocacy skills to ensure the representation of different groups in the women's movement. The

Muslim feminist organization argues that acknowledging the need of intersectional feminism, meaning that secular feminism is not enough, is about time in Turkey. She explains why: "Because they don't include Muslim women. And it's not me, it's half of Turkey!" and continues "who are you gonna do the revolution with?". The representative asks how change will come around if half the population is excluded, and advocates for discussion with parts of society you might not fully agree with.

Representation in a slightly different understanding can be found in a project aiming to draw attention and eventually change the misrepresentation of women in advertisements, both in terms of low representation and stereotypical roles. This project will organize trainings for people working in the advertising industry, either at big companies or at advertising agencies. Based on initial research done for this project, the organization looked at numbers of men and women in leading roles and speakers, but also the kind of roles men and women were given. What they found most disturbing was how women were portrayed, either as housewives, or preoccupied with her physical appearance trying to become more beautiful or younger. Men were mostly portrayed as authorities, or as what the researchers call an undefined category, meaning that men were partly portrayed in a non-stereotypical and hence in a more diverse way. Furthermore, women are simply excluded from some sectors, like banking, electronics, cars, as if they were not consumers of these commodities and services. According to numbers from Ipsos Turkey, provided in the application form from the organization, 44 percent of female participants did not think that characters in advertising reflect them.

The Turkish situation of advertising statistics follows a global trend, and has not changed much in ten years. This is noteworthy, since society has changed a lot during the past decade, as the interview participant from the project explains it. It is partly because people are unaware of these structures, she explains, and guided by their unconscious prejudices following the ready-made formulas, but also because the industry plays a safe game and is not willing to break patterns that work. Sometimes it gets really ridiculous, she argues, like a commercial with cows – but with male voice overs.

The organization wants to get rid of stereotypical gender roles and "create an advertisement environment where the diversity in society can find itself in equal representation". This is both a question of justice, and of business effectiveness. If it would not include the latter, the change would probably take longer, but arguing that identification is crucial in successful advertisement

is a useful argument. The representative sees advertisements as “modern myth machines”, especially in a country like Turkey where the general time of watching television is 4,5 hours a day, according to the numbers given in the interview. It also makes it a social transformation tool with the possibility of changing cultural perceptions, why the interview participant has high hopes that advertising can play a crucial role in the long-term struggle to achieve economic, social and political gender equality. The power of representation of gender is important, and the representative emphasizes the impact of gender representations for children: “We don’t see funny women, clever women, where are they? Or motherly men [...] we don’t see them on tv”. If children do not see themselves on television, they start questioning themselves: “am I normal?”. This issue is hence an important question for all genders.

In order to ensure women’s equal professional opportunities and hence economic independence, a work-life balance is necessary to combine professional and private life, according to a textile workers’ union. They understand the traditional gender division between the male breadwinner and the female responsibility for home and children to be the key issue why women are struggling to fully participate in professional life, and to be promoted and make a career. This is connected to a broader perspective of being part of decision-making instances, the organization argues in their project application. They further explain that women working part time, or completely withdraw from the labor market, is a result of a combination of a lack of childcare and men’s lack of responsibility for tasks at home. Working less or leaving work leads to economic dependency. The working conditions in the textile industry such as long working hours, not seldom over-time work, and low and irregular payment also keep women from participating for longer time, and on higher positions, in the textile industry. This organization sees the double burden of an insufficient work-life balance leading to stress and guilt for women. Single parents are especially vulnerable to the challenges of reconcile professional and private life.

The union plans to organize workshops for shop stewards, other union members, and their family members on reconciliation of work and family life, to ensure a better working environment and to improve careers for their members. Representation is according to this organization not only a question of justice for the people at stake, like gender equality in boards or panels, but also to ensure a solid regrowth of women in decision making positions and opportunities for women to enter certain businesses.

Two projects are focusing on gender-based violence, with information and education as leading strategies to combat misconceptions of reasons behind and consequences of gender-based violence. With the basic understanding of sexual violence as a result of destructive power relations, one organization focusing on combating sexual violence works on several frontiers at the same time – through education, advocacy and support. They do not limit themselves to sexual violence against women, or LGBTQ people or any other specific target group, but centralize the issue and work on all expressions of it in their trainings for different professional groups. The power of language is central in this organization's work, as they argue that the terms used in the discussion of the issue structure people's understanding of it. According to the representative from the organization I interviewed, there are too many myths about the perpetrators and survivors of sexual violence, obscuring the actual problems and possible solutions.

Consent is the key term in how they define sexual violence, and one central objective is to establish and spread a vocabulary they consider cover the whole complex issue of sexual violence. The mass media is explained to bear a heavy responsibility, since the use of stereotypical images and language reproduces a generalized understanding of sexual violence, increasing stigmatization of both survivor and perpetrator. The illustrating images strengthen the idea of the perpetrator as a stranger, as someone dirty and not respectable, the interview participant explains. Examples of misconceptions can be that people rape as a result of being a man, or because people do not have a partner, she explains. She points out how terms like abuser, pedophile and rapist are mixed up, and how too much attention is paid to revenge, rather than support to the survivor. This organization wants to centralize the power dimension of sexual violence, and hence leave an understanding of abuse as a question of being sick or a monster, since they claim that "anyone can be exposed to sexual violence, and anyone can be a perpetrator".

Having a queer feminist base of their foundation, the association combating sexual violence works actively with a kind of queer mainstreaming, meaning that they try to deconstruct the established categories and integrate a queer perspective in all aspects of their work, having undefined characters in their information videos for example. They do not want to get stuck in set roles of survivors or perpetrators, even though they also are aware of the more vulnerable identities or groups. Based on a feminist terminology, they introduce and explain terms like biological sex, sexual expression, sexual orientation, sexual identity, and discuss how they are all components of gender. Furthermore, they explain terms like trans and intersex. One of the association's main

objectives is to shed light on the forgotten or ignored forms of sexual violence, paying attention to cases of sexual violence that might not get as much attention as others in the mainstream media. The person I interviewed gave the example of a university student versus a trans sex worker, where the first case sparked big rage, whereas the second was ignored. The association also discusses something they call the mass violence, like rape in war, abortion ban, forced trans operations and surgery of intersex babies, circumcision of both boys and girls, as well as violent language and practices in sports.

Media is also the focus of the other organization focusing on violence. They want to bring attention to the way local media coverages domestic violence and sexual violence against women, something they argue revictimizes and harms survivors of violence. Mass media has the power to be a tool of either reproduction of norms, or a transformation of the same, the representative I interviewed explains, which is why this organization wants to target the discourse produced through the local media. As they see it, women are not seldom held responsible for violence against them. Seeing girls as women, and hence not considered as victims of child abuse, is a common public perception, though not the case in the law. Another problem is how the local media describe cases of sexual violence in detail, which has difficult consequences for someone living in a small place where everybody knows everybody. A child who has experienced abuse suffer from a higher risk of being abused again since the child is seen as available to abuse. The aim of the project supported by Sweden is hence to make journalists aware of the consequences of their journalism, and hopefully make them change the way they report on these issues. The overall aim of the project is according to the organization to strengthen gender equality, and to combat a conservative notion of women as mainly family members with the duty of supporting the husband and the wellbeing of the family.

The Gender Studies Department of a private university has a grant program supporting feminist research projects, with the special aim of supporting independent, in other words dismissed, academics. The research proposals for the last three years explores a wide range of topics, but many of them focused on gender policies by the AKP government, and the impact of family and economic policies on women. Other topics were labor rights, migration, domestic violence and some studies in history. As Gender Studies being “under threat”, the representative from the university explains that academia has a very important mission in collecting data from a feminist perspective since such data is not shared by the government or collected by academia at

large. Having scientific data to support your case is extremely important in order to be taken seriously, she says, and eventually influence political policies and transform academia. This feminist epistemic community (Walby 2002), is of continued importance in the era of gender mainstreaming, as the respresentative differentiates between the gender politics in the name of gender mainstreaming by the government, and actual feminist politics that must be based on feminist research: "The source must be feminist, it's a way of seeing the world. When you lose that political background, it becomes something else" the representative warns.

7.3.2. Gender mainstreaming

Above, I have described the projects that have gender equality as main objective. However, the biggest part of the yearly support from the Consulate goes to other kinds of projects, focusing more broadly on democracy and human rights. All projects are still required to have an integrated gender perspective in their work, which is why I include a discussion of a gender-mainstreaming dimension in the non-gender projects as well. In the application form that all the organizations submit to the Consulate, there is a question if, and how the project is gender mainstreamed. The organizations are expected to explain how they take a gender perspective into consideration. In the material, there are two main tracks in gender mainstreaming of the activities: gender quotas and what I call an awareness of gendered issues.

The first focuses on gender equality in the board of the supported organizations, among participants in the projects, and among invited speakers in panels. Most organizations have a requirement of female representation in their projects, for example a minimum of 40 percent women. One example of a concrete gender mainstreaming strategy to combat male domination is found in an organization organizing education weeks on democracy and dialogue. They accept a higher number of women since female participants are more likely to drop out. The reason for women drop out is, according to the representative, probably social norms of women's responsibility for children and family, and because women might have a harder time to get time off work, not being as free, or mobile, as men in that sense. This problem mirrors the low representation of women in politics in general, is both a sign of lacking gender equality in Turkey, and a challenge to achieve it, mentioned by both the Consulate and the organization organizing the education. A common opinion in the material is that a real change regarding gender equality

requires a structural, organizational change. Gender equality in the advertisement industry is according to the interview participant a structural, internal matter, with low numbers of women in creative and executive positions. To change that is an important first step to eventually change the outcome of the industry. At the same time, as explained by the representative, it is not enough to only place women in decision making positions, attitudes have to change as well, among both men and women.

In improving gender equality and women's situation, the question of the inclusion of men is both practical and ideological. According to the Consulate, men must be included in the struggle for gender equality for several reasons: Partly because there are often men involved in violence and other types of discrimination against women, partly because men have the power and resources, and partly because men also suffer from conservative and patriarchal gender roles. In the application for the project of work-life balance, it is explained that men are crucial to achieve a true change in women's opportunities to combine a professional and private life. The organization therefore wants to specifically target fathers and other male family members who do not take enough responsibility for the family at home, and offer courses on how to strengthen their connection and communication with their children.

As for the gender mainstreaming category among the projects that I call awareness of gendered issues, there is a focus on women's specific situation and gendered experiences. This is for example awareness of the specific threats women face as journalists, the way survivors of sexual violence lack legal support, the situation for women and other vulnerable groups in prisons, or women's experiences of human rights violations and minority rights struggle. In two cases the organizations have stated that they do not intend to gender mainstream their projects, concerning the situation for the Roma minority in Turkey and fact checking politicians' statements, but the Consulate writes in the background memorandums that they will have a dialogue on how to integrate a gender perspective in the projects throughout the activity period.

Among the organizations I interviewed, there are two non-gender projects. They are both aiming to combat the current political climate of political polarization, the authoritarian and conservative political climate and a shrinking space for a pluralistic civil society through education, capacity building and strengthened advocacy skills among young politicians and civil society activists.

Gathering young politicians and civil society activists from all over Turkey and from all over the political spectrum, one project organizes one-week education programs centered around human rights, democracy and the rule of law, working for a "stronger liberal democratic ethos in Turkey". Combining theoretical segments with policy making, instrumental skills and lecturers by invited experts, the program aims to prepare young people for a political career with the respect of democracy and human rights as main pillars. Through lectures and teamwork, they touch upon a range of topics, in which gender equality and gender policies is one. Topics that have been discussed are for example underrepresentation of women in politics and discrimination in professional life, but also other gender related questions like LGBTI rights or gender dimensions in refugee policies. Gender equality can lead to heated discussions, the representative explains, since they are part of the general political polarization. With the aim of keeping an open climate, the representative explains how the organization indirectly, as he formulates it, advocates for gender equality. They understand gender equality as the opposite of gender justice, and they aim to promote gender equality on a political, economic and social level as part of the overall theme of democracy and human rights. The representative explains that if you have a democratic ambition, a gender perspective is absolutely necessary to achieve democracy.

Aiming to support civil society organizations and smaller initiatives, another organization focuses on capacity building and networking for what they describe as rights-based organizations working with "sensitive" target groups like women, children, LGBTQ people and refugees. They reach grassroots organizations in a way that the Swedish Consulate cannot do due to the requirement to be a registered association, so in this way the Swedish support is channeled to smaller organizations, of which some are focusing on gender equality. The representatives mention sexual violence and fatherhood as examples of issues that have been the subject of previous projects. If joining the support program – which is the project supported by Sweden – an organization gets trainings and workshops in networking, volunteering, fundraising, communication, project managing and advocacy, and gets access to the organization's space to organize meetings etc. They are also assigned a mentor who will help them improve as an organization. This center is part of a university, and they also aim to strengthen the ties between the academy and civil society.

Despite the harsh climate for civil society – "it is survival mode" – the staff I interviewed believe in strengthening the internal capacity among the grassroots organizations and activists, to

be ready when the external conditions to advocate and have a political impact get better. Apart from the direct support to organizations or initiatives working on gender issues, they also try to mainstream a gender perspective – to pay attention to gender quotas among their participants, and encourage the smaller organizations turning to them to be aware of gender equality in the structure of their organization. According to the two representatives I interviewed, an active, democratic citizenship, requires equal opportunities to participate in public and professional life. The center also pays attention not to reproduce sexist or stereotypical content in their education and material.

A general ambition of the Consulate is to find partners with the capability to widely spread their perspectives to a range of different actors, and hence "multiply the resources", as the staff explain it. In the material for this study, three categories among the organizations' target groups can be identified: people who are interested in or in need of some kind of support or community, professional groups asking for education, and decision makers who are targets of advocacy. In the following sections, I look at how the different target groups among the Consulate's partner organizations function as actors in Turkish gender politics.

7.3. The public as actors of change

In the project applications, one common target group is "the public". The public is sometimes a big vague, but I have identified two main groups among the public – specific communities and the young generation. "Raising awareness" about women's rights and gender equality, and changing perceptions of things among the public, is considered important by both the Consulate and the partner organizations. One strategy by some organizations is to produce publications and launch social media campaigns, another to organize trainings and education programs. It is also a matter of changed awareness, as with one organization working on sexual violence. The representative explains that the question of sexual violence does not lack public attention, but what bothers her is the kind of attention given to the issue. She explains that sexual violence is used as a political brick, where people use cases of sexual violence to prove their own political point, not seldom along religious lines. For example, if there is a case of sexual violence in a school, depending if it is a religious or a secular school, both sides criticize the other, blaming the situation on their political and religious beliefs. A counterproductive awareness is also a concern for the other

organizations focusing on sexual violence, in their critique of how the local media reports on cases of sexual violence in a dramatic and blaming way, revictimizing the survivor.

7.3.1. Change from within

The same organizations stress the importance of local actors to reach the public, since they believe that the real change is a bottom-up process based on a trustful "learning culture". The association has hope in the local level, and explain to me in an interview that collaborations between different local actors with good knowledge about the specific conditions of the region will have good chances to implement a project. Democratization comes from "the local upwards" as she puts it. The Consulate also sees the value in reaching local, non-Istanbul based organizations, and one big reason why this organization in a city along the Black Sea coast got support was, apart for a good project, their geographical location. The Consulate and several of the supported organizations express a will to reach outside the big cities, in particular Istanbul where the vast majority of the supported organizations are based. This is as we can see still a challenge. The majority of the supported organizations do have projects that expand to other places than Istanbul, or have participants from all over the country joining their activities. Acknowledging this, the Swedish support has a larger geographical distribution than what the addresses of the organizations might show. At the same time, it is important to take into account where the salaries and job opportunities land.

The local perspective, but in a more community-based approach, is also emphasized by the Muslim feminist organization.

> "You know, we are not very happy about our part of audience in terms of many things too, that's why we want to change it, right? And this change cannot come from outer space. You can't be secular and try to change Muslim society, it just doesn't work like that. It's not durable, it can't continue for years [...] It should always come from the society itself. You can be with them and you can fight with them, but you can't do it for them."

Aware of the risk of being seen as an outsider and treated with hostility, the organization still stays hopeful about reaching more conservative women. If you manage to "humanize the theory" and make it more everyday relatable, you will find a lot of feminist thinking among people already, the representative explains. If one comes from within the community, it is also easier to depart from a lived reality and to base the discussion on relatable issues, especially when touching about sensitive issues such as sexuality and divorce, she continues. Combining religion and feminism, the discussion of young people's freedom of choice can be done with religious arguments, and they hence avoid being seen as an external force trying to force Western values on Turkish people. Doing this, the Muslim feminist organization has the chance to combat the conservative discourse of gender justice opposing gender equality as Western and inherently non-intersectional (Diner 2018:106). This is a key strategy for this organization, but also an important post-colonial task to challenge the idea of freedom as a Western concept. The representative takes the freedom of religious practices as an example, pointing out how religious practices like praying or wearing headscarf must be an independent and conscious decision by the person in order for it to be an honest act, and to be accepted by God. Otherwise it will not count, she claims. Freedom of choice, she explains, is not a question of secular norms, but the "heart of religion". I would like to suggest that the Swedish support to this organization succeeds to be an example of how a state can perform solidarity informed by the recommendations Khader (2019) draws in terms of non-ideal universalism and local agency.

The Muslim feminist organization, along with the union, have the opportunity to reach more politically conservative parts of society, which is important in creating a broad change and not to get stuck in preaching for people who already think like the organization regarding gender equality.

7.3.2. The young generation as actors of change

I hear hope when several of the interview participants talk about the young generation as a driving force of change. Young aspiring political leaders, academics, students, journalists, CSO representatives and community leaders are explained in project applications and interviews to bear the possibility to change and are in several projects the target group of projects aiming at strengthening gender equality, both because they are easier to impact, but also because there is

another support for gender equality among young people. One interview participant understands "every force [to create] its anti-force", pointing at the authoritarian and conservative political climate, and explains that the young generation asks for more diversity, progressive actions and more freedom to express themselves when the political and social pressure restricts it. She thinks it is closely connected to social media, since it "has made it inevitable to keep a society contained, because they see other countries, they see the youth in other countries, you cannot prevent it". She takes the hype around a deodorant ad as an example. To the soundtrack of a rewritten Turkish song, called "Men cry" instead of "Men don't cry", the commercial showed all different kinds of men crying. The reaction was overwhelming, she says, and a perfect example of how people value alternative gender portrayals. Young people are described in several interviews to have different and more complex perspectives of society than the older generation, they are more self-reflexive, and both inhabit and value gray zones. "They are careless of how things have been done before" as a participant expressed it. The organization working with trainings on sexual violence also values the structural understanding of power and privileges that the representative thinks is more common among young people than older people participating in the trainings. The Gender Studies Department sees a growing interest in gender and queer studies among students and young academics, but they also see an alarming need to support and motivate young researchers, especially if they are dismissed.

The Muslim feminist organization sees a big interest among young people to question and discuss religion, social norms, and religious and social pressure within Islam and conservative families. "Society is changing" the representative explains, and more and more young Muslims are in a gray zone of tradition and new ways of seeing and doing things, and combine secular and religious practices. This makes the older generation – the "aunts" (what older Turkish women are called) – very anxious, she says with a laugh. For the future, this organization plan to work with high school students and create a space to discuss experienced gender inequality and social pressure, and to introduce the perspective on structural, patriarchal inequalities instead of an individual understanding of the issues. It is not going to be "one-way teaching", the representative underlines, but rather an open discussion of sharing and exchange, to create a space to talk about sensitive issues and break feelings of loneliness. The representative from the Muslim feminist organization thinks that one of the basic principles of feminism is to always listen and stay open to the perspectives and opinions of young people, in order not to become one of those aunts.

The belief in the young generation in the material does not mean that the whole young generation shares the same political perspectives, even though many might share the will to discuss and widen their perspectives. The project educating future political leaders is well aware of this. The representative sees depressing main currents and hopeful undercurrents, where one undercurrent is the younger generation that despite ideological differences are ready to meet and discuss with their opponents. In making a change, the organization emphasizes the importance of reaching widely, and cover all the political spectra with their dialogue project. An increased respect, dialogue and interaction among people is an important step toward a strengthened democracy, as they see it.

7.4. Coalitions of change

In line with what Çağatay (2018) sees as alliances between dominant and non-dominant feminisms, there are several collaborations present in the material. Creating alliances between established actors like universities and grassroots organizations for financial and social support is a strategy in several projects. This also strengthens feminist epistemic communities of expertise. Something mentioned in many projects is an ambition to create coalitions between different actors around a common interest, and to use established platforms for less privileged groups and hence establish an alternative space for activists. Some examples are the center supporting grassroots organizations, and the education for young politicians. Important to note here is that these universities are private and not public. For the people I interviewed from the civil society center, collaboration is a question of solidarity. Now when they have a stable space and a well-established platform, they will use it as much as possible to improve the situation for women, LGBTI people and children. The Muslim feminist organization wants their new office to be a space for smaller initiatives to have a space for meetings. Collaborations between established actors and less powerful actors shows us that Turkish gender politics is a complex web of actors bringing change in different ways.

7.4.1. Professional groups as actors of change

While there is little interest, or even resistance, to some of the issues worked on by the organizations supported by Sweden from the Turkish government, there is a growing interest in how to strengthen gender equality among local authorities and professional groups such as lawyers, teachers, journalists and advertising industry professionals. Different professional groups are targeted in several projects in order to be more aware of gender equality issues in their work, and hence work as an important channel for the knowledge and perspectives by the civil society organizations.

The organization running training programs on sexual violence, offers trainings for anyone who is interested in the issue, but mostly for professional groups like psychologists and lawyers who get in touch with survivors of sexual violence and want to increase their knowledge and support capacity. The organization also gets approached by student groups, unions, municipalities, other CSOs, or companies, which shows that there is a big interest and demand for trainings about sexual violence, also on a local political level. The association also sees this collaboration as an exchange from where they gain updated insight in the field from people working with these issues on a daily basis.

The interview with a LGBTI organization that for various reasons did not get support this year, but still is an established partner to the Consulate, offers insightful information to the discussion of the role of professional groups, which is why I include some of the findings in this discussion. Despite the current hostile political environment toward LGBTI rights, there is a big and growing interest and a high demand on training about LGBTI related issues from professions such as teachers, lawyers, social workers and psychologists. The trainings include basic LGBTI terminology, information about legal obstacles and how to support LGBTI individuals legally and socially. After a training for high school teachers, the organization got the question to organize similar trainings on a larger scale, but this kind of collaboration has to stay on an organization-to-organization level, since it would be impossible, according to the interview participant, to get permission from the Ministry of education to implement such a project on a more institutionalized level. They also have an upcoming project with companies, which maps queer friendly work places. The growing interest in LGBTI rights comes from an increased sympathy with oppressed groups since the whole society has gotten more repressive, according to the representative. People

are now more willing to learn about things they earlier rejected, he explains. In this way, oppression creates solidarity and a counter force to the hegemonic political discourse.

The advertisement project aims to gather stakeholders from the industry and create a common project based on a common understanding of the current situation and a joint vision for the change. This is according to the representative from the project absolutely necessary in order to gain sustainable change. That will be followed by awareness raising trainings of basic gender equality terminology and how to include a gender perspective in advertising targeting the market departments in companies, the advertising agencies and researchers in marketing research institutes. Apart from the argument of destructive and devaluing gender stereotypes, she also sees a strategic argument in business effectiveness. Even though there is a big interest in this issue in the industry, the representative from the organization express a concern about the engagement from some people might just be following a trend and not having a genuine will.

In a collaboration with lawyers, journalists and a university, the organization located by the Black Sea plans to organize trainings for journalists to raise their awareness on how certain ways of reporting reproduces a conservative discourse of blaming the woman suffering from violence, and not holding the perpetrators responsible. They also report an interest among these professional groups, and are hopeful about the results. A project working broadly on violations of human rights in Eastern Turkey also has a specific focus on violence against women since they see high numbers of domestic violence and female suicide in the area where they are present. Impunity for the perpetrators further violates the victims, and the organization aims to educate lawyers on domestic violence through trainings.

When trainings might be one strategy, the union focuses on negotiations to reach people with power in order to change things. The project by the union also aims to impact the negotiations of working conditions between the union and the employers, and get reconciliation policies in place since the working hours and conditions are difficult to combine with family life. Hence, this project will indirectly include a target group of employers.

As many of the supported researchers in the research award project are expelled academics, this project works as an important collaboration between academia and independent researchers. The difficult situation for academics hits feminist reserachers, and many either withdraw from academia or go abroad if they have the chance. The collaboration is a clear example of the coalitions between dominant and non-dominant feminisms pointed out by Çağatay (2018). The

representative points out how the university has the capacity to handle international funding, and hence can function as a platform to create a network between university-based researchers, independent researchers, students and CSO activists.

Despite the harsh climate for civil society, the diverse group of CSOs discussed in this chapter functions a strong actor of change through advocacy, trainings, support and collaborations with different segments of society. This shows, in line with Çağatay (2018), that forces working for gender equality thrive and succeed to make an impact.

7.5. The Turkish state – a possible actor of change?

In the following discussion of the Turkish state, I mainly focus on the hegemonic political discourse by the central government and their ministries. The Turkish state apparatus is of course more diverse than only the government, and people working for the state inhabit a broader political view. In line with the argument in the section on CSOs collaborations with professional groups, it is important to mention that local politicians and municipalities are mentioned by several organizations, both in the applications and in interviews, as possible collaboration partners. This shows how the state is more complex than the central government. Even though no projects by municipalities were granted by the Consulate for 2019, there were some applications, and the Consulate staff say they are open to collaborate as long as there are good projects.

As described in previous chapters, the Turkish government does little to strengthen women's rights, LGBTI rights or their economic and social situation at the moment. As declared by Kardam (2002), the efforts by the domestic state still matters despite international collaborations and global frameworks for gender equality. The Turkish state is both an obstacle and the key to reach the kind of gender equality envisioned by the Swedish Consulate and the partner organizations.

One overarching challenge to strengthen gender equality, mentioned by all interview participants, is the strong conservative currents pushing the gender discourse into a more traditional direction, or at best keep status quo. This conservative political agenda targets women partly through a lack of interest in gender equality work, partly a lack of implementation of the existing international conventions. From the initial steps in the beginning of the EU accession, the government currently either ignores or opposes the demands from the feminist movement.

Referring to 'common values', 'our culture', morality and 'nature', AKP politicians have denounced feminists and their demands as abnormal and alien (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017:613,615,617). The state is still highly present in gender politics, but rather as a constricting than changing actor in the current political climate of a "re-traditionalization" of gender issues (Dobrotić et al. 2013:221). The gap between international commitments and the actual situation for gender equality is a sign of how Turkey is torn between the EU accession process and its domestic political climate. Within this "religio-conservative gender climate" (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017:611), the so called GONGO[7]s of women's organizations supported by the government have a serious impact on the gender climate and the public gender discourse. Those are officially independent organization but heavily involved with the government and dependent on their funding. KADEM is the most prominent among these organizations, founded by President Erdoğan's daughter Sümeyye Erdoğan (Diner 2018:105). Their ideological base is similar to the one of the government, and they mainly focus on issues like faith and family in their promotion of gender justice instead of gender equality. The concept of gender justice focuses on the "natural differences" between men and women and portraits right-based gender equality as forced upon Turkey from the West (Diner 2018:106). With stable financial and legal support, the conservative women's organizations play the role of the sole representation of all Turkish women, hiding and ignoring intersectional perspectives of the heterogeneous group of Turkish women (Güneş-Ayata & Doğangün 2017). These organizations swallow a big portion of national and international funding, as well as important international connections and collaborations, and somehow hijack the space of impact from the more independent civil society in gender politics. This development has dramatically limited the opportunities to influence state policies for independent CSOs (Eldén & Levin 2018:58-60, Diner 2018:104).

All of the representatives I interviewed for this study smile a little bit when they think about the possibilities of getting support from the Turkish government. It is far away for most of them. "But as long as you don't get shut down, you can see that as a kind of support", a CSO worker says sarcastically. The organizations I have talked to explain it to be difficult in general to work on issues that are opposing the state's agenda, and gender issues have become very politicized during the last decade. They also experience difficulties to work on advocacy in relation to the state, since it is unpredictable who is in charge of what, who is collaborating with whom and how

[7] Governmental non-governmental organization

the governmental infrastructure works. Traditional ways of thinking and not being familiar or open to concepts like gender equality makes it hard for some organizations to work with governmental bodies and public offices. It is also difficult to work with critical advocacy, one organization expresses fear of being arrested for making statements or taking to the streets for demonstrations. The unpredictability is explained to be difficult to deal with, never knowing how things can change rapidly, and if your organization might face a shut down or not. There is also a risk of getting arrested if you work on sensitive issues.

The Consulate also describes the political climate as the main challenge to increase gender equality in Turkey. The conservative political discourse in combination with an unstable region does not only work in opposition to gender equality, but also neglect gender issues while focusing on other things like fighting terrorism[8]. The Consulate finds it difficult to spark interest among decision makers, to establish continuity and see practical implementation when these questions have low priority. Gender equality might be seen as a luxury, something extra that Sweden can be interested in, but that Turkey has to put aside. In that situation, one of the interview participants from the Consulate explains, it is important to directly and indirectly through their partners raise the question "why not?". A representative from an organization points at how the current economic crisis makes gender equality less prioritized, since there is less money to be spent on "soft issues". This mirrors the challenges in the EU with the preoccupation among diplomats with 'high politics' like national security, at the expense of 'low politics' like gender equality (Bretherton 2001:73-74).

Even though all the supported organizations somehow work from the counterpublics, against the current political climate, they all want to reach and eventually collaborate with decision makers within the state (Çağatay 2018:63). The decision makers are key to legal and financial changes. When it comes to the final goals of many projects, the state has to be included, since the aim in the long term is to see a changed political discourse, strengthened rule of law, legal regulation about gender equality in advertising, or support to survivors of domestic violence, to mention a few examples. Municipalities and local governors are especially important to get involved and collaborate with. The Muslim feminist organization also sees the value of having connections with organizations and actors connected to the decision makers, and people close to

[8] Terrorism in this context is a broad concept, see background chapter on how the Turkish government has responded to the coup attempt.

the decision-making processes, even though they do not agree with them. They do not want to ignore them, because "who else are you gonna work with" then?

Reaching the state is also an important goal according to the Swedish representatives. Despite the focus on civil society, it is according to the Consulate important to keep relationships to governmental bodies, since they have the power. "It's a little bit like working with men about gender equality" as one interview participant explains it – to reach the subjects of power.

The Turkish state is understood to be a powerful actor in gender politics by all the actors discussed in this study. It might not be a transforming actor of change as such, but a powerful tool in the struggle for increased gender equality. Civil society actors hence have to know how to approach, and maybe eventually work with, the Turkish state (Tickner 2018:26). The Swedish support aims to enable civil society to lobby for women's rights, towards the central political power, as the Consulate staff explain in the interviews. The support also enables activities like trainings or support that are not carried out by the state. Building a strong civil society however risks lifting responsibility from the government, and might delay necessary reforms (Kardam 2002:436). Many CSOs experience a heavy workload since there is a high demand on their work. One CSO worker ended her description of their different projects with sighting "and now we are gonna die". This is also a reason why the state is important to reach.

7.6. International actors of change

International collaborations and connections are the basis of this study of gender politics in Turkey, since the entry point to the topic is the Swedish presence in the country. The results from this study show that these international connections inhabit a central role in the struggle for gender equality this study explores, both in a financial and a discursive way. In the application process to the Swedish Consulate, the organizations are encouraged to apply with projects with several donors, which creates an international web of support around the issues Sweden supports. A wider range of collaborations is decreasing the risk of meeting legal reprisals, and Sweden and other big donors are hence functioning in a protective way, even though no one is immune.

International collaborations are explained in the interviews with the Consulate to be important to share experiences, exchange know-how and create solidarity around a common cause. They want to engage both the Turkish state and partner organizations in international cooperation

and processes of change to strengthen international conventions and commitments. Several of the granted projects, current and previous, have organized study trips to Sweden or elsewhere, or have had collaboration with other Swedish civil society actors. The union who got support this year, has visited unions in Sweden, the association combating sexual violence went to Germany, and the Muslim feminist organization will organize a study trip to Egypt to establish contact and get inspiration from a Muslim feminist organization there. The Consulate sees the Swedish support to feminist voices in Turkey as a possible further impact in the region.

To use international connections, as well as referring to international laws and commitments is a well-established argument strategy among the organizations in collaboration with Sweden. The grant applications often refer to "international standards" on women's rights, and for the non-gender projects also "international standards" on rule of law, democracy and press freedom. The international community of politicians and professionals is also explained as important to reach when trying to spread information and raise awareness about different issues as human rights violations, restricted press freedom, and arrests of politicians, academics and journalists.

The international community is dual in its role as actors of change. There is a lack of donors active in Turkey, and international funding is the only opportunity for the great majority of the organizations supported by Sweden. At the same time, can the external funding be unpredictable and difficult to administer. Furthermore, due to the refugee crisis, a lot of funding is allocated to funding projects supporting refugees why it is harder to find funding for democracy or gender equality, issues that might not be as alarming as a humanitarian crisis.

7.6.1. EU as an actor of change

The role of the EU as an international actor of change is central in this study, since the EU accession is the overall political framework for the Swedish support, and for many other donors supporting the similar organizations. The question of the EU membership for Turkey functions as a strategic tool, an incentive argument for gender equality by the EU centrally, and by the individual member states. Eldén and Levin argue that the EU accession process currently functions as an investment for when the conditions in Turkey are different and an actual reform cooperation

can continue (Eldén & Levin 2018:80), but I argue that it still has an important role to play in the undercurrent changes that have been discussed.

Since gender equality is considered to be a pillar stone in the European Union, gender equality is argued to be an important step for Turkey to get closer to the EU, according to the policy documents and by the Consulate staff. The EU connected governance between the Swedish state and Turkish civil society is a clear example of the global gender equality regime (Kardam 2002), based on international agreements around certain meanings and the importance of gender equality, and put forward as an issue of international concern. In the light of what is discussed in the chapter of previous research regarding the strength by the EU to change laws as well as norms in an accessing country, an interesting question in relation to changed social norms is where that change comes from. Is feminism an external or internal force (Chiva 2009)? Can international frameworks and lead to actual change? From what this study shows, the life-sustaining financial resources in the processes of change come from international donors, many of them EU connected, but the ideas are domestic.

Europe and the EU, often used interchangeably, are by several interview participants used as the guiding example of respect for human rights, LGBTI rights and gender equality, and referred to as the goal, or the democratic "endpoint", to use Khader's (2019) words. In the Result Strategy for the Swedish support, it states that "EU-integration is crucial to these countries' pursuit of democracy, the rule of law and openness, as well as sustainable economic development" (Ministry for Foreign Affairs 2014:6), which further strengthens than narrative. Expressing concern that Turkey is getting a worse relationship to Europe and moving in the opposite direction of an EU accession, the project working with young politicians aims to strengthen the knowledge and support for what they call European norms, history and institutions. They also always invite European guests to the schools. Council of Europe is one of the partners in this project, which explains why Europe becomes a central reference, but as the representative also explains, "[is] Europe stuff more attractive to Turkish people".

According to the interviews with the Consulate, there is no large-scale change regarding gender equality on a political, national level. As shown in the chapter of previous research as well (Kıvılcım Forsman 2004), the EU accession process still functions as a momentum for gender equality questions, both in a political debate, and in a financial way through the available support to CSOs working on gender equality. Furthermore, the ongoing EU accession process keeps the

government from closing certain organizations. If the accession process would finish, some organizations not in line with the government's agenda would then most possibly face a great risk of shutdowns and arrests, according to themselves. However, it is at this point impossible to fully evaluate the impact of the EU accession process since it still is ongoing, and very unclear where it is heading.

8. Concluding discussion: Big challenges and small-scale success

With the aim to contribute to a broader understanding of the practical implementation of Sweden's feminist foreign policy, as part of international gender politics, I have worked with four guiding research questions: How is Sweden involved in Turkish gender politics through the Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul? How do the staff at the Consulate General in Istanbul understand, implement and argue for the feminist foreign policy in their support and promotion of gender equality in Turkey? What actors and processes of change are present through the gender equality work by the Swedish Consulate General in Istanbul? How do the Consulate's civil society partner organizations work with gender equality in Turkey?

In dialogue with the existing research on Sweden's feminist foreign policy and gender equality in the EU enlargement processes, I have aimed to enrich the field by exploring local implementation of the policy, and pointed out important collaboration partners to Sweden in the struggle for gender equality in Turkey. By looking at the less visible everyday implementation by the missions abroad, this case-based study complements the existing literature by looking at other aspects of the policy than the security-oriented issues in conflict areas, and hence broadens the discussion of Sweden as an actor of change in international gender politics. It does so by looking at the relationship between state feminism and civil society actors (Aggestam et al. 2019:27), and explore the wide range of topics worked on by the partner organizations. As stressed by Aggestam et al., there is a need to critically evaluate the so called other-regarding gender-just external relations which are the basis of the feminist foreign policy. In order to see if there is an "empathetic cooperation" based on a sensitive dialogue, listening to the "others" in the cooperation is key (Aggestam et al. 2019:26,33-34). In this study, the "others" are the non-state actors who collaborate with Sweden. Exploring a web of actors, this study also contributes to the research field of gender equality in the EU enlargement process by showing the many different currents of change existing simultaneously, both in line with the EU accession process, against it, and independently of it.

In dialogue with theoretical discussions of the gendered state (True 2018), gender equality as an international matter within a global gender regime (Kardam 2002) and state as an actor of feminist change (Harrington 1992; Duriesmith 2018), I formulated the question if another state can be a successful actor of change, pointing at the Swedish involvement in Turkey. By bringing

postcolonial critical perspectives of imperialism in "missionary feminism" (Khader 2019), and building on Mohanty's critique of transnational collaboration "under Western eyes", I asked if Sweden becomes an imperial actor, and through its support is putting the Turkish actors under Swedish eyes, directing and defining problems, projects, goals, and money.

This study, looking from the perspective of the Swedish support, shows how Sweden both works as an actor in promoting gender equality, but more successfully as an ally. By exploring the alliances with civil society organizations, this study shows how a variety of actors are involved in Turkish gender politics, both in a pushing and constricting way. With little prospect of feminist change from the current Turkish state apparatus, parts of civil society work more intensely on gender equality, with important support from an international community. The space to act, and impact, for civil society in Turkish gender politics, is however limited. At the same time, along the harsh political conditions, there are other currents of change growing through civil society's collaboration with professional groups and the young generation.

Asking whether Sweden, and in a larger picture the EU, are performing an imperial enforcement on Turkey, demanding the country to adapt to "European standards", one could answer yes by looking at how Sweden positions itself as a gender-just endpoint who others should follow. A more nuanced answer is possible through Khader's (2019) call for transnational feminist politics based on non-ideal universalism opposing sexist oppression. In what I argue to be the role of an enabling ally (Duriesmith 2018), the Swedish support civil society actors working with gender equality in different ways, is the most effective way to strengthen gender equality in a foreign setting, a strategy that also grounds the work and hence decrease imperialist dimensions. Listening to the supported organizations, I would like to suggest that the Swedish Consulate in Istanbul performs the empathetic cooperation called for by Aggestam et al. (2019).

My analysis of civil society actors supported by Sweden shows a diverse and complex picture of "domestic change" (Chiva 2009) since the domestic opinion is wide and scattered around gender equality and what gender equality should entail. The organizations I explore work on sexual violence, media representation, political dialogue, labour rights, LGBTI rights, feminist research and Muslim feminism as part of a broadened feminist movement, and they all share the belief in women's equal rights, freedom from violence, economic independency and political and social equal rights for everyone. Despite the location in the counterpublics, the CSOs I explore in this study have an indirect impact through their target groups of "publics", professional groups, and

access to the young generation, and are hence the main actors of change in this analysis, and I claim that they are the central operating force to bring about feminist change (Çağatay 2018).

The main constricting actor in this equation is the Turkish state. The Turkish state apparatus is both a challenge and a necessary key actor to reach for the other actors discussed in this study, international as domestic. The governmentally supported women's GONGOs channel the Turkish state's agenda on gender politics which gives the state a path into civil society through their support to like minded organizations. The GONGOs have pushed the non-conservative women's organizations into the counterpublics from where they have little impact on state policies and access to international institutions. In line with Harrington (1992), the resources and power of the state are understood by all interviewed representatives to be the key to institutionalized progressive gender politics. In absence of a supporting Turkish state, the CSOs working on gender equality turn to international donors, not seldom EU member states with a budget for support to Turkey.

Collaborations between more well established and smaller actors from civil society is an important strategy. I see this in the collaboration between Sweden and their partners, as well as between larger actors supported by Sweden as well as other EU states, and smaller organizations or activists. The ongoing, but de facto frozen EU accession process, somehow still works as a momentum for gender equality work. From a previous momentum that brought changed laws and signed international conventions, the political and financial framework of the EU accession currently works as a survival momentum, as the EU accession process keeps some organizations to be closed, and enables financial support to organizations similar to the ones supported by Sweden.

One could ask why Sweden should keep supporting a reform cooperation if there are no big results. As mentioned before, the Consulate does not see any large-scale change in gender politics in Turkey. I would suggest to pay attention to the small scale results, apart from the significant fact that the support and presence helps keep an independent civil society alive. Looking at a small scale, there are positive results, mirroring what an interview participant called the positive undercurrents. While waiting for more room to act for progressive forces working with gender equality, the small-scale success hopefully points in a direction for other times to come, inevitable, and to some extent regardless of the EU accession process. In the application form, applicants are asked to describe previous projects carried out and argue for the prospects of carrying out another successful project. Looking at the small-scale results, one example of change

is the way gender equality in a union now is a well-integrated perspective and how more women are holding leading positions in the union. Another example is how a village leader understands the structural problem in sexual violence and express a changed attitude about women who have suffered from sexual violence. Valuing the small success stories, like a nationalist person paying interest in minorities, a conservative person gaining new insight in women's struggle or respecting LGBTI people, one organization sees the small steps of new perspectives, new friendships and critical thinking as a way to eventually change society.

The Consulate also thinks that it has succeeded in small-scale ways, in creating a bigger awareness of gender equality in the projects and collaborations Sweden is involved with. Worth mentioning is that all organizations I met emphasized their own feminist base. The Consulate staff also point at the fact that many organizations have grown with the financial and capacity building support from the Consulate, and hence will have better chances to continue and develop their projects.

Based on the results, this study supports the recommendation of a continued and committed Swedish support to Turkish civil society actors from the larger study on the question by Eldén and Levin (2018). I certainly believe that there are aspects to be improved, other voices and perspectives that should be heard and taken into consideration, but in the end, I follow Khader (2019) in her claim that there is an urgent need for feminist solidarity across borders and communities. I believe that this can include all the actors present in this study, and more. How this can be carried out in a successful, respectful, anti-imperialist and sustainable way is one of the central questions for feminist activism, politics and academy, in theory and in practice.

8.1. Future research

This study is not as critical as it could have been, if it had followed what Dubois calls a people-centered policy ethnography (2015:467). The people targeted in the projects supported through the Swedish grant program have important knowledge of the policy outcomes. Exploring their experiences could be done through looking at the supported organizations final reports, but rather through interviews with people who are involved in or targeted in the projects supported by Sweden – people in decision making positions, as well as beneficiaries of support or trainings. I find Mohanty's suggestion of locating an analysis of social injustice in the periphery of power and

privileges inspiring, also for evaluating responses to social injustice. I would direct future research to start in the communities that are the target groups of the projects supported by Sweden. “Reading up the ladder” of power, this perspective, with its “epistemic privilege” would shed even brighter light on international political processes than only looking at the relationship between the Swedish actors and their collaboration partners (Mohanty 2003:511).

By the time of finishing this thesis, there is a new Minister of Foreign Affairs in office, but the feminist foreign policy is still in place, hence still being a field of research. A larger study would be able to cover the work carried out by Sida, and would therefore be able to present a more comprehensive analysis of the Swedish efforts to strengthen gender equality internationally, in Turkey and elsewhere.

9. References

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9.1. Interviews

The transcripts are not available for audit.

Interview 1 – 2019-01-23

Interview 2 – 2019-01-24

Interview 3 – 2019-01-25

Interview 4 – 2019-01-29

Interview 5 – 2019-02-07

Interview 6 – 2019-02-12

Interview 7 – 2019-02-13

Interview 8 – 2019-02-15

Interview 9 – 2019-02-19

Interview 10 – 2019-03-04