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The Struggle for Gender Equality After the State of Emergency and Gender Studies

Problems, Expectations, Suggestions in Academia and Civil Society

Credits

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Translated from Turkish by

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The Struggle for Gender Equality and Gender Studies After the State of Emergency: Problems, Expectations, Suggestions in Academia and Civil Society

Nur Betül Çelik

Banu Durdağ

* This work is realized within the scope of the "Promoting Gender Equality via the Network of Solidarity Academies" project supported by the European Union and carried out in cooperation with the L.R. ADA Cooperative for Education (Ankara Solidarity Academy) and BİRARADA Science, Art, Education, Research and Solidarity Association. It was prepared as a report of the study on the status of the struggle for gender equality in academia and civil society organisations after the State of Emergency.

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What is the Gender Equality Solidarity Network (AĞ-DA)?

The "*Promoting Gender Equality via the Network of Solidarity Academies*" project started to be carried out in 2020 with the cooperation of L.R. ADA Cooperative for Education (Ankara Solidarity Academy) and BIRARADA Science, Art, Education, Research and Solidarity Association with the support of the European Union. KAOS-GL and İHOP are the consultative organizations of the project. The primary objective of the project is to develop channels that will make it easier for civil society organizations and academics to share knowledge, research and field experience in the field of gender equality and to establish a gender equality solidarity network to mediate the proliferation of advocacy and research activities to be carried out together. In line with this purpose, *AĞ-DA (Gender Equality Solidarity Network)*, was built in 2020 with the participation of academics working in the field of gender, solidarity academies formed by academics who were dismissed from public service during the State of Emergency and civil society organisations involved in the struggle for gender equality. *The network* aims to contribute to the development of the experience of civil society organizations, Solidarity Academies and academics to work together to cope with the obstacles created by the political atmosphere. Developing channels that will make it easier for civil society organizations and academics to share their knowledge, research and experience in the field of gender equality is among the founding objectives of *AĞ-DA*. In addition, **the Gender Equality Solidarity Network** is expected to mediate the re-establishment of the connection of academics with the experience and knowledge accumulated by civil society organizations in the field, thus facilitating the access of civil society organisations working in the fields of women and LGBTIQ+ rights to academic information and ensuring the proliferation of advocacy and research activities to be carried out together.

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Abbreviations

BİMER	Prime Ministry Communication Center
ÇİMER	Presidential Communication Center
CTS	Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Prevention Units
GONGO	Government-organized Non-governmental Organisations
IS	Istanbul Convention
KASAUM	Women's Issues Research and Application Centre
KHK	Decree Law
LGBTI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, (+)
ÖYP	Faculty Member Training Program
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
SHÇEK	Social Services and Child Protection Institution
YÖK	Council of Higher Education

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INTRODUCTION

1. Background and Rationale of the Research:

Obviously, with the State of Emergency (OHAL) declared after the July 15 coup attempt, the authoritarianism that manifests itself in various forms in parallel with the characteristics of different periods in Turkey gained new momentum. Particularly, with the declaration of the Gülen community as the terrorist organisation behind the coup attempt, purges of the people from public institutions began because they had organic ties to the organisation. But, those who were dismissed from public service by announcing their names in the annexes of the decree-laws (KHKs) were not limited to those related to the Gülen community. The coup attempt created a justification for launching an all-out struggle against all social segments that opposed the ideological preferences of the AKP government.

The State of Emergency regime enabled the government to rapidly mobilize the state's coercive apparatus against different segments of the society on the grounds of an all-out fight against terrorism. The fact that “being against the government” or “opposing for the change of government” is called terrorist activity both in the speeches of the representatives of the government and in the regulatory texts, in the decree laws, and the claim that different terrorist organisations act together as a coalition against the government can be used at any time by these means as the most frequently used legitimization tactic. It can be said that this force-based oppression is mostly directed toward civil society, and eradicates it. The area of civil society has narrowed with the closure of opposition organisations, the suspension or prevention of the activities of associations that advocate for rights, and the arrests of rights defenders. To understand the dimensions of this shrinkage, it would be appropriate to show the situation following the coup attempt with facts and figures.

Within the scope of the State of Emergency declared on 20 July 2016 following the coup attempt, a total of 178 media outlets (only nine of these closure orders were lifted later), 1425 associations, and 123 foundations were closed with the decrees until 31 December 2016. In addition to this, many practices have been put into practice which renders institutions observing public interest dysfunctional. The dismissal of elected mayors, especially in cities and districts where the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) won in local elections, and the appointment of trustees in their place has been one of the most conspicuous practices that started during the State of Emergency and continued on the grounds of terrorism after the abolition of the State of Emergency. Citizens were prevented from exercising their constitutional rights and freedoms on similar grounds. Especially freedom of thought and expression, freedom of association, right to assembly, demonstration, march, and demand for information are among the most restricted citizens' rights and freedoms.

In addition, the field of education has been pushed into a crisis, especially with the expulsion of the labour force from educational institutions. Similarly, in the field of higher education, a total of 6081 academicians were expelled from the institution they were working in, with the lists published in the annexes of the Decree-Laws between 2016-2018. In addition to the diminishment in the labour force, the already controversial principles of academic autonomy, election, and appointment of the rector and dean were once again destroyed by resigning all of the administrators stipulated in the Higher Education Law and re-appointing some of them. The rules for the appointment of rectors and deans were subject to a change, with elections being abolished altogether after the State of Emergency. The appointment of the new administrators who are known to support or who have made policy in the ruling party ranks constitutes the last link of the adverse change in this field. It is clear that universities, institutions where academic autonomy and freedom

have been almost destroyed, have been seriously damaged by authoritarian practices enacted during and after the State of Emergency.

In this context, it should be said that the struggle for gender equality is another area where oppression, which is legitimized based on tradition, belief, family values, honor, and moral norms, causes the most damage and losses. One of the consequences of this loss was that, as of 2019, the Istanbul Convention was opened for discussion on the level of family values, traditions, and beliefs, and Turkey's withdrawal from the Convention on 20 March 2021 with the Presidential Decree. It is a problem in itself that the anti-Convention campaigns carried out around the rejection of the concept of “gender” spread a language of hate, especially targeting LGBTI+s. Considering the determination of KAOS GL's Human Rights of LGBTI+s 2019 Report (2020) that “the lack of legislation and policy in the field of human rights of LGBTI+s continues to cause vital consequences and gross human rights violations” in 2019, It can be said that the decision of the policymakers withdrawing from the Istanbul Convention will turn the existing policy deficiency into a complete absence. It is another point to be investigated that the dissemination of opposition to the contract, especially by the representatives of the ruling power, combined with the dominance of the authoritarian regime over the judiciary can have an impact on impunity in cases of violence against women and LGBTI+s.

Beginning with the police attack on the Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Parade in 2015, “The threat of ISIL against Kaos GL in 2016, the banning of the March Against Homophobia and Transphobia in Ankara; with the Istanbul Pride Parade being banned once again, the increasing hate attacks and murders, and the increasing pressure, as the smear campaigns targeting LGBTI+s are now systematized by the media and politicians”¹, the indefinite event bans for LGBTI+'s in Ankara

¹ *Olağanlaştırılan OHAL'den Çıkış Dayanışmasıyla Mümkün! LGBTİ+ Örgütlenmesi Çalıştayı Sonuç Raporu, 24-25*

with the State of Emergency have led to a new era. But, with the victory of the legal battles in this area, the event bans could only be lifted in March 2020.²

With the increasing pressure, it is seen that knowledge production is tried to be kept under control as much as rights advocacy activities on gender equality. The intervention of the State of Emergency regime developed in the form of eliminating the gains one by one made by the struggle for gender equality since the mid-90s. In addition, it should be pointed out that there are interventions that will mean the loss of the position that the gender and women's studies fields have reached as a result of years of struggle within the academic organisation.

Among the achievements obtained as a result of the struggle practices for universities, are the acceptance of the Policy Document on Gender Equality by the The Council of Higher Education, the establishment of Women's Issues Research Centres in Universities, the establishment of Women's Studies Departments, and the restructuring of Women's Studies master's and doctoral programs within these departments, and the beginning of the training of academicians in the field of gender can be counted. Within the scope of these programs, it was ensured that the university cooperates with civil society organisations, women's movements, and LGBTI+ activists in the field of gender. Again, the contribution of the joint research projects and theses produced within these programs to the academic literature is highly significant. In addition to these, the progress made in raising awareness through the widespread inclusion of gender-related courses in undergraduate curricula is another remarkable achievement. Convincing university administrations to reorganize their operations in the context of gender equality by creating policy

Ekim 2020, KAOS GL Derneği, ss.1-2. (Getting Out of the Normalized State of Emergency is Possible with Solidarity! LGBTI+ Organisation Workshop Final Report, 24-25 October 2020, KAOS GL Association, pp.1-2.)

² *ibid.*, p. 2.

documents against sexual harassment is one of the distinguishing achievements of the gender struggle.

However, as a result of the intervention of the regime, the Council of Higher Education, which took shelter behind an excuse such as protecting the family, removed the Policy Document on Gender Equality from its website because it conflicted with our social and cultural values, and the Istanbul Convention was opened for discussion and the name “family studies” was used instead of universally adopted names “women's studies” or “gender studies” for the field. The name change carries a meaning beyond being just a simple intervention.

This change brings the legitimacy of the studies and lectures given in the field of women's studies or gender in universities into question based on traditional values, beliefs, and the principle of protecting the family. University administrations have high adaptability skills to act within the ideological framework determined by the government. In an environment where there is no academic autonomy, the instructions can reach the sub-units quickly, causing the institutional functioning and universal academic values to be disregarded, causing the departments and research centres to become dysfunctional. When considered together with this situation, the name change should be seen as a means of eliminating the freedom of research. Thus, it was possible to restrict universities' gender-based education and research activities. The transition, cooperation, and partnership, that should be between the university and the civil society have been blocked. This situation imposes a rupture between theory and practice. Universities lose their functions of producing knowledge with this rupture, which means that the source of theoretical knowledge dries up. In such an environment, desertification that can be expected to continue for generations is inevitable.

The rationale for the proposed and completed field research to identify the destruction in the field of gender equality within the scope of the Project for Promoting Gender Equality through Solidarity Academies was shaped within the context outlined above. The research assumes that in the period following the State of Emergency and extending to the present, the problems experienced in the production of knowledge at the academic level in the field of gender have deepened and the possibilities in this regard have narrowed, and the ties of academic knowledge with gender equality struggle practices have been weakened. It assumes that academia is gradually moving away from being a part of the organisational struggle in the field of gender equality. Academic autonomy has been destroyed in terms of institutions; the very existence of a higher education field, where academic freedom is no longer a question as a condition for knowledge production to emerge from practice, should be seen as a supporting factor for the research hypothesis on the destruction of gender and women's studies fields and the causes behind it.

2. Purpose of the Research:

The research was carried out between May 2020 and July 2021. The main objective of the research is to show the extent of the destruction created by the State of Emergency in particular and the AKP authoritarianism in general in terms of the struggle of civil society organisations advocating rights in the context of gender equality and to reveal how academia is rendered dysfunctional both in terms of being a side of the struggle and the source of construction of knowledge in the field. The aim is to provide data to the AĞ-DA Gender Equality Solidarity Network, which was established within the scope of the project for the academic reconstruction of the gender field and to strengthen the struggle for equality and rights by making the boundaries of destruction visible. Within the framework of the findings obtained, the nature of the contribution that the stakeholders of the AĞ-DA Gender Equality Solidarity Network expect from the network

on issues that they define as a need for sharing knowledge and experience in the field of gender equality has also become visible. It is expected that the results of the research will contribute to the organisation of the activities of the solidarity network with clearer objectives, to increase the capacities of the network stakeholders, build solidarity more strongly, increase the number of joint projects and draw the framework of any activity to be organized to improve their qualifications.

3. Research Argument

The research argues that the State of Emergency and the ensuing Presidential government system while reconstructing the patriarchal structure on an Islamic basis, acted within the power relations that operate through the body and attempted to shape its discourse on a transformed knowledge/power ground. This is a struggle for hegemony. Femininity/masculinity, gender roles, birth/death, and life are reinterpreted with a tradition that is reduced to the religious one. The discursive strategies developed to build a common sense on the axis of “tradition”, the meaning of which has been redefined in the struggle for hegemony, operate over “gender” and “body”. What these strategies are, how they work, and where they shift the ground of struggle have been the key questions of the research to make the dimensions of this struggle for hegemony visible.

4. Scope of the Research:

In line with its purpose, the policy choices, rights violations, discrimination, hate crimes, and domestic violence issues that deepen gender inequality in the process that emerged with the declaration of the State of Emergency were excluded from the scope of the research. Determining the problems that arise with the oppressive practices of the authoritarian regime in the theoretical and practical knowledge production processes has been determined as the main objective of the

research in terms of both creating strategies for overcoming the rupture between academic experience and struggle practices and building solidarity between academia and civil society.

5. Methodology of the Research:

First of all, it is crucial to ensure that the feminist perspective is articulated with different gender theories and approaches in terms of permeating the gender equality perspective in all research from a theoretical, epistemological, and methodological point of view and understanding transgender and LGBTI+ relations. The first type of literature to which the research will relate itself was chosen in this context. The research is fed by sources related to gay and lesbian studies, transgender studies, queer theory, and epistemological choices that come with them, as well as feminist epistemology. In the context of the heterogeneity of feminist theory, not ignoring diversity, a pluralistic view has been a basic principle in the selection of sources. The research has been tried to be carried out with a multi-perspective fed from different disciplines focused on the issue of gender, with the sensitivities formed in the socio-political practice from which these disciplines originate.

Undoubtedly, the reciprocal and critical relations of theories that examine the structure of power relations specific to modern societies and provide the opportunity to draw a conceptual framework on this issue with the theories that develop, discuss, criticize and deconstruct concepts such as sex and gender are important to make sense of and interpret the struggle for hegemony. In this context, it is necessary to mention several theories that can be gathered under the main title of ideology critique. Considering that the concept of hegemony, which is shaped by Marxist literature, is defined based on political, cultural, and ideological struggle, the importance of hegemony theories for this research is clear. An approach in line with Gramsci-Laclau-Mouffe

provided a theoretical basis for this research in determining the axes of the ongoing struggle for hegemony during the AKP rule. In addition to the research program developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe in their works titled *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, discourse analysis approaches were instrumental in establishing the epistemological-methodological framework of the research. In this context, research stands at the intersection of multidisciplinary, pluralistic, alternative, critical, and reflective methodologies.

The research was planned and conducted in three stages, in which quantitative and qualitative techniques were used together:

In the first stage, it aimed to reveal how authoritarianism, which gained momentum after the State of Emergency regime, affected the position of women's studies, gender equality, women's and LGBTI+ rights and struggle in academia, and what the direction of the change was. The universe of the survey is composed of academicians working on gender issues, still working at a university or leaving the university for reasons such as retirement or resignation, or who have been dismissed from public service with the Statutory Decrees during the State of Emergency process. In this context, questionnaires were sent online to 264 people identified. The collected quantitative data were processed in a way to form a basis for a descriptive evaluation.

In the second stage, through semi-structured in-depth interviews, the nature of the oppression faced by women's rights and LGBTI+ organisations operating in the field of gender equality, and its consequences in terms of struggle, were tried to be revealed. First of all, a list of 25 civil society organisations (CSOs) organized in Ankara, Antalya, Bursa, Aydın, İzmir, İstanbul, Van, Diyarbakır, Hatay, Mersin, Muş, Eskişehir provinces, members of the network and outside the network, which were closed or whose activities were suspended, was prepared. The

representatives of these organisations were contacted via e-mail, telephone, and/or WhatsApp application, and a request for a meeting was conveyed. A total of thirty participants from twenty CSOs from the provinces of Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Kocaeli, Mersin, Antalya, Hatay, and Muş, who responded positively to our call, were sent online in advance open-ended questions and keywords that allowed them to define the nature of the repression for themselves. In the light of the answers to these questions, the framework of the online interviews made over Zoom has been determined. Semi-structured online interviews were conducted between 30 October 2020 and 28 February 2021.

The third stage of the field research aimed to reach a qualitative finding, which was deepened by focus group discussions on the consequences of the destruction. Focus groups were planned and conducted to bring together academicians and rights defenders. Seven focus group studies were conducted with the participation of CSO members working in the field of women's rights and LGBTI+ rights, the managers of these organisations, including already closed ones, to whom we reached for in-depth interviews, and randomly selected academicians whose research area was gender and who answered the online survey of the research. Initially, three separate groups were formed, one consisting of academicians, one consisting of CSO representatives, and the other consisting of members of student initiatives or associations. Two online meetings were held with each group between May-June 2021. During the conduct of the first phase of the research, it was observed that authoritarianism deepened the problem of lack of interaction between academicians and CSO volunteers and members who fight for gender equality and rights advocacy, and academic knowledge production channels were gradually weakened, as well as this knowledge became impractical, completely abstract and far from problem-oriented. From this point of view, it was thought that focus groups should be structured as spaces for meeting, confrontation, solidarity, and partnerships between academicians and activists, and to

determine the quality of knowledge of this struggle together with the struggle for gender equality. In this framework, the last focus group meeting was carried out in the form of a forum, going beyond the usual structure of focus groups. In the forum, the important points and problems that emerged during a total of six focus studies conducted with academicians, representatives of civil society organisations, and student initiatives were discussed and the lines of commonality and separation were tried to be clarified.

I. Gender Studies and Equality in Academia In the Light of the Testimony of Academicians

1. Survey on the Status of Gender Studies in Universities After the State of Emergency

This part of the research report includes those who carry out their academic studies in the fields of gender or women's studies, who are currently working at a university, or who are retired, dismissed, or resigned by decree, etc. This study was devoted to the evaluation of the data obtained in the survey titled “The Situation of Gender Studies in Universities After the State of Emergency”, which was designed to be carried out with 100 academicians who had to leave the university for various reasons but continue their research activities independently. First of all, the implementation process from survey design to data collection will be described, and the problems that emerged during the implementation and the methodological limitations of the survey will be explained.

Although it was foreseen to be conducted face-to-face during the design phase, it was understood that the questionnaire should be applied online due to the COVID-19 pandemic that emerged in Turkey at the beginning of March 2020. Thereupon, the opportunities offered by different online options, their limitations, and their strengths and weaknesses relative to each other were compared and the survey preparation, dissemination, and monitoring program named SurveyMonkey was selected for implementation, taking into account the aims and objectives of the research. Through this application, a draft question paper consisting of 52 questions was designed, and the pilot application of the questionnaire was carried out with 10 participants. The question paper was given its final form after the research team evaluated the problems pointed out in the participants' feedback, the questions that did not seem to work, or the question formats (see Annex 2 for the survey questions).

Structure and Purposes of Questionnaire

The purpose of the survey is to gather information about the level of destruction that has occurred in the fields of gender or women's studies with the State of Emergency regime, within the framework of the testimonies of academicians. The questions are designed in such a way that quantitative data can be obtained to describe this destruction.

The first part of the questionnaire consists of questions for obtaining demographic data about the participants. The questions aim to reveal the academic status of the participants, their institutional ties, their position in an academic institution if they are currently working in that institution, their research interests, and the quality of the research they are conducting.

The second part of the questionnaire is devoted to questions to measure how much the educational and research capacities of institutes, departments, or branches of science established to carry out studies in this field are affected by the State of Emergency practices, as well as the position of gender studies in academia.

In the third part of the questionnaire, some questions aim to understand the nature of the participant's relationship with the gender equality struggle practices. It was expected that such questions would show how academicians define their ties with practice and to what extent they became a part of the practice of struggle.

The fourth group of questions in the questionnaire is designed to understand the individual perceptions of academicians who teach, conduct thesis, and research in the field of gender, about the extent to which the State of Emergency regime affects academic freedoms in this field.

The last set of questions in the questionnaire is structured in order to determine whether there has been a change in the policies of universities in the field of gender and women's studies with the State of Emergency, and if so, what this change has been.

Designation of Sample, Access to Participants, Collection of Responses

After the questionnaire took its final form, a pool of 264 academicians with research backgrounds in the field of gender was formed before the questionnaire was implemented. Question papers were sent to these academicians, whose names, information of the institutions they work or are affiliated with, and e-mail addresses were designated, via e-mail and web sharing, which were designated as answer collection tools. It has been tried to overcome the disadvantages of online survey applications related to low response rates, with the introduction of chat applications such as WhatsApp to speed up responses with reminder e-mails sent at fifteen-day intervals. Despite this, the target number of 100 returns could not be reached; Of the 264 academicians reached, only 91 returned. Two of these 91 people were excluded because they left the survey unfinished. The number of surveys taken into consideration is 89. Considering this situation, the return rate can be calculated as 34%.

212 of the 264 academicians who formed the sample pool of the research, to which the questionnaire was sent, still work in women's studies or gender studies centres of universities or teach in graduate programs in this field. The number of academicians who worked in the field of gender but were dismissed from public office with the emergency decrees is 38. The last group of 11 people in the pool consists of academicians who are not currently working in a higher education institution due to reasons such as retirement (9 people) or resignation (2 people). The first table below shows the distribution of the first group of 212 people according to the universities they work at:

University/ Department/ / Research and Implementation Centre	Number
Akdeniz University	11
Alparslan Türkeş Science and Technology University	1
Ankara University	9
Atılım University	5
Başkent University	5
Bilgi University	2
Bilkent University	4
Boğaziçi University	10
Çankaya University	6
Çukurova University	5
Dokuz Eylül University	1
Ege University	6
Galatasaray University	5
Gazi University	2
Hacettepe University	27
İstanbul Arel University	1
İstanbul Technical University	8
İstanbul University	15
İzmir Ekonomi University	4
Kafkas Üniversitesi	3
Karabük University	1
Koç University	7
Kocaeli University	1
Marmara University	1
Mersin University	19
Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University	13
Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University	1
Munzur University	1
Onsekiz Mart University	1
Ortadoğu Technical University	9
Özyeğin University	5
Sabancı University	8
Trakya University	7
Uşak University	5
Van Yüzüncüyıl University	2
Yıldırım Beyazıt University	1
Sum Total	212

Table 1: The Distribution of Academicians Who Have Been Delivered Question Papers by Universities They Worked

As seen in the table, Hacettepe University is distinguished from the others as the university where we reach the most academicians working on gender equality with 27 academicians. Mersin University follows it with 19 academicians. Colored lines in the table show the universities with 9 or more people in the pool. Considering the cities where the institutions from which the 212 academicians were included in the pool were determined to be

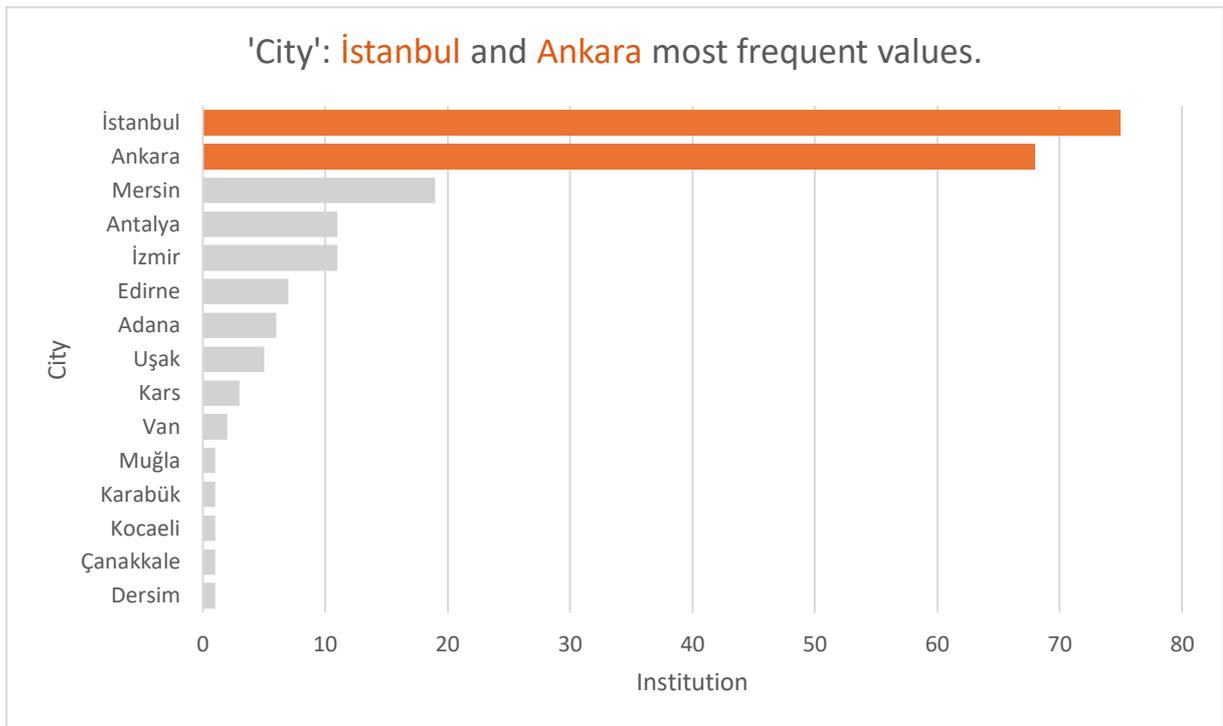
working in the field of gender or women's studies throughout Turkey, it is seen that the provinces of Istanbul and Ankara are ahead by a large margin:

Universities by City	Number of the Academicians	Ratio
İstanbul	75	35,38%
Ankara	68	32,08%
Mersin	19	8,96%
Antalya	11	5,19%
İzmir	11	5,19%
Edirne	7	3,30%
Adana	6	2,83%
Uşak	5	2,36%
Kars	3	1,42%
Van	2	0,94%
Muğla	1	0,47%
Karabük	1	0,47%
Kocaeli	1	0,47%
Çanakkale	1	0,47%
Tunceli	1	0,47%
Sum Total	212	100,00%

Table 2: Distribution of Academicians by Universities by City

The table above shows that those who contribute to knowledge production by conducting research on gender or women's studies are concentrated in the two largest cities of Turkey. Although it is disputable that the centre/province or centre/periphery distinction is problematic as an analysis framework, the decisive position of Istanbul and Ankara, which can be called “centres” in this regard, is clear in terms of gender studies. Of course, this numerical determination should not trivialize the qualitative contribution of the research and publications

made in other cities to the field. The imbalance of the distribution is even more striking when visualized.



(Figure 1: The Most Frequent Values in Numerical Distribution by Cities)

A similar distribution can also be observed in terms of academicians who have no connection with any higher education institution at the moment because they were dismissed from public service with the State of Emergency Decrees, but continue to carry out their research or activities on gender or women's studies under the roof of different Solidarity Academies established after the dismissals. The first table below shows the numerical distribution of the 38 dismissed academicians in the pool, to whom we sent the questionnaire, according to the institutions they were dismissed from. When the table is examined, it is seen that Ankara University takes the lead as the institution that exports the most academicians. The extent of the damage caused by the sudden dismissal of 11 academicians working in this field by a university, which can be claimed to have a deep-rooted tradition in gender studies, is obvious. In the second table that follows (Table 4), the distribution of the universities where

these academicians worked before their expulsion by the city can be followed. Accordingly, it is understood that there is an accumulation in Ankara and Istanbul. However, the fact that the number of dismissals in new, small and out-of-centre universities is relatively low in the overall total cannot be a reason for us to conclude that the damage to these universities is more limited. In these universities, where a very limited number of academicians are already able to conduct research in the field of gender studies, the field has been completely destroyed even by the expulsion of one person. For this reason, when it comes to these universities, the numbers should not be considered in proportion to the nature of the destruction. Considering the contribution of universities to the city they are located in and the effect of the social and cultural texture of the city on the quality of research carried out at universities, it can be claimed that the fact that the academicians in the pool are concentrated in the central provinces, the social pressure is relatively weak in these cities, and the factors that prevent the circulation of libertarian ideas are relatively more scattered. . The dismissal of almost all of the academicians who carry out gender studies in provinces outside the centre can also be considered as a loss for the civil society organisations in the city that are struggling for gender equality.

The institution from which Academicians are Expelled	The Number of Academicians
Ankara University	11
Munzur University	3
Marmara University	3
Kocaeli University	3
Ege University	3
Unspecified	3
Anadolu University	2
Okan University	1
Mersin University	1
Yıldız Technical University	1
Akdeniz University	1
Çukurova University	1
Iğdır University	1

Ondokuz Mayıs University	1
Cumhuriyet University	1
Dokuz Eylül University	1
Gaziantep University	1
Sum Total	38

Table 3: Distribution of Academicians by the Institution from which They are Expelled

The City where the Institutions From which Academicians are Expelled	The Number of Academicians
Ankara	11
İstanbul	5
İzmir	4
Kocaeli	3
Tunceli	3
Unspecified	3
Eskişehir	2
Samsun	1
Mersin	1
Muğla	1
Gaziantep	1
Antalya	1
Sivas	1
Iğdır	1
Sum Total	38

Table 4: Distribution of Academicians from the Institutions from which they are Expelled by City

When the distribution of the 89 academicians who participated in our research by answering the questionnaire is examined, it is seen that there is no significant deviation in the representation of the pool. However, this limitation was taken into account during the processing and evaluation of the data due to response below the target, and each data was considered meaningful in its own uniqueness by avoiding excessive reductions or generalizations in the presentation of the findings. It is an advantage that the survey allows each academicians to determine the unique experience of the destruction in the field of gender after the State of Emergency and that these experiences can give an idea about the general nature of the destruction. However, due to the lack of access to up-to-date data on the fields of study of

academicians during the creation of the pool, a widespread search could not be made throughout Turkey, which led to the inability to clearly define the research universe. This makes generalizations about the whole problematic.

2. Demographic Characteristics of Survey Participants

51 (57.95%) of the 89 academicians who participated in the survey stated that they worked full-time at a university in 2020 when the survey was conducted. Only 1 of the participants works part-time. On the other hand, 36 (40.90%) of the participants do not actively work at a university.

Employment Status of Participants at Universities		
OPTIONS	Distribution of responses	
Full-time Employees	57,95%	51
Part-time Employees	1,14%	1
Unemployed	40,90%	36
	Respondent	88

Table 5: Distribution of Participants by Employment Status at Universities

Three of the 36 people who are not actively working at a university at the moment have never been able to get a position in any university. It is seen that 33 academicians other than these have left the institutions they work for various reasons. The table below shows the reasons for leaving and the numerical distribution of those who are not actively working at the university according to the reasons for leaving.

Distribution of Academicians Not Working at the University by Reasons for Leaving		
REASONS FOR LEAVING	Distribution of responses	
Retirement	8,57%	3
Resignation	2,85%	1
Dismissed/non-renewal of contract	5,71%	2
Suspended	0,00%	0
Dismissed from public service by decree	71,42%	25

Closure of the Institution by decree	0,00%	0
Never got a position at the university	8,57%	3
Left due to pressure	2,85%	1

Table 6: Numerical Distribution of Academicians Not Working Actively at the University by Reasons for Leaving

The most striking result in the table is that 25 of the survey participant academicians operating in the field of gender were dismissed from public service with the decree laws issued after the State of Emergency. When we consider 2 academicians who were dismissed without being renewed their contracts and another academicians who declared that they left due to pressure, we can say that 28 academicians were pushed out of academia directly due to the practices of the State of Emergency regime³.

Of the 89 academicians who answered the questionnaire, 11 preferred not to answer the question about which university they were currently working at or before leaving. One of the participants mentioned a university abroad where she is currently working, not that she has resigned. 33 of the 68 academicians, excluding 10 academicians who prefer not to give information about the institution they are currently working in or have worked in the past, are from two big state universities in Ankara. The other 35 participants are distributed to 27 different universities throughout Turkey. The distribution of the participants selected from the

³ This inference can be challenged within the framework of the representativeness problem of the sample. However, it should not be forgotten that the field study was carried out by reaching almost all of a relatively large pool of academician selected with the criterion of having conducted studies in the field of gender during the sample selection. The data, which can be interpreted as biased here, actually shows us that the gender field has been significantly destroyed by the State of Emergency decrees. Academic study, of course, cannot be limited to the roof of the university. However, it has become an important problem for academician who have been deprived of the institutional opportunities of academia to create the infrastructure to carry out their research, access qualified human power, and find financial support. At the same time, moving away from education-teaching activities, which is one of the means of making the produced knowledge public, constitutes another dimension of the problem. As a result of this, it is seen that the academician who are organized within the Solidarity Academies and try to continue their academic activities through these organisations have to prioritize making a living and meeting their basic needs to survive. It has become an inevitable situation to carry out projects through Solidarity Academies and to work on ongoing projects. The contribution of the ongoing projects to the academic field is also an issue that needs to be questioned. Again, workshops, seminars, and meetings organized through Solidarity Academies create an opportunity for academician who have been pushed out of academia to make the knowledge they produce public and reach people from different segments of society.

academicians working in the field of gender according to the universities they come from can be seen in the table below:

Universities of Participants	Number
Ankara University	20
Hacettepe University	13
Unspecified	10
Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University	4
Başkent University	2
Marmara University	2
Munzur University	2
Boğaziçi University	2
Sabancı University	2
Kırıkkale University	1
Beirut University	1
Bilkent University	1
Ege University	1
Çukurova University	1
Ondokuz Mayıs University	1
Kocaeli University	1
Ortadoğu Technical University	1
Mersin University	1
Yıldız Technical University	1
Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University	1
Akdeniz University	1
Karabük University	1
Anadolu University	1
Süleyman Demirel University	1
Trakya University	1
Iğdır University	1
Yüzüncü Yıl University	1
İstanbul Technical University	1
İstanbul University	1
Yıldırım Beyazıt University	1
Sum Total	78

Table 7: Distribution of Participants by Universities

As can be seen from the table, Ankara University and Hacettepe University are in the majority in the overall total. Let's see the distribution of the most common values with another graph:

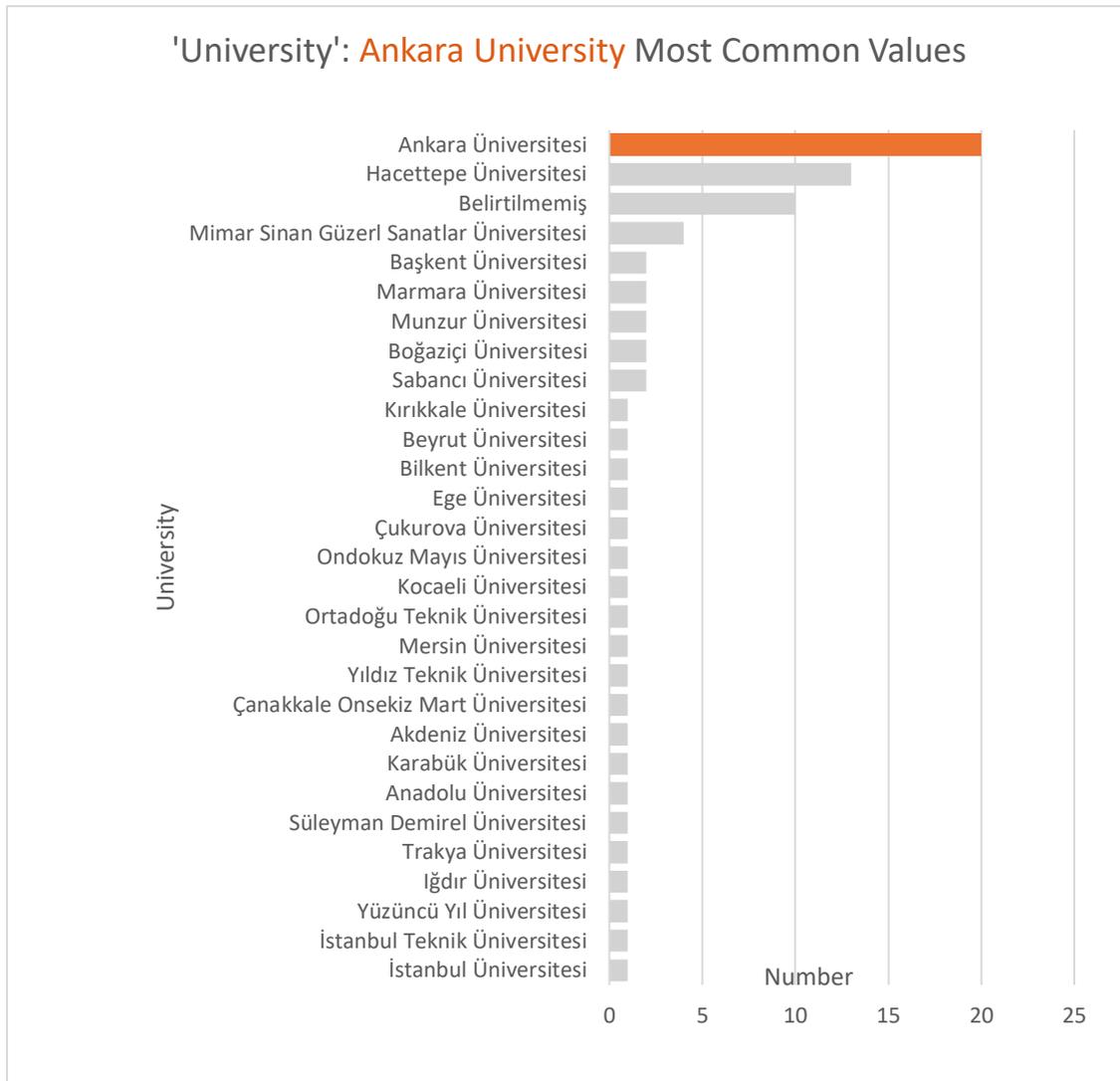


Figure 2: The Most Common Value by the Distribution of Universities

It should be noted that this figure reflects the distribution of academicians who were contacted during the designation of the sample. Therefore, the fact that Ankara University is the most common value here is related to the distribution of respondents. It does not mean that Ankara University has a privileged position among others in terms of gender studies. When compared with the distribution of those in the pool, it is clear that Hacettepe University has more academicians specializing in gender studies than Ankara University. However, of course,

the fact that the majority of the academicians coming from these two universities, in terms of the general results of the survey, shows that the pool of academicians constituting the research universe is relatively represented, but also indicates that the answers have a certain bias in terms of these two institutions.

When we look at the distribution of the academic institutions where the participants work or leave, according to the cities, the weight of Ankara (37 people) in the overall total is remarkable. Istanbul ranks second after Ankara as the city with the highest number of academicians. Here, too, the low response rate of Istanbul, which is in the pool with 75 academicians, to the call to participate in the survey, has caused it to fall behind Ankara in the ranking. Nevertheless, there is a similarity in the distribution of the academicians who answered the questionnaire and were included in the pool in the fieldwork in terms of backlog in the centre. The table below shows the numerical distribution of the participants according to the cities where they work or have worked in the past:

Cities of Participants' Universities	Number of the Participants
Ankara	37
İstanbul	13
Unspecified	9
Tunceli	2
Adana	2
Antalya	1
Mersin	1
Kırıkkale	1
İzmir	1
Beirut	1
Karabük	1
Çanakkale	1
Kocaeli	1
Edirne	1
Samsun	1
Eskişehir	1
Van	1
Iğdır	1
Isparta	1
Sum Total	77

Table 8: Numerical Distribution of Participants According to the Cities of the Universities they Worked or Left

In the questionnaire, the question about gender preference or gender identity was left open-ended to avoid definitions of the binary gender regime on this issue. Of the 89 respondents, 4 did not want to indicate their gender identity and preference. Only two of the 85 participants who reported their gender identity stated their identity as male. What is particularly striking here is that in the answers given to the open-ended question, the gender identity definitions of the binary gender regime were adopted exactly by the participants. Of course, it is possible to interpret this situation on the axis of the decisiveness of heteronormativity. It was also mentioned in the focus group studies conducted within the scope of this field study that it is very rare for LGBTI+ academic staff to explicitly declare their gender identity at universities, and that as a result of hierarchical structures and power relations within academia, it is difficult for LGBTI+ students and academicians to exist with their open identities in academia. Considering the results of the focus groups, it can be said that it may not be a coincidence that the codes of the binary gender regime are repeated unchanged in an open-ended question about gender.

Only one of the participants did not answer the question about their educational status. Of the 88 people who answered the question, 77.27% (68) have a doctoral degree and 22.72% have a master's degree.

Educational Status of the Participants		
OPTIONS	Distribution of responses	
Bachelor's Degree	0,00%	0
Master's Degree	22,72%	20
Doctoral Degree	77,27%	68
	100%	88

Table 9: Distribution of Participants According to the Educational Status

The table below shows the distribution of participants according to their academic titles. Participants who do not have a title because they have not yet completed their doctorate are

not shown in this table. Three academicians with doctoral degrees preferred not to answer the question about the academic title. The table shows that 38 (58.46%) of the 65 academicians who completed a doctoral program and answered the related question were seniors with professor and associate professor titles. 27 academicians are still in the first steps of the academic hierarchy. When we take into account the weight of all respondents, it is seen that professors and associate professors represent 42.70 percent of the overall total. On the other hand, faculty members who have not yet received an associate professorship and who have a doctoral degree have a rate of 33.34 percent in the general total. 23.96 percent of the 89 participants are those who have not yet received a doctoral degree. As can be seen, considering the general total, it should be emphasized that the majority of the respondents who answered the questionnaire are young academicians or candidates, with a weight of 57.20%.

Participants' Academic Titles		
Title	Numeric Distribution	
Professor	29,23%	19
Assoc. Prof.	29,23%	19
Assist. Prof.	23,07%	15
Dr., Instructor	1,53%	1
Dr., Research Assistant	16,92%	11
	99,98%	65

Table 10: Distribution of participants by academic title

When we look at the distribution of those who participated in the field research and answered the questionnaire in terms of the working period at the university where they last worked, it is seen that those who have worked in the same workplace for more than 26 years without interruption constitute 8.75 percent of the 80 people who answered the question. Those working in the same institution between 16 and 25 years constitute 25 percent of the total:

Working Periods of Academicians in Their Last Places of Assigned Position		
OPTIONS	Distribution of responses	
Less than 1 Year	1,25%	1
1-5 Years	22,50%	18
6-10 Years	23,75%	19
11-15 Years	18,75%	15
16-20 Years	17,50%	14
21-25 Years	7,50%	6
More than 26 Years	8,75%	7
	100%	80

Table 11: Numerical Distribution by Working period at the Last Assigned Position

One of the questions asked in the survey aimed to understand how long the participants had worked in the field of gender. The distribution of responses to this question can be seen in the table below:

Working Periods of Academicians in the Field of Gender		
Period	Numeric Distribution	
Less than 1 Year	1,18%	1
1- 5 Years	20,00%	17
6-10 Years	27,06%	23
11-15 Years	24,71%	21
16-20 Years	9,41%	8
21-25 Years	9,41%	8
More than 26 Years	8,24%	7
	100%	85

Table 12: Numerical Distribution by Working Period in the Field of Gender

As can be seen from the table, the working period of the respondents in the field of gender is distributed between a minimum of 1 year and a maximum of 26 and more years. 15 of the 85 participating academicians state that they have been working in the field of gender for more than 21 years. The ratio of those working in the field between 10 and 20 years in the total is 34.12 percent (29 people).

Among the questions asked in the survey was in which fields the participants carried out academic studies apart from the field of gender. The visualized form of the data collected by the answers to this question as a word cloud is as follows:

Katılımcıların Toplumsal Cinsiyet Dışındaki Akademik Çalışma Alanları



The word cloud shows us that the participants mainly work in the field of social sciences and they also conduct research in multidisciplinary fields that intersect with the field of gender. Fields and disciplines such as Sociology, Communication Studies, Cultural Studies, Film Studies, Migration Studies, Social Movement Studies, Literary Studies, History, Philosophy, Psychology, Political Communication, Political Science, Health Sciences, Ethnography, Social Memory Studies, Urban Studies, Musical Sociology, Medical Education, Biostatistics, Working-Class Studies, Political Economy, International Relations and Political Theory are the main areas of interest of the participating academicians.

3. The Position of Gender Studies and Education in Academia

In the survey, a set of questions was formed to identify the position of gender studies and education within the academic organisation. Of course, the participants will give answers that will reflect the structuring, organisation, and gender policies of the institutions they are a part of. Within the framework of the distribution ratios according to universities and cities, it would be appropriate to remind again that the answers of the participants have an inherent bias towards universities located in Ankara and Istanbul.

Programs in the Field of Gender		
Program	Distribution of responses	
Bachelor's Degree	12,94%	11
Master's Degree	62,35%	53
Doctoral Degree	40,00%	34
None	31,77%	27
Not Know	4,71%	4
	100%	85

Table 13: Testimony of the Participants about the Programs in the Field of Gender at the Universities they Worked or Left

As seen in this table, only 27% of the 85 academicians who answered the question stated that there is no education program on gender in their institutions. 53 of the respondents stated that their university has a master's program on gender. This represents 62.35 percent of the general total. If we take into account the 40% of the existence of doctoral programs, it is seen that the tendency to provide gender education at the graduate level in universities stands out.

Extra-Curricular Courses on Gender		
OPTIONS	Distribution of responses	
Yes	83,53%	71
No	5,88%	5
Not Know	10,59%	9
	100%	85

Table 14: Extra-Curricular Courses on Gender in Other Programs

Participants witness the existence of courses on gender or women's rights in their universities apart from the education programs specified on gender. Only 5 academicians state that there are no such courses in their university. 9 academicians stated that they did not have any information on this subject. Considering that these academicians are still not actively working at a university, it will become clear why they cannot express an opinion on this issue.

Research Centres for Women's Studies or Gender		
OPTIONS	Distribution of responses	
Yes	85,88%	73
No	14,12%	12
Not Know	0,00%	0
	100%	85

Table 15: Statements on the Situation of Gender Research Centres

The table above shows that 73 of the respondents stated that there is a research centre on women's studies or gender at their university. Only 12 participants stated that there is no such research centre at their universities.

The existence of departments within the academic organisation is vital in terms of training and employing faculty members, and opening and developing educational programs. The establishment of women's studies or gender studies departments has positive results such as accelerating the academic development in this field, providing the employment of trained personnel in the field, and ensuring the continuity of the studies. However, it is expressed as a general observation and judgment that the functioning of the departments established after long-standing struggles on this subject was interrupted after the State of Emergency. The data obtained from the answers given to the question asked in the survey study on this subject are shown in the table below:

Department of Women's Studies and/or Gender Studies		
OPTIONS	Distribution of responses	
Yes, Women's Studies	29,76%	25
Yes, Gender Studies	19,05%	16
Yes, Women's and Gender Studies	1,19%	1
No	45,24%	38
Not Know	4,76%	4
	100%	84

Table 16: Statements on the Existence of Women's and/or Gender Studies Departments

The table reveals that the sum of those who report that they have a Department of Women's Studies or Gender Studies or Women's and Gender Studies in their institutions is higher than those who state that they do not have such departments.

If the data in these three tables are interpreted together, it is possible to say that women's studies or gender studies have found a place in the academic organisation and that education programs and research application centres can maintain their existence despite the State of Emergency. However, of course, this does not constitute quite meaningful data, regardless of whether the OHAL applications have created a transformation in the content of the courses given and the working styles and interests of research centres. It is a phenomenon that students and academicians emphasize separately, especially in focus groups, that the managers remain unchanged, research centres continue to exist, and even if there are no significant changes in the faculty staff, internal dynamics and academic relations are transformed, general resistance to the concept of gender is tried to be established. What can be said as a result is that there were no radical interventions that would mean the total disappearance of the field. The answer is given by an academician to the last question of the questionnaire, which was left open-ended, maybe more explanatory:

The women's issues research and application centre and the women's studies department at my university are open. After the State of Emergency, the centre's administration was changed, and it was reduced to a symbolic nature with its limited activities limited to certain days and weeks. *The centre is generally passive, activities are reduced to women's issues only, which are dealt with traditional themes and methods* (Emphasis on authors). On the other hand, the management of the women's studies master's program is a continuation of the pre-State of Emergency. After the State of Emergency, there was no intervention regarding the teaching staff. The intervention (...) has been through the peace declaration signing process and after decrees. (...) I have not had any personal experience or witnessed that there was any interference with the course names, contents, and methods.

Another academician stated that “the theses written in the field of gender studies were interfered with, the course contents and guests in this field were interfered with, and the guests were prevented by the university administrations”. In particular, one another academician emphasizes that the fact that institutions were not closed after the State of Emergency does not constitute an indication of their operability: “For example, there are mechanisms to prevent sexual harassment in my institution, but the operation of these mechanisms is only at the discretion of the rector. They do not have any means of tracking whether the applications are operated or not.”

Another academician who answered the last question of the survey observed that government policies against gender equality rendered existing institutions dysfunctional and weakened academia's ties with gender equality struggle practices.

I observe that all the achievements gained in the field of gender before the State of Emergency (centres, units for combating sexual violence, courses opened) were emptied and rendered dysfunctional. The expulsion of feminist academicians who struggled in this area and contributed to the institutionalization caused the institutions to become dysfunctional, even if they were not closed. Universities are at the forefront of the areas most affected by government policies against gender equality. I think that women and LGBTI students are also isolated in this way. The hate campaign carried out against the LGBTI movement is and will discourage any enthusiasm for academic work in this area. We need efforts to re-establish the link between the university and the women's and LGBTI movement.

4. The Field of Gender in Academic Organisation after the State of Emergency

The results of the pressure on women's studies or gender studies in universities after the State of Emergency and later on, in terms of education, the situation of research centres, the training of academicians, and employment policies can be evaluated separately. The first table below quantifies the testimonies of the participants about how their research centres have faced a change with the State of Emergency.

Status of Research Centres During the State of Emergency		
OPTIONS	Distribution of responses	
The name of the centre was changed.	2,50%	2
The centre was closed.	0,00%	0
The number of the research staff at the centre was reduced.	15,00%	12
The administrative staff was changed.	27,50%	22
The staff was dismissed.	7,50%	6
All activities have been suspended.	2,50%	2
There was no change in the status and structure of the centre.	32,50%	26
Not know.	25,00%	20
Other	15,00%	12
	Respondents	80

Table 17: The Change in Research Centres During the State of Emergency

As can be seen from the table, only two participants stated that the centres in their universities were not closed, but that their activities were completely suspended. It is understood that the centres were not completely closed. 20 people stated that they did not know the situation at the university, whereas 12 people felt the need to talk about the facts and situations that they thought were not included in the options. 26 people emphasized that there was no change in the status and structure of the centre in their institutions. This is the response option represented with the highest percentage (32.50%) among all responses. According to the remaining 44 answers, the centres have become the object of a series of repressive practices, from name changes to reductions in staffing, from changing managers to dismissing their employees. Reducing the research staff with the change of managers draws attention to the most applied oppressive practice.

Among their other responses, the most striking statements are those pointing out that the dismissal of academicians specializing in the field of gender and signing the Peace Declaration titled “We will not be a party to this crime” in their institutions, leaving them out of academia has created radical changes in the structure of these research centres. In addition, it was also stated among these answers that these research centres were not pressured when they

harmonized with the government. In addition to these negative developments, some participants pointed out the increasing interest in gender studies in their institutions. Talking about an increase in the number of researches and theses written, these participants work at Sabancı University in Istanbul and state that the activities of gender-focused centres have improved both quantitatively and qualitatively, despite the pressure in their institutions after the State of Emergency. Apart from this exceptional example, it can be said that the State of Emergency started a process in which practices that destroyed the field of gender increased. Another data indicative of this is shown in the table below:

The Situation of the Departments during the State of Emergency		
OPTIONS	Distribution of responses	
Its name was changed.	0,00%	0
It was closed.	0,00%	0
The staff has been renewed.	8,00%	4
The administrative staff was changed.	16,00%	8
The courses on Queer were removed.	4,00%	2
Among the faculty members of the department, some people were dismissed by statutory decree, retired, and resigned.	8,00%	4
Faculty members of the department were dismissed.	20,00%	10
The programs of the department were closed.	6,00%	3
There was no change.	34,00%	17
The department is newly established.	2,00%	1
There was no department before.	6,00%	3
Not know.	24,00%	12
	Respondents	50

Table 18: Change in the Departments During the State of Emergency

As can be seen from this table, some of the departments that are stated to exist were exposed to a series of oppressive practices by renewing their staff, changing their administrators, removing the lecturers from their posts, and closing their programs with the State of Emergency applications. However, it is observed that practices vary from university to university rather than being the result of a general policy. This arbitrariness may be due to the

differentiation of universities on issues such as harmonization with the government and articulation with the conservative structure of the city.

Compared to the old and relatively institutionalized universities established in big cities, it can be assumed that there are significant differences among the universities established in different cities of Anatolia, which had problems in raising and employing qualified personnel even before the State of Emergency and managed to survive by establishing organic relations with the power and interest centres of the city. However, proving the said hypothesis falls outside the aim, target, and scope of this fieldwork. However, academicians who participated in both the survey application and focus group interviews of the field research emphasized that the approach to gender equality, especially in universities outside the centre, is shaped around a series of axes such as “the sanctity of the family”, “motherhood”, “guidance of tradition”, “indispensability of religious conservative values”. The consensus of academicians is that the downward pressure from university and faculty administrations, as well as students' resistance to gender equality, and the compelling social, cultural, and economic fabric of the city make it difficult to conduct gender studies and teach at institutions other than central ones. The table below shows the extent to which the survey participants agree with a reversed judgment about this phenomenon:

Academicians face fewer barriers to conducting gender research, writing/directing a thesis, or teaching lectures at relatively well-established universities in big cities.												
Strongly, I agree.		I agree.		I am hesitant.		I do not agree.		I strongly disagree.		Total	Weighted Average	
5,06%	4	45,57%	36	18,99%	15	18,99%	15	11,39%	9	79	2,86	

Table 19: Perceptions of participants about gender and academic freedoms in big cities

The academicians participating in the research stated that they witnessed significant destruction in the field of gender after the State of Emergency, in their answers to a series of questions asked to express their opinions on whether universities are places where free research is carried out and where adequate education and training programs are conducted in the field of gender. However, it would be appropriate to mention a fact emphasized by the academicians who participated in the focus groups. Accordingly, the goal of the hegemonic strategies of conservatism as well as authoritarianism rising with the State of Emergency is to restructure the field in the context of Islamic and conservative values, based on the motto of the sanctity of the family, rather than destroying the gender field altogether. Therefore, previously established centres or departments were not closed, instead, qualified lecturers employed in these places were displaced or were prevented from rising in the academic hierarchy by not giving them a position, and the internal working mechanisms of the institutions were disrupted by transferring the authorities directly to the rectors. Even if the courses were not closed, their content was interfered with. In most cases, students were allowed to exhibit bullying attitudes towards the lecturers who conducted these courses in the face of the course content that they felt uncomfortable with.

An indicator of the erosion of academic autonomy with the state of the emergency regime is the fact that many academicians have been cut off from universities by decree laws. Another is that the academicians who continue in the institutions have witnessed that the disciplines and fields of study they have worked for years are gradually weakened, and their position is lost in the struggle to break the heteronormativity and patriarchal power relations within academia. Academicians who are still struggling for existence in academia have been deprived of institutional support at least as much as their colleagues who were dismissed by statutory decrees. The field of gender occupies one of the most fragile positions in this sense.

The table below reflects the extent to which academicians agree with a judgment made about this situation:

With the State of Emergency regime, freely producing thesis, researching, publishing, or giving lectures in areas such as gender studies and women's studies have been deprived of institutional support.											
Strongly, I agree.		I agree.		I am hesitant.		I do not agree.		I strongly disagree.		Total	
42,31%	33	33,33%	26	10,26%	8	12,82%	10	1,28%	1	78	1,97

Table 20: Perceptions of the participants about the gender domain and academic freedom

While asking this question, a comment box was opened to allow academicians to explain their answers. It would be meaningful to quote here the views of some of the participants, which they added to this comment box, to show how many different dimensions the problem has:

For example, studies that consider Kurdishness and femininity as intersectional, or issues such as Muslim feminism and trans feminism have also faced and are facing discrimination and obstacles.

[...]

Although there is less blocking in big cities, covert/implicit barriers (persuasion speeches to prevent the lesson from being opened) are common.

[...]

Five years ago, my answer to this question would have been 'I agree'. Gender studies, which was previously a 'ghettoized' academic field, was becoming more widespread and 'mainstream' in this period. But in the last 5 years, working on gender under the roof of a university has become inconvenient. On the other hand, we can say that the trend toward mainstreaming continues in non-university academia. Gender studies is no longer an area where critical thinking can remain indifferent in Turkey. This project can be seen as proof of this situation.

[...]

I know that with the State of Emergency, especially the thesis studies on the intersection of ethnicity and gender were left unsupervised or subject to change. I know that some courses are not offered periodically, and an investigation has been launched against the professors who were complained to CIMER and BIMER because of the course content (especially LGBTI+ rights). I know that under these conditions, some courses are not opened, the contents of the courses opened are clipped, and guests who will be invited from outside are blocked. I know that sometimes institutional visits are blocked. I know that teachers who teach gender equality courses are exposed to hate speech and targeted by showing their photos in some newspapers because of their course content. All these conditions both reduced the number of studies that would enable academic production in this field, and also created restrictions on the course content. The university administration remained silent regarding all these conditions and preferred to open an investigation rather than protect the targeted lecturers and professors.

5. Change in Gender Policies in Universities After the State of Emergency

Increasing authoritarianism and especially the power's struggle for hegemony within the framework of religious and conservative values did not only cause damage to the place of gender within the academic organisation, but also caused some changes in the policies that ensure gender-oriented equality and developed within the framework of rights. In this regard, it has been observed that the mechanisms, established committees and structures developed to prevent possible violence, harassment and mobbing cases between academicians and students, academicians and academicians, and academicians and administrators have been rendered dysfunctional by various strategies. The academicians participating in the research were asked what kind of changes occurred in gender-oriented policies after the State of Emergency. The distribution of responses to this question is shown in the table below:

Table 21: Change in Gender Equality Policies in Universities After the State of Emergency

Changes observed by participants in gender equality policies at the university they work in or left following the State of Emergency		
OPTIONS	DISTRIBUTION of RESPONSES	
I have observed an increase in the violations of rights of students and academicians due to their sexual orientation.	18,75%	15
The university's sexual harassment policy document has been suspended.	7,50%	6
I observed that female academicians were dismissed from their administrative duties.	8,75%	7
I have observed that the struggle to secure gender equality in the workplace is administratively hindered.	16,25%	13
I observed that student clubs or initiatives that fight for gender equality are not allowed to be established or operate.	32,50%	26
I have witnessed that the members of student clubs or initiatives that fight for gender equality are punished by university administrations for their activities.	10,00%	8
I have witnessed that academicians who support the work of student associations and initiatives that fight for gender equality are prosecuted.	8,75%	7
I have observed feminist academicians being neutralized in gender politics and institutions.	1,25%	1
I observed that LGBTI+ groups were prevented from holding events.	1,25%	1
I observed that students take more radical attitudes towards student clubs and initiatives that fight for gender equality.	1,25%	1
The phrase "family" was added to the name of the women's studies centre.	1,25%	1
I observed an implicit distancing from the struggle and work for gender equality.	1,25%	1
I have observed that there are positive developments within the framework of gender equality, support has expanded, and policies have been developed to prevent harassment and violence.	2,50%	2
No	18,75%	15
I am not sure	26,25%	21
I do not know	3,75%	3
I don't want to answer	2,50%	2
	Respondents	80

When we examine the table above closely, we can say that the testimonies of the academicians show that there has been a regression and a change in attitude in the gender equality policies in the universities where these academicians have worked. The weight of the first seven answer choices in all answers is clear, especially regarding the possible changes

covered in the question. Since 80 academicians who answered the question without skipping could mark more than one option in this question, the weight of these seven answer options reaches 102 percent of the total answers. However, there is a strikingly high emphasis on the pressure on student clubs and initiatives and the increase in violations of rights.

Two academicians working at a foundation university in Istanbul state that, contrary to the general trend, there is an increased interest in gender studies in their institutions. These academicians say that they have observed that institutional support for research on gender equality is expanding in their universities. In addition, they emphasize that important steps are being taken in terms of policies aimed at preventing sexual harassment at the university in question. The words of one of these academicians, while emphasizing the difference between the general structural collapse and their own institutions, also point out that important studies that draw attention especially in terms of quality can still be done despite desertification:

Many universities have very strong and creative people who continue to produce in this field - both as lecturers and students. Therefore, very surprising studies can come out. But it is also true that there has been a general structural collapse and that many universities have deserted. At our university, a doctoral program in this field has been opened, the work of the centre has increased 5 times (as well as the support to the centre), and many important research and activities are ongoing. Therefore, I can say that it is not a regression but an expansion and expansion.

As can be seen in the table above, 26.25 percent of academicians cannot express a clear opinion on whether there has been any change in the field of gender after the State of Emergency. The tables below compare the answers given by those who chose “No” and “I am not sure” to mean that there is no change and those who did not want to answer the question, to different questions about their employment status and the pressures experienced in their institutions. The results of the comparison made within the framework of employment status are tabulated as follows:

Employment Status of Participants								
	Full-time Employees		Part-time Employees		Unemployed		TOTAL	
No	93,33%	14	0,00%	0	6,67%	1	39,47%	15
I am not sure.	52,38%	11	0,00%	0	47,62%	10	55,26%	21
I do not want to answer.	100,00%	2	0,00%	0	0,00%	0	5,26%	2
Toplam	71,05%	27	0,00%	0	28,95%	11	100,00%	38

Table 22: Responses of Participants Regarding the Change in Gender Policies After the State of Emergency by University Employment

As can be seen, 27 academicians still working full-time at a university express that they are not sure whether or not there has been any change in their institutions after the State of Emergency. While academicians who are not currently affiliated with a university can be expected to avoid giving a definitive answer to this question because they have not witnessed the changes in their institutions closely, it is unexpected that full-time academicians cannot be “sure”. This may be attributed to the weakness of the relationship between academicians and their institutions, the inadequacy of cooperation between academicians and/or the isolation of academicians. At the same time, it seems possible to explain this situation based on the claim that the transformation in gender policies was carried out not with a strategy that proceeds with rapid and radical decisions, but with strategies that spread over time, dispersed, and emptied institutions and concepts.

In the following Figure, there is a comparison of the three answer options mentioned above by academicians who were excluded from the university for different reasons and who are not currently in employment with a university. The number of academicians who tick these options and do not work at the university is 12:

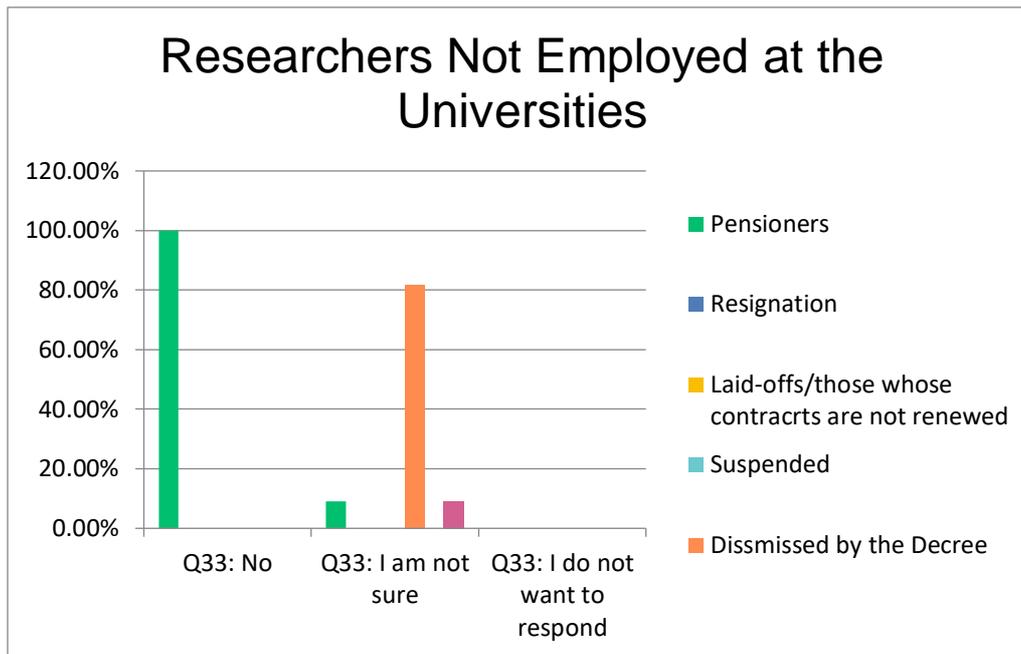


Figure 3: Responses of Academicians Not Employed at the University Regarding the Change in Gender Policies After the State of Emergency

If we evaluate the graph, the majority of retired faculty members state that they did not observe a change in the gender policies of their institutions after the State of Emergency. Academicians who were dismissed from the public service with the Decree-Law state that they are not sure about this issue.

An interesting comparison in terms of the results was made between the answers given to the changes in women's studies or gender studies research centres in the universities they work for during the State of Emergency and the responses of those who stated that there was no policy change or that they were not sure whether such a change existed. The graph below can give an idea of the results of this comparison:

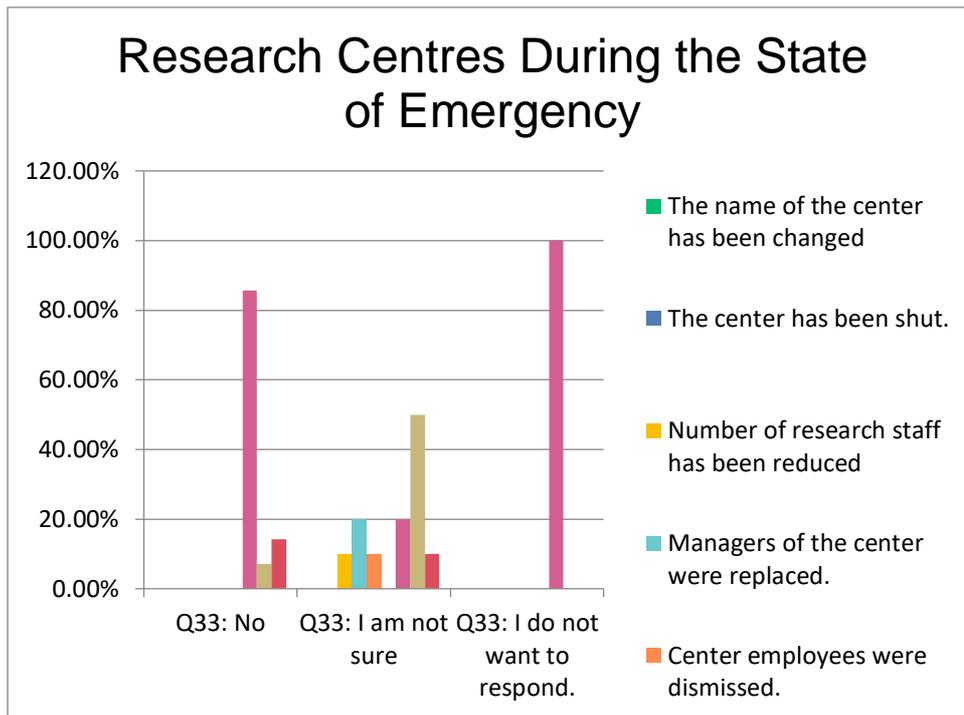


Figure 4: Hesitant Witnesses of Transformation in Gender Policies

It can be seen in the graph that those who answered “No” consistently declared that there was no change in the structure of research centres, with a ratio of over 80 percent. However, what is interesting and contradictory is that those who are not sure whether there is a change in the gender policies of their institutions also stated that the employees of the research centres were dismissed, their managers were changed, and the research staff was restricted.

It is understood that all of the academicians who marked the option “I do not want to respond” did not witness any change in the situation of the centres. Of course, there may be a number of reasons for choosing not to answer such a question, from thinking that giving information about the institution they work for will harm the institution, to fearing the pressure they will face if they are heard to answer such a survey within the institution. However, these inferences can only be expressed as speculation. The survey was not designed to measure the

attitudes behind it. In addition, it would be appropriate to consider the orientation of the question in order not to reach definite conclusions here.

As it is known, an important pillar of the fight against the masculine structure in the university is the determination of principles and norms related to problems such as sexual harassment and mobbing and forcing the administrations to develop policies that ensure gender equality. In universities where masculine hierarchy and heteronormative structure are dominant, sexual harassment and abuse cases between lecturer/student, lecturer/ lecturer, manager/administrative staff, manager/ lecturer, manager/student, student/student can be the subject of complaints. These complaints can rarely be carried out and started an investigation. Although academia's general silence on this issue and the tendency of administrations to cover up when such cases occur is widely accepted, the struggles to change the situation are often fruitless due to the resistance they encounter. Nevertheless, there are examples where the struggle to prepare an attitude and policy document against sexual violence and harassment in universities, especially in the 2000s, was successful. In parallel with the gender mainstreaming in universities during and after the process until becoming a party to the Istanbul Convention, it has been observed that the pressure to prepare such documents and announce them to the public, thus ensuring that the university will not remain silent about sexual violence, has yielded results in some institutions. However, the government's anti-gender policies started to become evident with the constitutional amendment and the regime change that allowed the majority of the executive and legislative powers to be exercised by the President which mean the interruption of the harmonization process with the European Union, the increase in authoritarianism especially after the Gezi Resistance, and the State of Emergency that came into effect after the 15 July coup attempt.

The academicians participating in the research were asked about the status of the institutions they work or leave from in terms of the policies in question. One of these questions is whether there is a sexual violence and harassment prevention attitude/policy document accepted and put into practice by the higher boards of universities, and when it was accepted or invalidated. Below is the table showing the testimonies of the participants of the research about the pre- and post-State of Emergency situation of the policy documents for the prevention of sexual violence and harassment in their universities:

Attitude/Policy Document Against Sexual Harassment at the University		
OPTIONS	DISTRIBUTION of RESPONSES	
Yes, it was accepted before the State of Emergency.	42,31%	33
Yes, it was accepted after the State of Emergency.	11,54%	9
It existed before the State of Emergency, now it has been lifted.	0,00%	0
There was the preparation, it was half done.	5,13%	4
It never happened.	19,23%	15
No idea.	21,79%	17
	100%	78

Table 23: Testimony of Academicians on the Sexual Harassment Attitude/Policy Document

As can be seen from the table, 33 of the 78 academicians who answered the question state that there was an attitude document accepted in their institutions before the State of Emergency. 9 academicians declared that a similar document was accepted after the State of Emergency. Accordingly, it is understood that approximately 54% of the academicians work in institutions where such a document is accepted by university boards. 4 academicians point out that the document that existed before the State of Emergency was lifted after the State of Emergency. It is noteworthy that the number of academicians who have no idea whether such a document exists in their universities is 17. It would not be wrong to deduce from these answers that these academicians did not participate in any work on the preparation of such a document in their own institutions. 15 academicians stated that there was never such a document in their

institutions. This situation can be considered as proof of the absence of policies that ensure gender equality in the institutions where these 15 academicians are located.

The status of sexual harassment prevention mechanisms in the institutions they work in was also among the questions asked to the participants. Below is the table showing the distribution of the answers given by the participants to this question:

Mechanisms Established to Prevent or Investigate Sexual Harassment		
OPTIONS	DISTRIBUTION of RESPONSES	
Yes, it was created before the State of Emergency.	49,35%	38
Yes, it was created after the State of Emergency.	7,79%	6
No, it was lifted after the State of Emergency.	0,00%	0
It never did.	23,37%	18
There were preparations before the State of Emergency, but they were not completed.	2,59%	2
After the State of Emergency, preparations started but were not completed.	2,59%	2
I do not know.	14,29%	11
	100%	77

Table 24: Situation of Mechanisms Established to Prevent and Investigate Sexual Harassment

What is striking in this table is that 49.35% of the academicians stated that before the State of Emergency, various mechanisms were established to prevent sexual violence and harassment in the institutions they worked at that time. The number of those who skipped without answering this question is high (12)⁴. Of the 72 respondents, 44 state that such mechanisms exist in their universities. A substantial number of academicians (23.37%) say that such mechanisms never existed in their institutions. 4 people state that the preparations could not be completed and that they were left on a protracted basis.

⁴ This is really interesting, something to ponder over. All but 3 of the academicians are people who have some way of working experience at the university. Again, all of them were included in the pool that was taken as the basis for the selection of the research sample, as they were working in the field of gender. Despite these, the reason why they prefer to skip such questions without answering them is intriguing. As researchers, our guess is that some academicians, especially those who consider themselves responsible for protecting their institutions, may play a role in this. In addition, it can be thought that the self-censorship mechanisms created by the pressure on universities due to the authoritarianism of the regime are operating.

Units Established to Implement Gender Equality Policies		
OPTIONS	DISTRIBUTION of RESPONSES	
Yes, it was established before the State of Emergency.	41,03%	32
Yes, it was established after the State of Emergency.	5,13%	4
No, it was closed after the State of Emergency.	1,28%	1
It never happened.	25,64%	20
There was, I don't know the current situation.	1,28%	1
There were preparations, but the process stalled.	1,28%	1
I do not know.	24,36%	19
	100%	78

Table 25: Testimony of the Status of Gender Equality Units

The distribution of the answers given by the academicians to the question about whether there is any unit in universities to carry out gender equality policies is shown in the table above. The number of academicians who stated that such a unit was established before the State of Emergency is 31. This represents a rate of 41.03% among the responses of 78 academicians. Four institutions that established gender equality units after the State of Emergency were reported. Thus, with the statements of 36 academicians in total, it is understood that there are units that determine or monitor the institutional policies related to gender equality in the universities where these academicians worked or had worked before leaving. The number of academicians who are not aware of the existence of such a unit is 19. The number of academicians who declared that such a unit never existed is also observed as 20. The conclusion drawn from the table is that, as a result of gender mainstreaming, many universities have taken steps to develop, implement and monitor gender-sensitive policies.

However, concerning the words of an academicians who participated in the survey, which we quoted earlier in this report, the existence of these units and their survival following the State of Emergency cannot be considered an indicator of their operability. Many practices are hindered by restrictive interventions in the activities of such units and unofficial but “friendly” warnings from administrators.

The research is based on the assumption that universities are directly affected by the change in the government's gender policies. It also includes a question trying to understand the views of academicians regarding a common proposition such as “with the State of Emergency regime, the emphasis on cultural, traditional, religious and moral norms and values has increased in the determination of policies regarding the issue of gender equality compared to before the State of Emergency”. As the research aims to show the extent to which the increasing pressure after the State of Emergency affects the gender field in universities, an analysis of the reasons for this pressure was left out of the scope of the research. Therefore, different questions that open up the proposition in question were not asked. As seen in the table below, academicians, mostly social scientists, were asked about their opinions based on the government's policy choices:

With the State of Emergency, the emphasis on cultural, traditional, religious and moral norms and values has increased in the determination of policies regarding the issue of gender equality compared to the pre-State of Emergency.													
	Strongly, I agree.		I agree.		I am hesitant.		I do not agree.		I strongly disagree.		Total		Weighted average
Full-time employees	51,06%	24	27,66%	13	14,89%	7	4,26%	2	2,13%	1	59,49%	47	1,79
Part-time employees	100,00%	1	0,00%	0	0,00%	0	0,00%	0	0,00%	0	1,27%	1	1
Not currently working at a university	74,19%	23	25,81%	8	0,00%	0	0,00%	0	0,00%	0	39,24%	31	1,26
Total	60,76%	48	26,58%	21	8,86%	7	2,53%	2	1,27%	1	100,00%	79	

Table 26: The perception of the impact of cultural, traditional, religious moral norms and values on gender policies

As can be seen from the table above, 7 of the 89 respondents who responded to the survey preferred not to answer the question asked whether they agreed with the view that the emphasis on cultural, traditional, religious, and moral values has increased in the determination of policies on gender equality after the State of Emergency. Looking at the distribution of the answers, it is seen that 60.79 percent

(48 people) of 79 people stated that they strongly agree with this judgment. Of these 48 people, 24 work full-time at a university, and one works part-time. 23 people are not currently working at a university. Of the 21 academicians who chose the "I agree" option, 13 work full-time, while the remaining 8 are not employed at any university at the time of the survey. When these two options are considered together, 87.43 percent of the academicians agree that policies against gender equality are shaped by the influence of cultural, traditional, religious, and moral norms and values. 7 academicians, who stated that they work full-time at a university, also stated that they were undecided on this issue. Those who expressed their opinions as "I do not agree" and "I strongly disagree" are represented with a weight of 3.80 percent in the general total. A note left in the comment box of this question is quite remarkable:

Especially in the field of LGBTI+ rights, hate speech has increased and the concept of gender has been morally placed in a negative position as the exact opposite of religious/traditional values. The point where this is most visible seems to be the discourses affirming violence against women and LGBTI+ individuals, which are constantly heated and kept on the agenda to abandon the Istanbul Convention.

The testimonies of the academicians who answered the survey questions by participating in the research about the initiatives created by the academicians or students fighting for gender equality in academia or the quality of their relations with the communities show that student initiatives, clubs and societies were blocked by closing down or not allowing their activities, especially after the State of Emergency. In fact, it is one of the results of the focus group discussions that obstacles were encountered in this regard even before the State of Emergency. However, the change in the government's gender policies after the State of Emergency became concrete with the discriminatory and sexist statements of ministers, deputies, high-level bureaucrats in various ministries, governors and the President himself,

which spread hate speech against LGBTI+s. Parallel to this, the activities of LGBTI+ student groups in universities were prevented, and even the pride marches were not allowed, and the students who organized these marches and wanted to carry out despite everything, were faced with police pressure by the manipulations of the university administrations. When the academicians who participated in the first phase of the field research, which included the application of a questionnaire, were asked about their observations about this situation, the distribution of the answers received was as follows:

Student Societies or Initiatives on Women's or LGBTI+ Rights		
OPTIONS	DISTRIBUTION of RESPONSES	
Yes, still active.	23,81%	20
Yes, I don't know if it's active.	32,14%	27
Yes, with the State of Emergency, its activities within the university were restricted or blocked.	3,57%	3
There was, it dispersed with the declaration of the State of Emergency.	8,33%	7
No, students were not allowed to form communities.	2,38%	2
None	14,28%	12
I do not know	15,47%	13
	100%	84

Table 27: Status of Student Societies and Initiatives Struggling for Women's and LGBTI+ Rights at the University

The fact that feminist and queer struggles are not sufficiently covered in determining the content of the courses also emerges as a problem on which academicians agree. These and similar problems were also voiced by academicians in the focus group discussions. On the same issue, those who participated in focus groups from student initiatives, associations or clubs stated that the curriculum followed in undergraduate or graduate programs did not include LGBTI+ rights, and that there were no or insufficient queer-based courses. Survey results also support these testimonies. Below is the table showing these results:

The contents of the courses/trainings on gender in universities are organized in a way to cover women's or LGBTI+ rights activism.

Strongly, I agree.		I agree.		I am hesitant.		I do not agree.		I strongly disagree.		Total	Weighted Average
0,00%	0	6,58%	5	30,26 %	23	44,74 %	34	18,42%	14	76	3,75

Table 28: Perception of Gender Classes/Trainings to Cover Women and LGBTI+ Rights Activism

Apart from this, academicians strongly adopt the view that academia has either insufficient or no relations with civil society organisations fighting for women's and LGBTI+ rights in general. The “other” option, which was left open-ended in this question, was left as it was during the evaluation of the answers. The reason for this is that despite the fact that respondents reported insufficient cooperation, they emphasized that this was not just a problem that came with the State of Emergency. It was also stated in these answers that there is mutual exclusion rather than cooperation with civil society organisations. It can be said that there is a general agreement that there is an urgent need to strengthen relations and cooperation among the participants by increasing them. In the table below, it is seen that 52 participants out of 28 who said “I have no idea” stated that there was either no or insufficient cooperation in support of this inference.

After the State of Emergency, the cooperation of university units working in the field of women's studies and/or gender studies and academicians working in these units with feminist and LGBTI+ organisations

OPTIONS	DISTRIBUTION of RESPONSES	
Insufficient	36,25%	29
Sufficient	0,00%	0
There is no cooperation.	22,50%	18
I have no idea.	35,00%	28
Other	6,25%	5
		80

Table 29: Evaluation of the Relationship of Academic Staff with Feminist and LGBTI+ Organisations After the State of Emergency

Taking part in struggle practices is a very important factor that strengthens the relations of academicians with civil society organisations and enables knowledge production processes

to be structured on the basis of theory/practice unity. With the State of Emergency, the pressure on civil organisations fighting for human rights, women's and LGBTI+ rights has increased. Survey data show that this pressure affects the way and level of participation of academicians in struggle practices. The first table below is about the membership status of the academicians who participated in the survey before the declaration of the State of Emergency to CSOs.

Membership status of a non-governmental organisation or initiative before the declaration of State of Emergency		
OPTIONS	DISTRIBUTION of RESPONSES	
I was a member of a non-governmental organisation or initiative in the field of women's rights.	39,29%	33
I was a member of a non-governmental organisation or initiative in the field of human rights.	21,43%	18
I was a member of a non-governmental organisation or initiative in the field of LGBTI+ rights.	9,52%	8
I was a member of a union that defended the rights of teaching staff.	58,33%	49
No	22,62%	19
I don't want to answer.	3,57%	3
I was a member of the professional association.	2,38%	2
		84

Table 30: Membership of academicians with civil society organisations before the State of Emergency

The table above shows that 63 of the 84 academicians who answered the question on the subject were active in the organized struggle for human rights, women's and LGBTI+ rights, and employee rights before the State of Emergency. The participants answered the question about whether the State of Emergency changed their relations with the initiative, platform, association, or union they are a member of, stating that there was no change affecting their membership at a rate of 72.97%. However, in open-ended responses, it was stated that associations or platforms were under pressure, their activities were restricted, their managers were detained for a long time, and the number of meetings and press releases decreased. Some academicians say that they are subjected to mobbing at the university they work because of their continuing membership.

Pressures cause behaviours such as avoiding participating in activities individually, turning to more passive and risk-free action styles and applying self-censorship on subjects that may “create risk” in lessons. Below is a table comparing which struggle practices academicians are involved in, one of which is before and after the State of Emergency:

Involvement in practices of struggling for women's rights and/or LGBTI+ rights before and after the declaration of State of Emergency				
OPTIONS	BEFORE the State of Emergency		AFTER the State of Emergency	
Do not attend any events	4,94%	4	21,95%	18
Participation in street events organized on important special days such as 25 November and 8 March	71,60%	58	59,76%	49
Participation in Pride Week events, Pride parade	50,62%	41	24,39%	20
Participation in the actions of initiatives created to prevent femicides	44,44%	36	41,46%	34
Attending hearings as a spectator	20,99%	17	21,95%	18
Participation in social media campaigns	65,43%	53	70,73%	58
Participation in women's rights protest actions, street demonstrations	58,02%	47	43,90%	36
Contributing to the work of one or more women's rights and/or LGBTI+ rights organisations without being a member, conducting joint studies	44,44%	36	43,90%	36
Consultancy in events such as competitions, film festivals, etc. organized by CSOs	1,23%	1	0,0%	0
Participation in solidarity events	51,85%	42	50,00%	41
Organizing panels, workshops, and symposium-like events	2,47%	2	2,43%	2
Participation in monitoring activities of rights violations	16,05%	13	17,07%	14
Reporting for violations monitoring activities	6,17%	5	13,41%	11
Medical advice and mediation	1,23%	1	0,0%	0
Training in civil society development activities	23,46%	19	35,37%	29
Production of radio programs on gender equality	1,23%	1	1,22%	1
Contribution to the writing of the university's sexual harassment attitude document	18,52%	15	12,20%	10
Actively working in university sexual harassment monitoring units	8,64%	7	7,32%	6
Carrying out signature/social media campaigns on rights violations	12,35%	10	13,41%	11
Participation in video or written record-keeping activities to document and disclose violations of rights	8,64%	7	8,54%	7
No response	2,47%	2	3,66%	3
	Respondents	81		82

Table 31: The forms and levels of participation of academicians in struggle practices before and after the State of Emergency

As can be seen in the table, there has been a significant increase in the number of those who say that they have never participated in struggle practices after the State of Emergency. Only 4.94% of the participants did not participate in any activities before it. After the State of Emergency, this rate increased to 21.95%. Another striking phenomenon is the downward trend in the rate of participation in street protests after it. Although a significant part of the participants continues to participate in such actions, their participation in the 25 November and 8 March marches decreased from 71.60% to 59.76%. Participation in Pride week events and pride parades decreased by half. It is clear that the fact that the marches in question were not allowed, and that even if they were allowed, they could only be carried out under intense police intervention. There is an increasing trend in the participation of academicians in reporting activities in rights monitoring and their participation as trainers in workshops organized to develop civil society. It can be thought that this is the result of academicians, who were pushed out of universities by statutory decrees, trying to gain a place in civil society organisations within their expertise.

In this phase of the research, which includes the survey application, we tried to shed light on the transformations experienced in universities in terms of different dimensions of the gender equality problem in parallel with the acceleration of anti-gender policies in the period following the entry into force of the State of Emergency regime, in the light of the testimony of academicians. In the following section, we will focus on the problems of the struggle for gender equality after the State of Emergency from the point of view of civil society organisations, and what should be done to strengthen the bond between academia and civil society organisations.

II. Civil Society's Struggle for Gender Equality after the State of Emergency and its Relations with Academia: In-Depth Interviews with Civil society organisations

1. Methodology and Framework of Online In-depth Interviews with Civil Society Organisations

In the second phase of the research, it is aimed to reveal the nature of the oppression faced by civil society organisations operating in the field of gender during the State of Emergency and its effects in terms of the struggle for gender equality, with the experience of the representatives of the organisations. In-depth online interviews were conducted with a total of twenty organisations engaged in the struggle for rights and equality in the field of gender, including organisations that were closed or suspended by decree during the State of Emergency. The names of the organisations and their representatives participating in the interview will not be mentioned in this research.

The framework of the in-depth interviews was determined by sending questions and keywords online in advance to the managers of civil society organisations that were closed under the State of Emergency or still carrying out their activities, allowing them to define the nature of the oppression for themselves. Semi-structured interviews were conducted online between October 30, 2020 and February 28, 2021 with 30 participants from 20 civil society organisations from the provinces of İstanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Kocaeli, Mersin, Antalya, Hatay and Muş. The length of the meetings over Zoom is between a minimum of 45 minutes and a maximum of three hours. These hours spent in front of the screen uninterrupted are long enough to cause a loss of attention for both the researcher who conducted the interview and the representative of the organisation interviewed. Conducting the interviews online deprived the researchers of the advantages such as being able to monitor the body language provided by

face-to-face interviews, listening without missing what the interviewee says, taking notes instantly, and controlling the interview by interfering with the flow.

The topics to be covered in the online interviews with civil society organisations were determined in advance by preparing a framework text. The titles in this text guided the interviews, but new titles and questions were added to this framework, taking into account the problems addressed by the interviewees during the course of the interview. For this reason, each interview conducted in accordance with the logic of semi-structured interviews shows that the problems faced by civil society organisations with the State of Emergency differ depending on the activities of the organisation, organisational structure, the region where the organisation is located, and the duration of the organisation's experience.

The flow plan of the semi-structured interviews can give a general idea of the topics covered in the interviews:

General framework:

1. Obstacles/obstructions encountered in their activities and fighting practices;
2. The ways they follow, the methods or strategies they develop in order to resist and ensure the continuity of the struggle against pressures and obstructions;
3. The nature of the problems CSOs face in their internal structures;
4. Solidarity relations, partnerships, interactions, collaborations with other CSOs

Before and after the State of Emergency,

1. Transformation in the struggle practices of CSOs;
2. Change in the number and involvement of members;
3. Solidarity, partnership and cooperation among CSOs, change in their routines;

4. Relations and collaborations with local authorities.

Relations of CSOs with Academia before and after the State of Emergency;

1. Cooperation of CSOs with universities and/or gender research centres of universities;

2. Changes in their access to the information after the State of Emergency;

3. The place, share, and weight of civil society in the production of knowledge in the field of gender equality.

2. Interventions to Suppress Civil Society Before the State of Emergency

Considering the common emphasis in the interviews, it is understood that the State of Emergency regime has a restrictive effect on the activities of women and LGBTI+ associations, especially advocating for rights and fighting for equality in the field of gender, preventing these organisations from developing their capacities and limiting their participation in local and national decision-making processes. Although the initial hypothesis of the research takes the State of Emergency as the milestone, in fact, it is among the common emphases that come to the fore in the interviews that the oppression and authoritarian practices are a process of increasing severity against both the field of gender in academia and civil society organisations that are fighting for rights in this field started before the State of Emergency, that is, since 2015, including the State of Emergency.

Both LGBTI+ and women's rights defender organisations, including those that were closed by decree or whose activities were suspended, point out that the process in which the pressures on the field started with the Büyükada Case before the State of Emergency. The existence of authoritarian practices aimed at suppressing civil society before the State of

Emergency became apparent with the detention of representatives of civil society organisations and activists from many LGBTI+ rights defender organisations for various reasons.

In the meetings, representatives of the organisations drew attention to the government's practices that interrupted gender equality struggle practices and prevented cooperation with the public authority, especially in terms of civil society organisations operating in the field of women's rights advocacy before the State of Emergency. The interviewees stated that it is necessary to go back to 2010 in terms of women's organisations facing the negative consequences of these practices.

But as I explained, we had great difficulties in establishing cooperation with public institutions and municipalities in 2010 and later. Already before the State of Emergency, our possibility of cooperating with public institutions disappeared. The appointment of trustees with the municipalities as a result of the State of Emergency had a great impact, and our cooperation left was lost. (Interviewee 2)⁵

Although the decree laws are mostly referred to with reference to the State of Emergency, the decree number 633 on 8 June 2011 constitutes an important turning point in the history of interventions in the field for civil society organisations struggling for gender equality, especially in the women's movement. With this Decree, the Social Services and Child Protection Institution (SHÇEK) was abolished, the Ministry of State Responsible for Women and Family was closed in 2011, and the Ministry of Family and Social Policies was established in its place. Instead of the closed SHÇEK, the General Directorate of Family and Community Services and the General Directorate of Child Services were established as the service unit of

⁵ The names of the interviewees who participated in the in-depth interviews from civil society organisations were named as "Interviewees" to protect anonymity and the interviews were numbered in chronological order.

the Ministry and the central organisation of SHÇEK was liquidated. The provincial organisation was subordinated to the Special Provincial Administrations.

This development is important in that it marks the change in AKP's gender policies and its policy of confining women within the heteronormative, traditional family. With the abolition of SHÇEK and the transfer of its powers to the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, the ongoing activities with the cooperation of the said public institution were first suspended and then completely stopped. In the following years, the emergence of pro-government civil society organisations, GONGOs (government-organized civil society organisations) in the field of gender were defined by interviewees as systematic interventions to narrow the field of civil society in the struggle for gender equality:

Our field has been increasingly limited, and of course, with the emergence of these GONGOs after 2013, there is another intention, of course, that independent women's organisations should be replaced by GONGOs, we discussed the issue of women's rights with civil society. There is a will to meet with those who are our own, let's meet with those of our own opinion. Therefore, an area of civil society that the GONGOs took over also emerged. Especially after the State of Emergency, we see that men's rights organisations have increased a lot. For example, these GONGOs are always in Parliament, and there is a constant attack on women's rights, and on the Civil Code. They do lobbying activities and they are addressed and invited to these important workshops or something. We are not called. For example, fathers who claimed that they are victims of child support are invited to the Child Support Workshop in 2018, organized by the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Family, but independent women's organisations are not invited (Interviewee 2).

In 2015, the 13th Istanbul LGBTI+ Pride Parade was banned by the Istanbul Governor's Office on the grounds of “protecting the peace and security of the people, general health and morality” and “preventing possible incidents of violence and terrorism”. It is emphasized by the interviewees that the attitude has turned into “criminalizing” and then the governorships in

other provinces banned Pride Month events with the “copy-paste” method for similar reasons, as the periods when the repressions became more visible and their violence gradually increased.

The prohibition process, which started in 2015, is experienced in the form of either suspending the cooperation of LGBTI+ organisations with local governments which were already in a limited number or rendering them invisible by censorship. This common experience conveyed by the interviewees is followed by extraordinary scrutiny of organisations, being targeted by pro-government media organs, threats from social media platforms, individual investigations, and detention operations against organisation managers. This period, when the government's anti-gender attitudes became evident, is also described by those interviewed as a period in which organisations had to lower their political profile in order to ensure their own safety due to increasing pressure and “withdrawn into themselves”.

Before 2015, we were in a more positive and hopeful period. We have been feeling the increasing pressures since 2015. With the State of Emergency, they marginalized us even more (Interviewee 6).

[...]

Before the State of Emergency, we actually felt pressure. After the June 7 elections [2015]. But after that process, we actually lowered that political profile with the State of Emergency. These have started to appear less frequently on our website. It hasn't even been published at all. Thus, we actually had to censor ourselves a bit (Interviewee 15).

3. State of Emergency Period: Decrees, Closures, Penalties

With the State of Emergency, civil society organisations engaged in advocacy activities in the fields of human rights, women's and LGBTI+ rights, and children's rights were faced with the threat of being closed down; organisations were rendered

incapable of carrying out their activities during this period. It is seen that the interviewees agreed that the effects of the atmosphere of fear created during the State of Emergency are at least as destructive as direct interventions:

After an unbelievable atmosphere of fear, we have already encountered many things such as the closure of associations, confiscation of their properties, investigations against those friends, etc. Not only in us, but also in all women's organisations and organisations working in the field of human rights, there were situations that caused unease, and later, of course, these were some moves that we read as a direct threat to the civil society, such as the Büyükada Case, Osman Kavala, etc. (Interviewee 2).

[...]

We organize conferences, film screenings. With the State of Emergency, we have difficulties in finding a place for our conferences and events. Especially starting from 2015, our film screening activities have changed. In the State of Emergency, we could not even make a press statement, let alone the event. Our marches and actions were restricted (Interviewee 13).

One of the facts that the interviewees drew attention to is that the lobbying activities of civil society organisations operating in the field of women's rights advocacy, both in the parliament and in local administrations, are interrupted in such an environment of pressure. It is especially emphasized that as a result of the dismissal of elected mayors following the declaration of the State of Emergency, the appointment of trustees in their place, the suspension of activities carried out in cooperation with local administrations, and the elimination of existing opportunities completely, there is no room for improvement in terms of organisations operating in the field of gender.

In the context of advocacy, I can describe the problems we experience as follows. [...] With the declaration of the State of Emergency in 2016, the appointment of trustees to municipalities made a huge difference. Our space has narrowed. Because we know that the first thing that

trustees do is to close women's counseling centres and build wedding halls, dismiss qualified and trained personnel, etc. (Interviewee 2).

The interviewees expressed the effects of the State of Emergency on the practices of organisations to be involved in advocacy and policy processes as follows:

What is an advocacy tool? For example, lobbying. For example, going to the parliament and meeting with the deputies is one of the most important tools. During the State of Emergency, this was, of course, a completely shelved process for us). [...] While it may have played an active role in making a law before, now an action plan against violence against women is being created and independent women's organisations are not being called. We do not know which organisations are being called. We are not affiliated with the ministries in any way and there are cases where we are not invited to the meetings despite our repeated requests (Interviewee 2).

One of the dilemmas that most of the interviewees pointed out as a result of the widespread authoritarian practices of the State of Emergency is the establishment and internalization of self-control/self-censorship in LGBTI+ and/or women's rights advocacy organisations. In fact, each non-governmental organisation preferred to avoid using the phrase “gender” in their activity titles to ensure their own safety in the oppressive environment that came with the State of Emergency, as well as avoiding their names as organizers/agents of the activity. The interviewees from organisations that were able to obtain the status of association right after the State of Emergency stated that they did not give up their activism on the street, despite the pressures and threats they were exposed to, especially through social media and digital media channels, but that they had to adopt anonymity as a policy in order to increase security measures.

What do these reflect? You think twice about what you are going to say. Maybe you are self-censoring and the field is getting narrower (Interviewee 2).

[...]

With the State of Emergency, we had to hold crisis meetings frequently. LGBTI activists in the spotlight were detained because of their social media posts, their passports were confiscated, and they were forced to sign at the police station every week. This is how the state punished. In this process, we also self-censored our individual social media accounts (Interviewee 15).

[...]

We were constantly receiving threats via digital media. Our website has been hacked many times. We were targeted by media organs close to the government. We were constantly getting threats from Instagram. After this process, we have increased our anonymity and security measures (Interviewee 4).

It was emphasized that the participation in the activities organized by the organisations for their members and volunteers decreased during the State of Emergency, and there was a significant decrease in the number of volunteers aged 30 and over. It has been stated that the oppression of especially LGBTI+ organisations during this period led to introversion and internalization of self-censorship.

Before 2015, we were more positive and hopeful. With the State of Emergency, they marginalized us even more. Especially with the bans in Ankara. Those who attended our events in the past hesitated to become even members anymore. In this process, introversion is in question for every organisation. During the pandemic, the Directorate of Religious Affairs' accusations increased the pressure on us (Interviewee 6).

[...]

Queer organisations try to exist on their own. The motivation of these organisations is the struggle for rights. The struggle for the organisation despite the power, the state, and the family. But all of these took a big hit with the State of Emergency (Interviewee 10).

[...]

With the State of Emergency, we have entered a period where we are even more cautious and internalize self-censorship (Interviewee 14).

In addition, the ongoing lobbying and cooperation initiatives for the LGBTI+ friendly municipality protocol in local governments have also been interrupted, and the limited number of City Council LGBTI+ Assemblies, which were voluntarily advancing before, had to suspend their activities during the State of Emergency.

Some contacts have been cut [with local governments]. They were reluctant to be seen together with LGBTI+s, with the LGBTI+ movement as an outcome of this whole criminalization process (Interviewee 7).

With an application that started after the general elections held on June 7, 2015, continued during the State of Emergency, and became a regular practice after the abolition of the State of Emergency, the government's policy of appointing trustees to local governments, especially in the eastern provinces or districts interrupted the practices of struggling issues such as “child marriage” and “domestic abuse”, which were issues that could not be resolved due to the passive position preferences of the opposition governments at that time, and resulted in the suspension of reporting activities on them altogether. This is highlighted as a significant loss in the fight against gender inequality, domestic violence, sexual harassment, and abuse.

Another common experience emphasized by the interviewees is that organisations that are not appointed by the government or closed with a statutory decree, especially those that have gained power and visibility in the struggle against femicide, domestic violence, and abuse, are subject to extraordinary inspections. With the high fines imposed, the associations had to take down the signage, and the investigations, arrests, and detentions against their managers rendered the organisations virtually dysfunctional.

In the previous year [2018], the sign of our association was removed. Constantly threatening insults from the Facebook page, then from different fake accounts ... both sexist swearing under

the articles we share, and that's why they're here, their problem is not that. They wrote different things. [...] In 2019, we received a warning from the Ministry of Interior. We had an investigation. We have been complained and investigated. In 2018, we had an investigation. It's not the trustee you know, but the men came and stayed with us [in our association] for 6 months. The financial branch is examining all the documents, as well as the association's desk, they examined everything. They couldn't find anything. Because there is nothing. (Interviewee 19).

While the organisations that were rendered dysfunctional by various penalties in this process receive support and solidarity from the organisations with which they wage a joint struggle in the same field, both in the provinces and in the centre. On the contrary, the situation is different for the organisations that were closed with the Decree-Laws and/or whose activities were suspended. Since these organisations were criminalized by the Decree Laws at the very beginning of the State of Emergency, they were also deprived of organized solidarity patterns.

It's actually a bit traumatic [before the shutdown, they didn't get support and solidarity from the organisations they were in cooperation and solidarity with]. I think you more or less guess. [...] We expected this from the state [locally] as a women's organisation. But we did not expect the processes after. It was quite a disappointment. [...] So they didn't want to do business with us in any way. Of course, there was this then. It was known that an investigation was launched against us. [...] We thought that this nightmare would end when it was closed. Okay, we sat silent and thought that they would let us go. They didn't let go. For example, because it was an association that was closed, nothing we could do. We couldn't turn off the lines of electricity, water, and internet, and two years later, the debts were charged to us (Interviewee 8).

Another dimension of the damage caused by the State of Emergency to civil society organisations in the struggle for gender equality is the weakening of the ties of organisations fighting for women's rights with other organisations operating in the field, and the decrease in the number of members and volunteers.

We have relations with other CSOs before and during the State of Emergency, but with the State of Emergency, our relations with some CSOs gradually weakened. Our relations naturally weakened, as some found us "too oppositional". [...] The number

of young female members and volunteers has also decreased gradually (Interviewee 13).

The targeting of especially LGBTI+ organisations by political power and state institutions during the State of Emergency not only increased the forms of cooperation and solidarity among communities and organisations operating jointly in this field but also strengthened the motivation to reassure and advance in line with common goals.

Pride Parade bans in Istanbul in 2015 and in Ankara in 2018 were one of the obvious pressures. Again in this process, demonstrations were banned in Ankara on the pretext of public morality, social morality, and security threat. In this period, all LGBTI+ associations were inspected. They do inspections almost every year. On the other hand, with these prohibitions and increasing pressure, we have stayed closer and closer to LGBTI+ organisations (Interviewee 15).

Even though Pride Weeks are banned every year, we are on the streets somehow and we are producing our word. Again, we stand against oppression. Maybe it's progressing as we hold on to each other against pressure from outside. Maybe this is the most basic thing I can say in this process. We were holding on to each other even though everything was forbidden (Interviewee 19).

The spread of these new patterns of solidarity and the formation of new umbrella networks were expressed as developments that these associations welcomed and volunteered to be a part of. Representatives of these organisations, which are also stakeholders of the Gender Equality Solidarity Network (AĞ-DA), emphasize that these patterns should be developed. They also shared their suggestions for the development of the network.

4. Relations and Collaborations of Civil Society Organisations with Academia before and after the State of Emergency

It has been expressed by those interviewed that the atmosphere of oppression and fear created by the State of Emergency negatively affects participation in organized struggle practices. According to the interviewees, one of the factors that led to this result is the dismissal of academicians who are signatories of the Peace

Declaration, who carry out studies in the field of gender, from universities by the decree laws.

It was stated that with the expulsions, the existing collaborations, joint activities and ties of civil society organisations in the field of gender with universities either disappeared completely or remained limited to only a few foundation universities in the centre. With these purges in academia, it has been determined that the link between the practical knowledge of the field of gender equality and the institutional knowledge in academia has gradually weakened. Another problem caused by this is the inability of civil society organisations to come together with university students and the distance of students from the field and organisational practices.

Universities are an area where we lack a bit. I can't say that we had a lot of cooperation either before or after the State of Emergency. But it is a place we always want to enter and be active in. Universities are an area we want to cooperate with, but there is not such an initiative related to this, there is nothing concrete, but we can observe this very clearly of course: With the State of Emergency, Peace Signatories were marked and expelled from universities and most of them were women, working for women's research centres or social networks. The destruction that may have been caused in Anatolian universities by the fact that there were people who teach gender lessons, and then the The Council of Higher Education's removal of the Gender Equality Attitude/Policy Document from the internet saying "it is against our values", and the perspective of the people who were dismissed from their jobs, on gender, etc. can be seen and felt deeply. This all-out attack is not limited to the law. Civil society fighting for gender equality is also intimidated (Interviewee 2).

[...]

Before the State of Emergency, we had joint activities with universities, especially with women's studies at universities. However, these activities came to an end with the expulsion of academicians from the university (Interviewee 13).

The interviewees stated that even before the State of Emergency, the relations and collaborations with academia progressed not with the institutional initiatives of the universities, but rather with the individual efforts of the academicians working in the field of gender at the university, and underlined that academia is not LGBTI+ inclusive in its current state.

Relations with academia proceed mostly through the professors. In other words, it is under the guidance of them. To understand academia, it is necessary to look primarily at student initiatives. It is necessary to look at how active queer organisations and initiatives are at universities (Interviewee 10).

The systematic prevention of the establishment of LGBTI+ communities and initiatives at universities with an official status after 2017 by university administrations and their deprivation of the support of students and academic staff have reduced the number and impact of such organisations:

While we were able to hold our events very comfortably [at university campuses] in 2014 and 2015, both the pressure increased and it became more noticeable in 2017. The number of students engaged in open activism has decreased, and this problem still continues. The number of official [LGBTI+] communities has decreased over the past five years. Digital violence has clearly increased. [...] Academia is not LGBTI+ inclusive in its current state (Interviewee 11).

Representatives of civil society organisations operating in the field of gender, who participated in the interviews, stated that their relations with academia weakened after the expulsion of faculty members with the State of Emergency Decrees. They talk about the fact that the previous collaborations are no longer there or that they have become more closed to civil society organisations due to the pressure on the women's studies units and the change of their staff:

Before the State of Emergency, we had joint activities with the universities in big cities. There are women academicians from the university who work in the women's struggle, in the field of feminist theory or in the field of women's studies. There were also certain trainings we organized with them. The dismissal of academicians working in the field of gender with the Decree also hampered our relations with academia (Interviewee 12).

[...]

In other words, in fact, it was always through individuals [contacting the university through academicians], of course. But when those academicians were expelled, we continued to do business, work and be in solidarity with them. But because they are no longer at the university, that is not because it is an obstacle for us, but because our connection with universities is mostly through them, and that connection has disappeared (Interviewee 14).

[...]

There was women's studies at the university in our city. In fact, there were two or three friends who were also our volunteers, but especially the change of rectors and political pressures changed the directors of women's studies at the universities (Interviewee 13).

Particular attention was drawn to the role of the hierarchy within academia, the establishment of a hierarchical relationship between the practical knowledge of the field and the institutional knowledge in academia, and the transfer of this to the organisation, in the lack of sufficient ties between academia and civil society organisations and the practices of producing knowledge together. The need for activists who have the knowledge and experience of the field and the theoretical knowledge of academia to come together on a more egalitarian level is also among the important highlights.

In their activism environments, where they come together with feminist women, or how titles and positions can create reservations when people are speaking, how they can create domination over others, etc. are seen as the main issues of feminist organisation and feminism. It's one of the things we're missing right now. Our organisations have been pushed into an incredibly hierarchical position, and when academicians join these organisations, they somehow participate by bringing that hierarchical perspective. First of all, I think that this should be addressed and returned to feminist principles and principles. Because otherwise it is impossible to walk together. One of the biggest reasons why young women do not want to join organisations is the issue of hierarchy (Interviewee 2).

5. The Normalization of the State of Emergency and the Situation of Civil

Society Organisations

It is the common judgment of those interviewed that despite the lifting of the State of Emergency, the effects and the repressive practices applied in this process still continue, especially the practices that limit democratic rights such as freedom of association, assembly, demonstration and march. In fact, some of the interviewees stated that the oppression did not end, on the contrary, it continued intensified and this situation made it very difficult for civil society organisations to survive. It is observed that a series of repression strategies such as banning marches, blocking press statements, and especially the frequent inspection of LGBTI+ organisations by government commissioners, hinder rights advocacy activities in the field of gender:

The State of Emergency is over, but the practices [implementation of the State of Emergency] have hardly changed. Here, they say, “You can only do it at the place we will show, between these hours and this amount of time”. What we're going to do is just a press meeting. Parades are almost restricted. Last year [2019] we had a nice parade in the daytime on November 25th. Let's see, it looks like we will be content with the press meeting this year (Interviewee 13).

[...]

Despite the end of the State of Emergency, violence and pressure did not decrease, on the contrary, they increased. In addition, the number of young female members and volunteers decreased gradually (Interviewee 13).

[...]

The State of Emergency is over, but as an association, we still continue to censor ourselves and feel at risk. [...] I think [the effects of the State of Emergency] actually continue quite heavily. Maybe there are such small intervals. You know, we haven't felt a lot of pressure for a while, maybe we feel a little more comfortable. Then we worry again. I guess I can say it's a state of great obscurity (Interviewee 14).

III. Online Focus Groups on Gender Equality in Academia and Civil Society After the State of Emergency

After the first two phases of the field research – the online survey for academicians working in the field of gender and the online in-depth interviews with representatives, administrators and volunteers from twenty civil society organisations operating in this field – were completed, the focus group was outlined in line with the findings and data obtained.

The aim of the focus group is to examine the structuring of gender studies within academia, the effect of power relations and established structures on the knowledge production processes in the field of gender, the place and role of academia in the struggle for gender equality, the effect of the increasing authoritarianism in Turkey after the State of Emergency on the field of gender studies. To learn the experiences of academicians, students/student initiatives and civil society organisations in different positions, to identify and evaluate the problems together, to contribute to the determination of the needs in order to strengthen the bond between the civil society and academia by discussing the problems.

In this context, in order to ensure the homogeneity of the groups in seven focus group studies, three groups were determined as academicians, students/student societies/initiatives/associations representatives, volunteers and civil society organisations managers and volunteers, and a total of six online interviews were conducted twice with each group. The seventh focus group meeting was held online in the form of a forum where encounters and discussions were carried out by bringing all groups together. Before the interviews, the participants from each group were sent the accompanying information text, the informed consent form, and the framework questions of the focus group via e-mail (For the framework questions, see Annex 1). Online focus groups were conducted with a total of 14 people, including six academicians who were dismissed by decree in May-June 2021 but

continue to work in the field of gender outside the university, four students/student initiatives and representatives from five organisations defending women's rights and LGBTI+ rights.

The focus group components held online are as follows: four associate professors, a professor and a research assistant including dismissals from the Central Anatolia and Black Sea regions; four representatives from Queer and/or feminist student/student societies/initiatives/associations from Central Anatolia and Aegean regions; representatives from the Solidarity Academies from Marmara, Central Anatolia, Mediterranean and Aegean regions; five representatives from women's rights and LGBTI+ rights organisations. The last online focus group meeting in the form of a forum that brought together the three groups was completed with a total of ten participants.

When the answers given to the questions asked to measure the damage caused by the State of Emergency are subjected to a preliminary evaluation, it is seen that results that support the research hypothesis are obtained. In the focus groups, first of all, to the question of “Where are we in the struggle for gender studies and equality?” was sought for an answer. Second, with the testimony of academicians and then students/student initiatives/communities/associations, to the question of “Where are we on the issue of gender studies and equality in academia?” was sought for an answer. Finally, with the testimony of representatives of civil society organisations, to the questions of “Where do we stand on the issue of gender equality? Where is our position after the State of Emergency? Where are the problems centred?” were sought for answers.

1. Gender Studies and Struggle for Equality in the Light of the Testimony of Academicians

Structural Issues

A series of problems and a series of classifications are possible that focus group participants share and focus on. First of all, it is possible to talk about structural problems. The following structural problems in academia were emphasized in the field of gender in Turkey and in the world:

- Neo-liberal Policies, The Rise of Right-wing Populism, and the Transformation of Religion as the Determinant of Social Relations

It has been stated that neo-liberal policies, the rise of right-wing populism and the transformation of religion into the determining factor of social relations, that is, a kind of conservatism, constitute one of the structural problems of academia and exist with a similar effect not only in Turkey but also in the world.

Both in the world and in Turkey, a quite excessive academic knowledge is produced in the field of gender. There is no restriction in the production of knowledge, but the rise of the anti-gender movement, of course, also affects academia. We are seeing the rise of the anti-gender movement around the world, and there are also systematic attacks on gender studies (Scholar 6)⁶.

Here, it has been determined that especially the social and cultural structures existing in different regions put pressure on the university; that academic and administrative staff cannot be independent of city or region-specific patronage relations; that the university is deprived of a cultural transformation function; that, on the contrary, the existing local power relations have penetrated the administrative and academic functioning of the universities. As a result of these

⁶ In order to ensure the anonymity of the academicians participating in the focus groups, each was named "Scholar" and numbered in alphabetical order.

structural problems, authoritarianism and conservatism negatively affect all kinds of academic relations and production processes.

The field of gender in provincial universities is a field that has been recently discovered and explored. These are the studies made especially for filling files, reassignment or assignment promotion criteria. They are avoiding criticism. Those who do this are phobic, misogynistic academicians who view the gender issue from the right-wing perspective (Scholar 4).

[...]

Since universities are too localized, they can no longer transform the city they are in. To ensure the continuity of the city, to reproduce the existing culture... People who are also a bureaucratic part of the city in the countryside are also working as academicians for the universities here (Scholar 5).

[...]

It is as if the field is institutionalized by opening master's and doctoral programs, but there is conceptual confusion in institutionalization. Lesson wars began in the countryside; Who will teach which course? Motivation is purely money oriented. We need to go a long way in terms of institutionalization in terms of content and quality (Scholar 5).

- Avoiding Criticism in Knowledge Production Processes

In the interviews, it was emphasized that the seamless integration of academia with neo-liberal policies adversely affected the critical knowledge production processes. It can be expressed as a common observation that the research and publications produced in academia have increased quantitatively. However, quantitative increase does not always mean an improvement in terms of quality. On the contrary, in academia, which is articulated with neo-liberal policies, the increase in quantity brings with it the loss of criticism in terms of quality. With the rise of right-wing populism, there has been a tendency for religion to become the determining factor of social relations. As a reflection of this trend, attempts to restructure the hierarchy within academia, especially in non-central universities, on the basis of religious

values, is another dimension of the problem. As a result of all these, it can be said that there is a serious erosion and destruction in the production of critical knowledge. It should be emphasized that there is a consensus on this issue among the participating academicians.

It was stated by the participants that the criticism caused them to be perceived as opposed to the government. The adoption of the language of power as a result of the organic ties established with local power centres, which are the extensions of the central power, also contributes to this. Some of the students and academicians and administrative staff, who act as representatives of local power centres, do not hesitate to use all kinds of tools that spread this pressure in order to leave no room for critical thinking. The reinforcing effect of local interest networks should not be forgotten here. It was emphasized by the interviewees that reasons such as the defence of local values, protection of the family, sensitivity to faith and national values were often put as an obstacle to criticism. One of the consequences of any intolerance to criticism has been to employ the devices of control as widely as possible. University administrations do not prevent students from conveying what is explained in the lectures in the form of complaints to the higher authorities, on the contrary, the use of the complaint mechanism is encouraged, disregarding the legal framework on the protection of personal data, and using it against academicians. It has been said that this has consequences such as increased intolerance to criticism, harassment of academicians by their students, and mobbing within the institution.

- The Problem of “Gender” Taboo in Academia and the Imposition of Family-Oriented Perspective in Research, Knowledge Production and Teaching Processes

Participants pointed to the policy of disseminating the concept of family studies by changing the names of some of the research centres originally established under the names of Women's Studies or Gender Studies in universities before 2014. It is emphasized that there is a connection between this policy and right-wing populist practices, authoritarianism and conservatism. Participants agree that the name change is aimed at transforming the field on a different value system as a part of AKP's struggle for hegemony, rather than eliminating the gender field altogether.

I think the question of which academicians from which disciplines established KASAUMs [Centre for Research and Application on Women's Issues] is important. Having theologians in KASAUMs suppresses critical knowledge production. Especially in rural KASAUMs, the subject of “family and religion” is definitely added (Scholar 5).

Another problem highlighted in the focus groups is the legitimacy of a social situation in which women are imprisoned in the family, through studies, academic studies, theses, etc., conducted with a family-oriented perspective rather than gender.

In the field of gender, the quality is decreasing while the quantity is increasing. The names of KASAUMs and Gender Studies Centres at the universities in the central provinces were changed. The effort to confine the gender field to the family in academia is increasing and spreading.” (Scholar 2)

The interviewees agree that this means the reproduction of the conservative status quo. It has been emphasized by the interviewees that knowledge production in Eastern European countries is also affected by these processes, and that family-oriented studies are gaining importance in these countries with more conservative preferences. However, it has been stated that the opposite trend exists simultaneously in academia, and that highly qualified studies in which motherhood, fatherhood and family are deconstructed with a critical perspective have increased in recent years. This view will be detailed under the heading of positive developments.

Another problem expressed in the interviews is that the concept of gender in universities is gradually being removed from theses, researches, articles and books. It has been determined that a special effort is made to not include the concept of gender in both the titles and keywords, especially in the theses, and such a tendency is gaining weight even in the universities in the central provinces. The interviewees stated that in order “not to be caught on the radar of YÖK (The Council of Higher Education)”, a process in which the concept of gender is eliminated as much as possible in graduate theses points to a serious self-censorship problem.

In this context, it can be stated that not only the State of Emergency regime and AKP authoritarianism, but also the opposition to the Istanbul Convention (IS) have devastating, constricting results on the knowledge production processes in the field of gender, which may mean the loss of criticism and quality:

Opposition to IS also affects knowledge production in academia, both in Turkey and in countries where right-wing populism is on the rise, especially in Eastern Europe. Especially in Turkey, the names and contents of the studies and courses have been transformed and they are being interfered with. Theses, which are reproduced by supporting the conservative status quo, are written in the title of not the term gender, but often “family”. Opposition to IS is circulating in Turkey and Eastern Europe with very similar rhetoric. In addition, studies integrated into neo-liberal policies are also prominent in the literature, and this affects the production of critical knowledge in the field of gender in academia (Scholar 1).

- Social Values and Religious Beliefs as the Founding Axis of Relations in Academia

One of the transformations that was emphasized in the focus groups was the role of the religion factor that determined the limit in the relations of the students with the lecturers. It was stated that the students activated the complaint mechanisms on the grounds of religious sensitivities, for example, by taking the video recording of the lesson without the knowledge of the instructor and mounting the recording, they sent it to the administration and opened an investigation against the instructor, thus starting to establish a kind of domination over the

instructors. It has been emphasized that this is a situation that is becoming increasingly common especially in “provincial” universities. Complaint mechanisms are operated with claims that the course content consists of “taboos against our beliefs, family sanctity and traditions”. It has been stated that the issue of religious belief and the traditional heteronormative family has been turned into a sacred taboo, traditions are increasingly exalted and there is a very serious pressure to keep any language and discourse contrary to them within certain limits. However, it is clear that the concepts and topics covered in the lessons are specific to the struggle for gender equality and are shaped within this struggle.

It has been stated that harassment and mobbing against the instructors can easily be covered up for similar reasons. One of the most striking examples of this situation is the statement of a scholar, who was harassed by her student, that she could not act on this issue, nor could she receive any support from her colleagues, and that there were no mechanisms to be used in such cases in his institution. It is emphasized that the closure of sexual harassment prevention units in universities has a large share in this situation.

In the period when KASAUMs were strong, our gains were great. For example, “What is harassment?” We were visiting the faculties and talking about it one by one. We had municipalities sign various policy documents. At that time, we used to say that the situation in the provinces is worse, but now, with what I have learned from you, it is obvious that the situation is even worse. Harassments and mobbings in the countryside are not even heard anymore, they are covered immediately (Scholar 6).

- ***- Organisation and Operation of the Pressure in Academia from the State of Emergency to the Presidential Government System***

In the period following the declaration of the State of Emergency, it is emphasized that, with the changes made in the administrative levels at universities, an environment was created that could disseminate the government's practices in all units of the university, implement practices that would be beneficial in achieving ideological transformation, and institutionalize control and pressure on

academic and administrative staff. Although it is emphasized that there is an increase in the number of studies in the field of gender and practices that can contribute to the struggle for equality and rights in some universities, it has been observed that mechanisms forcing a quality change in the production of knowledge in the field of gender have been activated in parallel with the intensification of pressure on all opposition segments of the society in the period following the declaration of the State of Emergency. Particularly, it is emphasized by the focus group participants that the appointed, close to power administrators of universities established in conservative cities, in cooperation with local power centres, create environments in which academic ethical rules and norms become invalid in the organisation of academic processes.

- Displacement of Gender Studies in Academic Structure

The results such as the fact that gender research centres in universities, women's issues research and application centres gradually become religion and family-centred, the field of research and activity is shifted to the family by changing their names, they are rendered dysfunctional through the appointment of theologians to the heads of the centres in the field of gender in academia in the State of Emergency and its aftermath. are the visible consequences of destruction.

We have started to be exposed to intense pressure in academia since 2015. While KASAUMs were not seen as political in the first years of their establishment, especially in 2015 and after, “you demand freedom, you slide into activism” etc., it started to be criminalized (Scholar 3).

In the interviews, it was emphasized that it is extremely important from which discipline the academicians who founded the centres on women's issues come from, that the appointment of theologians to the heads of these centres suppresses the production of critical knowledge. It is stated that the subject of “family and religion” is definitely added to the activities of women's issues research and application centres especially in the provinces, and some of the central universities are able to resist this process.

The urge to trap the woman in the family is very intense. For example, the emphasis on family in the title and content of theses is too much. We see that this is done consciously and systematically against the critical knowledge produced in the field of gender in academia (Scholar 5).

However, even in the universities in big cities that seem to have completed their institutionalization, the pressure of the government and religion can affect research preferences, curricula and contents through women's issues research centres. It was stated that these centres were transformed by trying to reform them on the basis of religion and family values, rather than abolishing them completely. Thus, it is emphasized that while determining the limits of the knowledge produced in these centres, the power also provides legitimacy in domestic politics by saying "Look, we are working on the women's issue".

They are trying to establish legitimacy through the rhetoric "Look, we are also against women's exposure to violence and domestic violence". They have a dilemma, they have a schizophrenic state. They don't want to be seen directly in opposition to the women's movement. They still care about how they look from the outside (Scholar 1).

- Provincialization of the Centre: Partisanship, Nepotism, Citizenship and Incompetence

Although it was emphasized in the focus groups that provincialization was not widespread enough to cover all central universities (state or foundation), it was stated that almost everywhere began to take on a provincial appearance, and that many universities suffered from the tendency to become provincial no matter how much they resisted it.

There is a very remarkable border in the countryside, which is the matter of religion. It is an issue that reproduces itself starting from the rector and up to the student. How will you explain to the students the issue of gender in the countryside? Everywhere is rural now. (Scholar 4).

The conditions for academicians to exist in the provinces are not to talk about gender equality issues as much as possible. It is stated that for a female scholar, existence can only be possible

through spouses, fathers, siblings, etc. Scholar 5 explains this situation as follows::

In an event I attended as a speaker, I was told, “Professor, please don't talk about violence”. For a woman to speak out in the country, it is expected to be either someone's wife, older sister, or mother. Women who do not have these feel strange when they speak. “Would you like to get married? I wonder if you find a husband?” they are asking.

In the interviews, the dimensions of the provincialization trend in universities from the State of Emergency to the present were defined through the following determinations:

- Incompetence of academic staff: Partisanship, nepotism and compatriotism in recruitment and promotion. Increasing insecurity with YÖK (The Council of Higher Education) academics, ÖYP and 50-d (temporary positions) staff and the problem of not being able to find a position at all;
- It is legitimate for bureaucrats to teach at universities;
- Expansion of unethical relations;
- The dominance of patriarchal, discriminatory, phobic language: The normalization of sexist, phobic approaches, the prevalence of sexist, masculine, infantile language in relationships and addresses;
- Determination of kinship-citizenship relations;
- Proximity to power takes precedence over merit;
- Trustee rectors.

In addition to these, the fact that most of the dismissals are from the field of gender

studies and this undermines the training of faculty members was also among the issues highlighted in the interviews.

- The Problem of Academic Freedoms and Autonomy

The interviewees who stated that there is a conscious and systematic pressure against the critical information produced in the field of gender, stated that one of the consequences of this is that the production of knowledge proceeds through projects rather than academia, and that studies carried out in this way are confined to the policies and language of the funding institution.

The production of knowledge in the field of gender through projects has gradually increased in Turkey. Knowledge is produced through projects rather than academia. The increasing pressure in academia and the YÖK (The Council of Higher Education) have a big share in this (Scholar 5).

Since it could not be produced in academia, studies in the field of gender became produced with funds. However, the negative aspect of this is that the studies are more confined to the policies and language of the funder (Scholar 6).

The fact that academia has ceased to be knowledge production centre and that knowledge production is done through projects funded by independent institutions stands out as an indicator of the destruction suffered by academia. The intensity of the pressure on academia, especially on the field of gender, has resulted in universities no longer being places where knowledge can be produced freely. Projects have become the main sources of knowledge produced in the field of gender in recent years. A negative result of this is that the studies carried out appear in a content appropriate to the political preferences and language of the funding institutions. In this sense, it can be claimed that the studies carried out neither within academia nor with the support of civil society are produced in accordance with the criteria of academic freedom and independence. It is also debatable whether these independent fund institutions can

provide sufficient ethical and academic control over the quality of the information produced, and whether the standards are adequately applied from a methodological point of view. In terms of methodological consistency, sharing of data, ensuring continuity in knowledge production, and the adequacy of the techniques applied in the evaluation of research results, quality problems arise in data and knowledge production processes depending on the concessions made in the standards of academic knowledge production depending on the political preferences of the funding institutions.

Losing the gains of the struggle with the relations of domination produced by the academic structure; The increasing prevalence of gender equality policy are two of the results of the destruction in the field.

-The Problem of Organizing within Academia, the Absence of Patterns of Solidarity and Cooperation

In the interviews, it was emphasized that experience sharing could not be done especially in the provinces. It is emphasized that academia does not have the opportunity to cooperate with the civil society, contact and institutional bonds and relations cannot be established. Another obstacle to organizing in the countryside is the inability to become anonymous..

There is a problem in the countryside, such as not being anonymized. The obstacle to organizing in the countryside is the inability to become anonymous (Scholar 4).

You can't get lost here [in the country]. Everyone knows who you are. They do not allow any organisation in the provinces other than themselves. Being organized/united seems impossible. However, individual contact can be made with students (Scholar 5).

Another problem that came to the fore in the meetings was the disappearance of patterns of solidarity and cooperation, the serious destruction of professional solidarity, the solidarity of mutual equals with each other, and the fact that people began to avoid engaging in relations of solidarity with each other for fear of losing their jobs.

Positive Developments

- *Increase in the number of studies in the field of Gender*

Although the increase in the number of studies in the field of gender was mentioned in the interviews, the main difference was underlined in the focus groups: It is stated that although the large foundation universities established in the centre in particular lead to quality research through gender research centres, a similar support is denied in many state universities in the centre. In this respect, it is understood that the academic interest in gender studies in foundation universities grew without being harmed by the pressure, while the state universities in the centre were affected by the transformation created by the pressure. The increase observed in the number of researches in the field of gender in most of the universities established in different regions of Anatolia is among the claims made in the interviews that were produced with the aim of meeting the appointment promotion criteria and filling the files.

- *The spread of interdisciplinarity*

Currently, there are more gender studies centres and more initiatives in the field in foundation universities compared to state universities. However, interdisciplinarity has become so widespread in academia, which is very promising for the field of gender (Scholar 3).

One of the most important gains from the spread of interdisciplinarity is that intersectional fields are covered with multiple perspectives and methodological approaches in gender studies.

• *The emergence and proliferation of “brave” initiatives that deconstruct the family and motherhood.*

There are very bold steps in the rejection of the family and motherhood, as well as academic publications on this subject are increasing. There are huge and systematic objections to family and motherhood. That is, the deconstruction of family and motherhood is on the rise (Scholar 3).

Besides, the participants drew attention to the developments in the studies of critical masculinity. It has been mentioned as an important development that awareness studies on paternity are carried out, especially in cooperation with local governments. It was emphasized that in addition to the municipalities with the Republican People's Party (CHP), some municipalities with the Turkish Good Party (IP) and the Justice and Development Party (AKP) tend to develop their practices for monitoring gender studies.

• *The fact that LGBTI+ and feminist movements have deepened their struggles with oppression and have reached the power to direct the literature and theoretical developments.*

In the face of intense and systematic oppression and attacks, especially the LGBTI+ movement has become extremely strong. TERF [trans-exclusionary radical feminist, the English abbreviation of radical feminist approach that excludes trans individuals], cis [cisgender] discussions have risen a lot, and I find this very important. On the other hand, there is a tension between the LGBTI+ movement and different feminist approaches. Voicing and discussing different types of violence and policy development initiatives regarding these are very important developments. The ongoing struggle for their entry into the literature is very promising. Different claims, ecofeminism etc. It is equally promising that it is being voiced and rising gradually. For example, the concept of Queer was not known so much in the past, but almost everyone now knows and is familiar with this concept (Scholar 3).

Particularly, some of the scholar participants see the future of gender studies as independent formations, freed from the constraints of the established university structure. The

institutionalization efforts of the solidarity academies formed by civil society organisations and those excluded from the academy are considered as the pioneering steps of creating a “free and independent academia outside the academia”. Scholar 3 underlines the hopefulness of these efforts by saying, “I think that hidden geographies will defeat mediocrity and masculinity in academia, and I am very hopeful about this”.

2. Gender Studies and Struggle for Equality in the Light of the Testimony of Students

Domination in Relations and the Problem of Queers’ Non-Existence in Academia

In the focus group study conducted with students, representatives of student societies/initiatives/associations, and volunteers, it was stated that Queers faced the problem of not being able to exist in academia and their existence in the academic structure with open identity was prevented. Queers face this obstacle in the entire hierarchical structure in academia, from administrative staff to the boards, and they start their academic career in an unequal position..

- *Exposure to sexist approaches*

Academicians’ rhetoric are like “Is this LGBT, these are empty jobs, my daughter, my son” and so on. There is sexism in their address (Student 2).⁷

- *Assuming responsibility for the entire movement*

Because I'm queer, I have to do activism while I'm taking classes, which is why I'm not there. During the class, I feel as if I have to defend the entire Queer movement (Student 1).

[...]

Gender is very important in the field of Public Health. This is left to the awareness of academicians. We constantly have to defend ourselves and do activism in class (Student 2).

- *Not being allowed to exist within the academic structure with their open*

⁷ In order to ensure anonymity in the focus group work with students, representatives of student societies/initiatives/associations, and volunteers, the participants were named as “Student” and numbered in alphabetical order.

identity.

I have never existed in academia with my open identity. I have been to three universities. Two were in the centre and the other in the countryside. Despite all our expectations and ideals in academia in Turkey, it is very difficult to exist as an LGBTI+. Moreover, even a hetero woman scholar has to work hard to get approval even while working on LGBTI+” (Student 4)

- *Exclusion, being ignored, being the target of attacks*

Stating that staff working in administrative units and libraries are exposed to discriminatory and racist hate language, students also stated that the current situation is worsened by the use of exclusionary strategies by using derogatory addresses, expressions that disparage feminism and the Queer movement in classrooms.

I used to work in the library when I was a student at university. When it was understood that I was LGBTI+, the attitude of the administrative staff I worked with at the library towards me changed. There is no mechanism to complain about and operate it (Student 1).

It has been emphasized that even left-wing academicians who have a critical perspective and stance may adopt a discriminatory language that is inconsistent with their stance. Queer students not only start their academic career from an unequal position, but also experience systematic mobbing based on their gender identity.

We were exposed to physical and verbal attacks by indirect means. Anonymously, we encounter the attitude of “we don't want you here” (Student 2).

[...]

It is not possible to find every academicians to be inclusive and reliable on gender issues (Student 3).

[...]

Because of YÖK, they made it impossible to use the term LGBTIQ+ in our theses. I feel that we have to hide both the subject we are working on and our identity. I am doing my master's degree in Turkey, but I do not want to stay in academia in this country (Student 1).

Students emphasize that the academic environment has hierarchical structures that will prevent the gender issue from being discussed with an egalitarian approach. The fact that the feminist method cannot be carried into relations with students is only possible if the academicians position themselves in this hierarchical pattern without questioning, and even mediate the reproduction of this pattern.

There is a very disturbing hierarchy in academia. The student is constantly exposed to one-sidedness and hierarchy. I witnessed too many LGBTI+ phobic attitudes (Student 1).

Desire to take a share in power, being highly articulated with power relations and an authoritarian attitude stemming from them determine the relations that academicians establish with students. A considerable number of academicians who take refuge in the power of knowledge are closed to criticism; they are unable to criticize themselves.

With the State of Emergency, they "sterilized" the university and the faculty. They took away our gains. When I started my master's degree at the same university, all the pressures continued. Moreover, the liquidation of professors by decrees was added to these. In a class, the professor insulted me by imitating me physically because I was defending feminist ideas (Student 3).

[...]

In order to have a critical mind in academia, everyone must first self-criticize themselves. We are faced with an anti-scientific attitude, in which science is increasingly humiliated. It does not seem possible to make a breach in other areas after failing to withstand the general trend (Student 3).

Different forms of abuse of power, harassment or mobbing are frequently experienced not only between academicians and students, but also in relations between academicians and academicians, but such problems can easily be covered up. In many cases, it has been pointed out as a frequently encountered situation that solidarity among colleagues turns into a protective

shield not of the abused or mobbed, but of the abuser. The absence of objective, independent mechanisms or institutional structures that can be resorted to in the event of such situations, or even if they are rendered dysfunctional, leaves the problem unsolved. The absence of these mechanisms also serves as a way of intensifying pressure..

Insufficient Gender Education

The lack of courses covering gender-related issues, the lack of a gender perspective in both the course content and the way the courses are conducted, and the non-inclusion of new theoretical developments in gender-themed master's programs are among the main problems discussed in the interviews.:

Queer theory contents from the 90s are still taught in the syllabuses. Current discussions are either not included at all or are given in very limited times (Student 1).

[...]

For example, I explained to a professor [a scholar in women's studies] what intersex means. They did not block me, but they do not know about the subject (Student 2).

What is meant here is that academia is closed to the gains of the LGBTI+ movement and to the new concepts it has developed. It is determined that academia lags far behind the movement, that these academicians are not familiar with Queer theory, new concepts and still cannot go beyond first and second wave feminism. These findings reveal the inadequacies of gender education in universities. While gender should have an important place in medicine and especially in the field of public health, in addition to social sciences, it is seen that this situation is not handled at the institutional level, but only with the individual initiatives of academicians who are sensitive to gender issues. At this point, it was especially emphasized that there is a need for gender sensitivity rather than academic interest:

For example, in faculties of medicine, learning was always through the male body. There is still a long way to go in faculties of medicine, but we have only just begun to see the female body in classes (Student 2).

[...]

When we talk about a subject in the field of gender, the professors say that this is not a priority area, and they cut off the subject. Specialization is used as a cover. There is a need for sensitivity beyond academic interest (Student 4).

Barriers to Queer Studies

LGBTI+s, who cannot exist in academia with their open identities, are forced to hide their subjects if they are doing queer studies. The fact that academic specialties were closed to the “gender problem” and the discriminatory and exclusionary hate strategies were turned into a legitimacy cover were also counted among the obstacles to queer studies in academia. Contrary to the general rise of queer studies in the world, it can be stated that the very limited number of studies in this field in Turkey has a share in this result. It should be remembered that the strategies of ignoring, internalizing, devaluing and even criminalizing the concept of gender are an important part of the power's struggle for hegemony. With these discursive strategies that work through the body, it is aimed to inhibit the knowledge and education processes as well as the struggle practices in the field. The resistance to queer studies should be considered as an extension of any loss of rights that LGBTI+s face in their daily life practices. This result is not surprising in an environment where academics are articulated with existing power structures and can survive as long as they have organic ties with them.

Pressure and Barriers to Queer Organisations in Academia

During the interviews, it was determined that 2015 was a date when the pressures intensified. It is emphasized that LGBTI+ communities, which were ignored before this date, for example, which were allowed to organize events in solidarity with feminist communities, have been attacked and criminalized since this date, solidarity relations between student

communities have been destroyed, and exclusion has become more evident with the increasing number and influence of right-wing communities. Events are either not allowed from the beginning, or their realization was prevented by not taking advantage of the opportunities like the venue etc.

After 2015, classrooms on campus began to be locked. Although we are a student body (philosophy community) officially recognized by the university administration, the attitude of the administrative staff, the same people five years ago, has changed (Student 1).

[...]

Between the years 2012-2013, student societies were working more together and were in solidarity. We did not receive support from other student societies in the Pride Parade in 2017-2019. On the contrary, they created a division among students by saying “You brought the police into the school”. In fact, when we were all under the same blockade, it turned into a kind of isolation (Student 1).

[...]

There is such a thing as “receiving acceptance from leftist brothers” at the university. If you are not accepted, the discourse “you brought the police into the school” comes into play (Student 4).

[...]

The distinction between officially accepted and not accepted by the university is very important in student societies. In 2018-2019, we were able to present our events as if they were the events of officially recognized communities. But now they even get involved in posters (Student 1).

[...]

There are two categories, recognized and unrecognized by the school [university administration]. As the LGBTIQ+ student community, which is not known from the school, we had problems and setbacks even in organizing activities and finding safe spaces. Even the processes of obtaining permission from the university administration for the event are much more challenging compared to the recognized student societies. If gender was mentioned in the title of the activity, we were directly rejected (Student 2).

[...]

Between 2012 and 2015, the attitude of “ignoring” the LGBTIQ+ organisation was more in question by the university administration at my university. Our LGBTIQ+ community application was rejected by the rector, saying “the campus is not ready for you”. From ignoring to banning completely in 2015 and later (Student 3).

Students stated that with the State of Emergency, student communities that refer to right-wing politics on campuses emerged and became widespread, campuses, including faculty entrances, were surrounded by turnstiles, and they were exposed to harassment and plagiarism by private security personnel on campus..

With the State of Emergency, student societies that took right-wing politics as a reference emerged in universities. Student societies emerged where the voices of whatever the government wanted were raised. [...] There are turnstiles at the entrance of each faculty on the main campus. Private security tags some students and does not allow them to enter the campus. Some are taken to the campus without a card or identity card. [...] There was an investigation into the activities of some student groups. After 2015, everything about student organisation was blocked. They were trying to intimidate some students by filing and opening an investigation (Student 3). [...]

In the past, life on campus continued until midnight. But with the State of Emergency, the private security on the campus began to force us to leave the campus, amounting to harassment (Student 1).

[...]

Turnstiles at the campus entrance and even turnstiles at the faculty entrances, investigations for students, checking everything...(Student 3)

3. Gender Studies and Struggle for Equality in the Light of the Testimony of CSO Representatives

Representatives of civil society organisations stated that, unlike the academicians who participated in the focus group, authoritarianism increased rather than conservatism in society. In particular, it was stated that the authoritarianism that increased with the State of Emergency

was perceived as conservatism, and the situation that seemed to be conservatism was extremely fragile and temporary.

I do not think that there is a conservatism in the society. Nothing to boast about. Society was more conservative 20-30 years ago. Conservatism seems to have increased as authoritarianism has increased in the last 5-10 years. The political imposition of the government and the pressure imposed by all levels of the state increased. But what does this mean in society? I don't think the answer to this is conservatism. Of course there is homophobia and transphobia, but I don't think it's conservatism. [...] What appears to be the matter of conservatism is actually very fragile, very fragile (Representative 1).⁸

Participants from civil society organisations stated that despite authoritarianism, the field of equality and rights struggle was not completely destroyed and a struggle established with the right strategies had a high chance of success.

There is a saying that “femicide has increased a lot”, but I think that the pressure has increased because the strength of the struggle has increased. There is a lot of injustice. Justice mechanisms are not working. You cannot share the information you produce. The attacks have increased, but the actions do not stop, we take actions (Representative 3).

[...]

I think the pressures are increasing from time to time. I think we can overcome these by organizing and increasing organisation (Representative 2).

[...]

It is very important to unite the struggle, this is something that is said a lot. There are many demands for freedom, large and small. Combining these struggles strengthens and brings great benefits. Women's and LGBTIQ+ movements have a locomotive and transformative power. Getting acquainted with academia and other CSOs can even start by becoming a partner. This itself is very important (Representative 1).

⁸ In order to ensure anonymity in the focus group work with representatives of civil society organisations, the participants were named as “Representative” and numbered in alphabetical order.

It is one of the prominent findings in the interviews that getting effective results in relations with local governments and gaining the support of local administrators are highly related to which political party holding the local power is. However, even in this case, it is understood that the support, resources or aid that organisations can reach are distributed by considering the political attitudes of the organisations, and in this sense, partisanship is highly determinant in the relations of civil society organisations with local governments.

It has been stated that such organisations do not receive enough support from local administrations, academic institutions in the region, or the local people, regarding the organisation of the lost labour of women who take care of the elderly and/or children in the family and do housework in the form of cooperatives. The lack of training on this subject was pointed out, and the need for organisation on care labour, domestic labour, etc. was emphasized in order to evaluate the labour as a whole:

We are a cooperative. What should we do as a women's cooperative? We need a study conducted on women's co-operatives. What should the labour and production policies of a women's cooperative be? We have needs for planning, policy making (Representative 3).

It was stated that the pressure on civil society organisations increased after the State of Emergency, and every action and activity they carried out brought them against the police. In addition to the increase in the number of detentions, it was stated that they were faced with huge fines.

There are so many punishments upon us for our actions. They try to intimidate with individual punishments (Representative 3).

It has been stated that this situation has a deterrent effect on participation in demonstrations and events, and that self-censorship mechanisms are often used in determining

the language of the campaign. The increasing amount of time devoted to the creation of the campaign in such a way as to escape the pressure of the government makes it difficult to search for modes of action that will produce more successful results.

V. GENERAL RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

When the findings of the surveys conducted with 89 academicians working in the field of gender, 20 in-depth interviews with the managers of civil society organisations, seven focus group studies participated by academicians, representatives of civil society organisations operating in the field and volunteers of women and LGBTI+ student initiatives in universities are evaluated together, the results of the research can be listed as follows:

1. The research has shown that the assumption that the oppression in the field of gender started with the State of Emergency is wrong. After all surveys conducted with academicians, in-depth interviews with civil society activists, and focus group discussions, all elements of the field agree that the erosion of the gender field started before the State of Emergency. This pressure is marked by the research participants as an indicator of authoritarianism.
2. The research demonstrates that, with the oppressive practices that started before and increased with the State of Emergency, knowledge production was tried to be kept under control as well as the rights advocacy activities on gender equality, and the position that the fields of gender and women's studies have reached as a result of years of struggle within the academic organisation. It has shown that the area has been intervened more in a way that means the loss of it.
3. It is understood from the testimonies of the academicians who participated in the survey and focus group meetings that gender-focused researches and theses written in academia were not all interfered with, and that not all undergraduate and graduate programs and research centres that existed before the State of Emergency were closed, the vast majority of which continued to exist. Responses to the questionnaires show that

there has been a loss in this regard as a result of pressure, but not as abruptly and rapidly as initially assumed.

4. The answers of the academicians who participated in the surveys and were dismissed from public service with the State of Emergency Decrees show that these academicians no longer have the opportunity to access the necessary academic and financial resources in order to produce and disseminate knowledge, and conduct research projects.

5. The research shows that in the period following the State of Emergency and extending to the present, the problems experienced in the production of knowledge at the academic level in the field of gender have deepened, and the opportunities in this regard have narrowed, the ties of academic knowledge with gender equality struggle practices have been weakened, and academia has ceased gradually to be a part of the organized struggle in the field of gender.

6. University administrations have high adaptability skills to act within the ideological framework determined by the government. In an environment where there is no academic autonomy, the instructions can reach the sub-units quickly, causing the institutional functioning and universal academic values to be disregarded, causing the departments and research centres to become dysfunctional. When considered together with this situation, adding “family” to the titles of women's studies research centres should be seen as a means of completely eliminating the freedom of research. Thus, it was possible to restrict the gender-based education and research activities at universities.

7. Academic autonomy has been completely destroyed in terms of institutions; The existence of a higher education field, where academic freedom is no longer a question

as a condition for knowledge production to emerge from practice, should be seen as a supporting factor for the research hypothesis on the destruction and its causes in the gender and women's studies fields.

8. It can be said that a position has been lost in terms of struggling with the academic hierarchy and the dominance of the masculine structure in universities. It is understood that the solidarity of especially academics and students with women and LGBTI+ communities within the university has weakened. It is observed that the formations active in the gender struggle had difficulties in organizing activities within the university during this period. It is observed that these formations either disappear or are inactivated.

9. It is understood that academic programs have moved away from covering queer concepts, and the contents of the courses have been changed in many universities by direct or indirect interventions.

10. After the semi-structured interviews and focus group meetings, it was understood that the pressure on civil society organisations increased in parallel with the authoritarianism trend. It has been stated that the organisations have difficulties in obtaining permission for their activities, finding a place, that they are under pressure to be closed and supervised, that their members and volunteers who participate in the protests are sentenced to high fines, and that their managers are pressured to be arrested.

11. The criminalization of the gender field has led to the spread of hate speech, especially towards LGBTI+s. While LGBTI+ organisations are struggling to survive because they are directly exposed to this hate speech, they are also trying to develop strategies for struggle in the field of gender equality. This situation has strengthened

the relations of solidarity among organisations. In this sense, despite everything, it can be said that the influence of the movement is gradually increasing.

12. It is understood that the region in which civil society organisations are located has changed the nature of the oppression they are subjected to. Organisations operating in the eastern region, on the one hand, struggle with the masculine nature of the region, on the other hand, they try to cope with the effects of the pressure of the central government on local governments and the consequences of having a Kurdish ethnic identity. Some of these organisations operating in the field of gender were closed during the State of Emergency.

13. Despite the pressure, women's and LGBTI+ organisations struggling in the field of gender equality have the potential to recover easily. New networks were created to replace the associations that were closed during the State of Emergency, and patterns of solidarity were quickly put into action. This situation is hopeful.

14. Based on the results of the research, it can be said that while the State of Emergency and the ensuing Presidential government system reconstructed the patriarchal structure on an Islamic basis, it acted within the power relations that operate over the body and attempted to shape its discourse on a transformed knowledge/power ground. This is a struggle for hegemony. Femininity/masculinity, gender roles, birth/death and life are reinterpreted with a tradition that is reduced to the religious one. The discursive strategies developed to build a common sense on the axis of “tradition”, the meaning of which has been redefined in the struggle for hegemony, operate over “gender” and “body”.

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ANNEX 1

GENDER EQUALITY IN ACADEMIA: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

ONLINE FOCUS GROUP

AĞ-DA ACADEMICIANS FOCUS GROUP

The status of gender studies in academia/university in General Terms

- Theoretical and methodological developments
- Researches, theses, projects, publications
- (Extreme) Specialization
- Theory-practice relationship: Transnational partnerships with civil society and other academies
- The relationship with the local, hegemonic structures

The problem and struggle of gender equality in academia in the world

- Developments, improvements
- Problems, effects of authoritarianism, right-wing populism
- The position of academia in the context of the Istanbul Convention

Status of Gender Studies in Turkey: Structures, Facts, Problems

- The effects of the general structuring problems and hierarchical relations of academia in Turkey on the specialization in the field of gender and knowledge production processes
- Institutionalization problem
 - Research activities: KASAUMs etc.
 - The formation of the departments, their structure, their position in the university hierarchy
- The problem of training faculty members: Master's and doctoral programs

- The place of gender-related courses in education programs and/or the inclusion of gender-focused issues in education programs at different levels.

AĞ-DA CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS FOCUS GROUP

Conservatism

-What do you think about the argument that the society is getting more and more conservative?

-If you also see conservatism and approve of the judiciary, what effect does conservatism have on struggle practices?

-How do you fight conservatism?

-What is the effect of increasing conservatism on organisational practices?

Annulment of the Istanbul Convention, Emphasis on “Family and Religion”

-How were you affected by the termination of the IS?

-How did the emphasis on “family and religion” come to the fore with the annulment of the IS, how did it affect the existing organisational practices?

-What kind of losses did the attempt to withdraw the gender equality field to an area centred on “family and religion” cause in terms of gains?

● ***Provincialization and Local Relations***

-How do you contribute to the texture of the city where your organisation is located?
What can be done to increase these contributions?

● ***Relations to Academia***

- If you were to present new organisational models to protect the gains in the struggle for gender equality, where would academia be?

-What do you think about the integration of academia into the struggle for gender equality?

Identify the problem areas that exist in this regard.

- How do you evaluate the struggle for gender equality in academia?
- What role can civil society play in transforming academia?
- What do you think about the argument that feminist approaches have a hegemony over the struggle practices in academia?
- How much space does queer activism find in academia?
- What are the intersectional areas of struggle? To what extent does this intersectionality bring together feminist activism and queer activism?
- What role can academia have in strengthening international links in the fight for gender equality?

- **AĞ-DA STUDENTS / STUDENT INITIATIVES FOCUS GROUP**

Being a Queer and/or Feminist at University

- Could you share your experiences as a queer and/or feminist student at the university?
- What would you say about the conditions for a queer and/or feminist student to have their voice heard in the context of the academic hierarchy?
- What do you think about the argument that feminist approaches have a hegemony over the struggle practices in academia?
- How much space does queer activism find in academia?
- Could you tell us about your experience in supporting or hindering academic structures in organizing? What problems do you have in this regard?

- ***Academician-Student Relations***

- What are the deficiencies and problems in terms of gender sensitivity in the academician-student relationship? What can be done about this?
- Do you think sexual orientations cause discrimination in the academicians-student relationship? Have you experienced such discrimination?
- What role can the initiatives of feminist and/or queer student communities play in solving problems such as abuse of power, harassment, and the prevalence of hate speech in academician-student relations?

- ***Institutional Structures at the University***

- Is it sufficient for university administrations to create sexual harassment prevention policy documents and to establish sexual harassment prevention units within this framework, to create and implement gender-sensitive policies at universities? What are the problems, if any?