

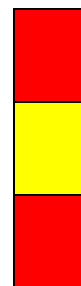
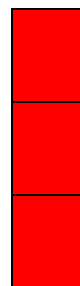
Summary of Sida's Assessment of the Development towards the Strategy Objectives and Implementation of the Contribution Portfolio

Strengthened democracy, greater respect for human rights and a more fully developed state under the rule of law

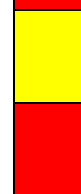
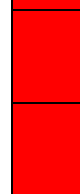
Objective¹

Portfolio²

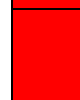
An efficient public administration with administrative capacity to implement reforms for closer relations with the EU, with emphasis on fundamental rights



A more efficient judicial system that better guarantees the right to a fair trial in accordance with European standards.



A reduction in gender based violence

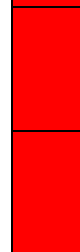


Increased enjoyment of rights and greater opportunities to exercise democratic influence

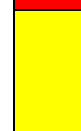
A more pluralistic civil society, with strengthened popular support which promotes democratic accountability.



Turkey better fulfils its international commitments on human rights, gender equality (including the EU's strategy for equality between women and men) and non-discrimination.



Women and men have to a greater extent, the same power to shape society and their own lives.



¹ Assessment of the **development towards the strategy objectives**: Green: Desirable direction; Yellow: Partially desirable direction; Red: Undesirable Direction.

² Assessment of the **implementation of the contribution portfolio**: Green: According to plan; Yellow: Partially according to plan; Red: Not as planned.

1. Overview of the Strategy Context

Total amount for the Strategy: 8,24 billion SEK

Disbursed Amount 2017: 62,5 MSEK

Number of Contributions 2017: 22

1.1 Changes in the Context

During the reporting period the situation has continued to deteriorate from bad to worse, especially when it comes to democratic principles, human rights and freedom of expression. The outcome of the election on increased presidential powers has provided the Government of Turkey (GoT) with the legitimacy to continue on the path it had embarked. The state of emergency that was instated after the failed coup attempt is still effective, and there are no signs of it being removed. Turkey's increased presence in Syria (Afrin) has further tightened "security measures" in Turkey, and no critique of the operation is accepted. Under these conditions accusations of being terrorists and/or aiding terrorists have led to arbitrary arrests of journalists, human rights defenders, academics and several activists within civil society. The level of self-censorship has further increased, and very few, or no, media outlets reports critically on government actions.

In addition to the 100 000 dismissed and more than 40.000 arrested, a recent report by the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights(OHCHR), reports of several allegations of torture and ill-treatment among these people. Further adding to an environment of fear among those employed in the public sector³.

Conservatism has increased during the reporting year, and gender equality is increasingly politicized. Government NGOs (GONGOs) is the dominant voice in policy discussions, and it has become more difficult for rights based women's NGOs to operate openly. This is particularly true for the LGBTI movement. In November Ankara municipality banned all LGBTI activities, referring it to be a "security risk for the public". The ban is still in place in Ankara, and although no other municipalities have followed suit, there is an informal ban in many other municipalities.

The state of emergency has also been used to clamp down on the right to association and freedom of peaceful assembly, again with reference to security. Conspiracy theories govern public discussion and often target figures in civil society as well as foreign countries and the European Union. The conflict in the South East is placing an especially heavy burden on civil society in the Kurdish region. At the same time a persistent and courageous civil society is continuing its work. While the pressure on civil spaces has increased overall, the opportunities to act vary by issue. All this has made it more or less impossible for organizations to secure funding from domestic sources (including charitable donations, advertisements as well as foundations), as the fear of being associated with these can have dire consequences. Hence, the only funding possibilities were from international sources, which however also can be seen as part of a conspiracy by the GoT. Therefore, caution and sensitivity is a must both for CSOs and international donors.

Reforms on EU accession are more or less on halt. The progress report for 2017 has not yet been published, but it is expected to be very critical, and there has been cuts in IPA funding. The EU Turkey Facility for Refugees in Turkey (FRiT), has been fully contracted (3 billion EURO). This has changed the donor landscape in Turkey, and has also affected the priorities of both multi-lateral agencies, as well as CSOs, as funding levels for Syrian refugees are immense. Most of Sida's partners

³ http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/dpage_e.aspx?si=A/HRC/37/50/Add.1

also have funding for Syrian refugees from other sources, which can create difficulties in follow-up and reporting. Discussions for a second phase of the FRiT have been initiated.

Implementation of the strategy has during the year followed the recommendations of last year's MTR, i.e. to re-direct support from supply-side led reforms to more demand-side led reforms (from government to Civil Society Organizations, CSOs).

It should be noted that this reporting format becomes quite difficult whereby a very limited (65 MSEK) country portfolio, that has 6 objectives to report on, and quite a low number of total contributions. This means that there are very few contributions under each objective. Furthermore, the objectives are very much interlinked, as is the scope of the whole portfolio, which is very much intertwined with the overall context of Turkey. This means that the sections on progress towards achieving strategy objectives to a large extent are very similar.

1.2 Sweden's Role in the Strategy Context

Table 1. Donor Context

Total development assistance make up x% of the national budget n/a	Sweden's share of the total of development assistance constitute n/a
Common donor strategy 20xX - 20XX is signed by [XX] donors: n/a	Common EU strategy is valid 2014- 2020 Status of EU joint programming: There is no EU joint programming
The five largest donors (organisations and/or countries) are: n/a,	Sweden is the largest donor of the EU member states

Except from the EU Delegation (EUD) Sweden is the only donor with a bilateral programme that allows multi-annual funding. All other donors have small more politically motivated funds, managed by their political sections. Sweden's role is to complement the larger IPA-programmes and, since the attempted coup, also to provide support in the most affected areas (freedom of expression, women's rights, human rights etc.).

As mentioned above, FRiT rather than IPA is now the main vehicle for EU Turkey relations. Furthermore, most CSOs in Turkey work with Syrian refugees, as this is where most funds are available. This has led to several local CSOs working with Syrian refugees rather than EU-accession projects, which risks creating a vacuum within the Turkish CSO scene. It is also less political to work on refugee's rights than the rights of Turkish citizens.

1.3 Synergies with Other Swedish Strategies

There are synergies with the Strategy for the Syria Crisis and the Humanitarian Strategy through the Sida's support to the UN Joint Programme on the prevention of child, early and forced marriages in

Turkey (agreed December 2017)⁴. The programme targets both host communities and refugees and its planned results are to reduce gender-based violence, which are expected objectives in both the Turkey- and Syria strategy. The programme is also partially implemented by UNHCR which receives a separate regional support from the Humanitarian Strategy, and other UN Agencies that receive core support from Sida.

In addition to activities implemented in Turkey, there are humanitarian framework agreement partners that work cross-border from Turkey into Syria. Sida is directly involved in monitoring and supporting the humanitarian aid delivered cross-border. As there are clear synergies, there is no need to further strengthen these but rather continue close coordination with the Syria team and the humanitarian unit.

There are clear synergies between humanitarian aid and long-term development as the Syrian refugee situation is shifting from humanitarian to focus on resilience and integration. As Turkey hosts the largest refugee population in the world there are also links to migration, such as migrants' human rights, not least through the EU-Turkey deal, which included a 3 billion Euro support to Turkey. Sida's bilateral portfolio also includes a few contributions that comprise Syrian refugees in Turkey. For example, the support to legal aid via UNDP to vulnerable groups has a specific component on Syrian refugees. A contribution to the World Bank includes a socio economic survey on Syrian refugees in Turkey, and support is provided to the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM) via the Swedish Migration Agency – which again highlights how migration and human rights are intertwined.

Within the Syria strategy there is a regional support to UNFPA which is being implemented in Turkey, in addition to some cross-border contributions. The Turkey team supports the Syria team in the follow-up of these contributions as well as the contextual analysis for refugees in Turkey.

A handful of Sida's framework organisations that support to civil society development are implementing activities in Turkey, as are some of Sida's global partner organizations working in the areas of democracy and human rights.

1.4 Allocation between Areas of Support

The re-direction of the strategy, in accordance with the recommendations from the MTR, can be seen already in this years' strategy report. I.e. a clear move from supporting government led processes, to supporting CSO led demand-side reforms, and an increased flexibility to provide smaller support to for CSOs to "survive". Demand-side support has increased from 63.5% to 77%, whereas government led reforms has decreased from 36.5% to 23.5% during the same period. It should however be said, that these figures may not be 100% accurate, as some of the contributions includes components to both areas. Furthermore, since our portfolio is so small it is not relevant to do an analysis of contributions under each objective, as they are interlinked and/or very few.

⁴ Contribution no. 11712 "UNJP for the Prevention of Child, Early and Forced Marriage in Turkey 2018-2020"

2 Results Reporting

2.1 Area of Support 1: Strengthened democracy, greater respect for human rights and a more fully developed state under rule of law.

2.1.1 Objective 1.1: An efficient public administration with administrative capacity to implement reforms for closer relations with the EU, with emphasis on fundamental rights

Development towards the strategy objective

The State of Emergency has had very negative effects on public administration, competence has been lost, as well as efficiency. Reforms for EU accession are nearly on halt, and there is great deterioration in fundamental rights. Turkey is pushing for the opening of Chapters 23 (judiciary and fundamental rights) and 24 (justice, freedom and security) and arguing that it has mostly fulfilled the criteria for the visa liberalisation. However, structural administrative changes where the executive's power and influence over public administration and judiciary makes progress impossible at the moment.

Freedom House's Freedom in the World Report, downgraded Turkey's status to "not free" in 2016⁵. The World Justice Project 2017-18 Rule of Law Index shows that Turkey has fallen to 101st position out of 113 countries⁶. Turkey's score decreased by 1 point and now is 40, and its' rank decreased to 81 out of 180 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI). Turkey has been declining in the index for 4 consecutive years and has lost 10 points and 28 ranks between 2012-2017⁷. Government institutions that were established to provide citizens with transparent information does not function. Access to information is denied for security reasons and/or with claims to lack the needed data.

Legislation is mostly governed by decrees; introducing new regulations, making administrative changes without democratic scrutiny. Impunity is a major obstacle as investigation and prosecution of government officials are subject to the approval of its' director, thus hampering justice and used under the discretion of government officials⁸.

Protection of the freedoms of opinion and expression, freedom to assembly and association, has backslided even further, as there are arrests of people when expressing their views publically or in social media. Demonstrations/rallies have been banned in several cities. Individuals as well as journalists are not free to report and comment on government policies without fear of retaliation.

Complaint mechanisms are not impartial within the areas of public services, employment and the justice system. Instances of unequal treatment and discrimination have been commonly reported, whether it be based on gender, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation.

Portfolio level

The portfolios aim was to strengthen the administrative capacity of Turkey's public administration with a focus on support to fundamental rights. Early on in the strategy period difficulties were identified, and it was decided to work in the "fringes" of the Government led reforms. However the

⁵ Freedom in the World Report, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2018/turkey>

⁶ World Justice Project's 2017-18 Rule of Law Index, https://worldjusticeproject.org/sites/default/files/documents/WJP_ROLI_2017-18_Online-Edition.pdf

⁷ Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2017 Results, https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2017

⁸ Amnesty International Report 2017/18, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2018/02/annual-report-201718/>

recent years' developments in Turkey have made it more and more difficult to work even in the fringes of the government reforms, especially in the area of judicial reform. This was also confirmed by last year's MTR, where it was concluded not to initiate any new contributions in support of government reforms. Unless it is limited in scope and a highly prioritised by Sweden/Sida, e.g. the area of migration. Furthermore, the MTR recommended working more with CSOs to push for Government reforms, rather than working directly with the reforms. Hence, Sida has will not initiate any new contributions focusing on supply side of reforms, and it is anticipated that the number of contributions within the result will decrease during 2018.

Contribution level

The contribution via UNDP to strengthen the capacity of the Ombudsman Institution⁹ will be closed during the year and no new phase is planned as the institution has become highly politicised.

The Swedish Migration Agency (SMA), first phase with the DGMM resulted in creating institutional means and standards that enabled it to adequately plan its' migration management policy and ensure efficient and fair procedures for migrants. The project focused on building the capacity of staff and management, as well as sharing expertise and experiences. The current contribution is a continuation of the previous project. It was agreed in the autumn of 2017 and a Quality Assurance System is foreseen to promote an asylum examination, which in turn will contribute to achieving fulfilment of migration related conditionalities.¹⁰ The project is at its preliminary stage of being implemented, and there aren't any results as of yet.

2.1.2 Objective 1.2: A more efficient judicial system that better guarantees the right to a fair trial in accordance with European standards

Development towards the strategy objective

The Turkish judicial system has been subject to increased executive influence and control which in turn has had a severe impact on the independence of the judiciary. Control over governing institutions, dismissal of judges and prosecutors and recurring violence and threats against lawyers have contributed to the diminishing of human rights and the rule of law in Turkey. Presumption of innocence, the individual criminal responsibility, legal certainty, the right to defence, equality of arms and right to an appeal and the right of every individual to a fair trial were overseen in many instances. Justice is not impartial and is not free of improper government influence, as several decisions are influenced by the execution.

Access to justice is impaired. Public officers believed to have ties with Gülenists have been dismissed and are deprived of their right to access to justice via normal courts. In 2016 the Venice commission criticized Turkey for the massive post-coup dismissals, and thousands of cases have been sent to the European Court of Human Rights (EHCR). To counter this the Government established a State of Emergency Commission to review applications relating to measures taken within the scope of the decree laws, and in particular applications relating to dismissals of civil servants. This Commission made up of 7 members the majority of which is directly appointed by the executive. Out of the 107 174 persons dismissed from their positions in public employment, 105 151 persons applied to the Emergency State Commission for their re-instatement to public profession as of February 2018. The Commission processed 1 562 cases out of which 41 cases were decided in the favor of the applicants¹¹.

⁹ "Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of the Ombudsman Institution", TRAC ID: 55020222

¹⁰ "SMA quality assurance support to DGMM", TRAC ID: 55020324

¹¹ <http://t24.com.tr/haber/bekir-bozdogdan-ohal-komisyonu-ret-kararlarina-iliskin-aciklama,549522>

Competency of judges is a question as 4463 of judges and prosecutors have been dismissed and the newly appointed judges and prosecutors does not have the same competence.¹² Breakdown of hierarchy amongst courts has been seen in several cases, as the first instance court rejected the decision of the Constitutional Court which ruled in regard to an individual application and stated that there was not enough evidence for the accused to be under custody. Normal practice would be that they should be set free.

Portfolio level



As described under objective 1.1 the intention was to support the judicial system through a rights-based approach, by working in the fringes of the government led-judicial reform. However, even the fringes have been severely affected by the situation. Implementation of the portfolio has been mostly on track with some delays. However, unforeseen events and policy changes risk that any positive results will be sustained. E.g. in the aftermath of the attempted coup many of the previously achieved results were erased, as staff within the system, (e.g. judges, police etc.) were dismissed from their positions (e.g. trainings conducted by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute, RWI). In recent years alternative dispute resolution mechanisms (mediation) were put into place. However, mediation on labour disputes was made mandatory, which poses a great risk that decisions will be made in favour of the employer. It is also believed that mediation will be made mandatory for family disputes, which would be detrimental, as risks of favouring the family/man would be very high. Especially, considering the increased conservatism in favour of family rights before the individual woman's rights would be highly likely.

The Minister of Justice and his undersecretary as ex officio members continue to have substantial influence over the work of the Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK). It is rumoured that a new legislation will be enacted, where the powers of the Union of Bar Association and Bar associations will be revoked. This would lift the membership to bars which is currently a requirement and hold of state funding to bars (Legal aid practiced by bars is financed by the state).

Contribution level

The contribution to Council of Europe (CoE)¹³ aims at solving the problem of efficiency of justice by spreading the use of mediation in civil disputes, principally by establishing the basis for effective implementation of the Mediation Law. Amendments to the laws were facilitated and awareness raising among judges, lawyers, civil society organizations and members of the public was raised. In 2015, the number of cases solved through mediation rose from 521 to 2053, with 91% of the solved cases coming from the 6 pilot provinces. The figure in 2016 had risen to 4625 with 125% increase in the pilot areas. Two more provinces have applied to be pilots in the project, and the Government of Turkey has contributed to the project. The Council of Europe experts have indicated their concern in a foreseen amendment in mediation practices where the mediator supplies a solution coined as evaluative mediation. Sida has been especially vocal on the importance of the equality of arms principle in the practice of mediation, and the importance of mediation that protects women's rights and promotes gender equality.

A second significant contribution that was initiated in 2015 has been a contribution to legal aid via UNDP¹⁴. Implementing partners are Union of Bar Associations and the Ministry of Justice. The project aims to standardize a system of high quality legal representation with for disadvantaged groups throughout Turkey, including refugees. The project covers the areas of access to justice and the right to a fair trial. The project has already achieved the formation of an Advisory Committee composed of representatives from leading NGOs and relevant state institutions working with Syrian refugees. Consultants have completed tours of the 6 pilot provinces in the South and have established focal

¹² <https://turkeypurge.com/>

¹³ Developing Mediation Practices in Civil Disputes in Turkey", TRAC ID: 55020206

¹⁴ "Support to the Improvement of Legal Aid Practices for Access to Justice for All in Turkey" TRAC ID: 55020276

points in state institutions, and local NGOs and have recorded certain preliminary findings. The report for the Automation system is being drafted. Each of the five components of the program was gender mainstreamed, and the involvement of national and local women's human rights NGOs in the project has been secured.

2.1.3 Objective 1.3: A reduction in gender based violence

Development towards the strategy objective

The situation regarding Gender Based Violence (GBV) continued to be a main concern in 2017 and shows regression since the establishment of the strategy. According to Bianet (which is one of the two independent resources available for femicides as the government does not keep the data contradictorily to the Istanbul Convention) men murdered at least 290 women in 2017¹⁵ in comparison to 261 women in 2016.

Eventhough there had been many improvements in the Turkish legislation with respect to GBV during the AKP government for the last 16 years, the non-implementation and non-commitment to these laws by the state and law enforcement officials remains to be one of the main concerns. In recent years the problem has increased with a conservative, family oriented and gender justice based discourse. Some of the articles in Law No: 6284 on Protection of the Family and Prevention of VAW issued in 2012, that was supposed to be based on the Istanbul Convention, merely gives reference to the Convention and is also incompatible with the provisions of the Convention¹⁶. Law 6284 is not being implemented properly especially regarding the regulation on the Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers. It was promised that the centers were to be established in every city in Turkey. As of now centers exist in 49 cities out of 81, without the necessary qualifications as outlined in the law.

Women shelters are also a problematic area in which the necessary law requirements are not being realized by the State as outlined in the Municipality Law No: 5393, which obliges municipalities with a population of over 100,000 citizens to open shelters for women and children.

The situation among Syrian women and girls is also unclear, but there are frequent reports on child marriage as a negative coping strategy for Syrian families in Turkey as well as widespread suffering of GBV. As mentioned, there is also limited data on GBV among Syrian women and girls but numbers are likely to be high.

The strategy objective is going in an undesirable direction. The assessment is that the situation is gradually worsening in the country, that conservative, religious and nationalistic public statements and rhetoric is likely to further increase GBV in the country. There is no, or limited, dialogue between CSOs and the GoT, and most of the dialogue is through family oriented GONGOs (Government NGOs). The government is giving almost no importance to eradicate GBV as agreed in international commitments, neither at policy level nor in implementation.

Portfolio level

Due to the increased conservatism within the government, the portfolio on reducing GBV is mainly implemented by CSOs. The CSOs core work is however mainly in other sectors e.g. LGBTI (Kaos GL)¹⁷, freedom of speech (Bianet)¹⁸, and women's empowerment (Kamer)¹⁹. To address the situation

¹⁵ <https://bianet.org/kadin/bianet/133354-bianet-siddet-taciz-tecavuz-cetelesi-tutuyor>

¹⁶ Shadow NGO Report on Turkey's Seventh Periodic Report to The Committee on The Elimination of Discrimination Against Women For Submission to The 64th Session of CEDAW- July, 2016

¹⁷ [The Rainbow Project](#) Contribution No: 55020105

¹⁸ Support to independent media 2013-2015' Contribution no: 55020101 & 'Support to independent media 2015-2018' Contribution no: 55020259

¹⁹ "KAMER: An opportunity for every woman 2014-2017" Contribution no: 55020221 and "KAMER: An opportunity for every woman 2017 -2020" Contribution no:10487

on forced and early marriages for Syrian refugees (and host communities) an agreement was signed with UNICEF on a UN joint programme *to prevent child, early and forced marriages*²⁰.

As mentioned, CSOs are facing severe difficulties (through, shrinking space, arrests of rights defenders, closures by government and increased conservatism), but are still managing to implement activities and deliver outputs. Outcomes, however, will not be reached. Hence, the implementation of the portfolio is partially on track.

It is expected that the portfolio will increase in the coming years, as conservatism increases and women's rights become more and more politicised. In addition, GBV is highly prioritised by Sweden and Sida, and the large scale EU support (IPA and FRIT) does not prioritise GBV.

Contribution level

Given the ban on LGBTI activities in Ankara and increased pressure from the government, KAOS GL has not been in a position to advocate for hate crime legislation. However, the organisation still gives legal consultancies to LGBTI individuals, including refugees. In 2017, the CSO gave 127 consultancies to LGBTI citizens and 765 consultancies to LGBTI refugees. KAOS also started working on a new methodology to report on human rights violations of LGBTI individuals some of which are GBV cases. Data collection based on this new method will start in 2018. Since 2013 Kaos produces the annual "Hate Crimes Report" on LGBTI individuals. In 2017, KAOS collected data on GBV cases against LGBTIs from 117 respondents and 48 witnesses via face to face, online or phone interviews which gives richer information as to the context, circumstances of the crime. It also combines the perspectives of the victim and witness to cross check validity of the crime²¹.

Despite increasing difficulties between 2014 and 2017, KAMER managed to continue its work. A total number of 4,950 women approached KAMER for protection against violence during this period. 110 women appealed for support, who was at risk of being murdered during the same period, all of which have survived.²²

2.2 Area of Support 2: Increased enjoyment of rights and greater opportunities to exercise democratic influence

2.2.1 Objective 2.1: A more pluralistic civil society, with strengthened popular support which promotes democratic accountability.

Development towards the strategy objective

As described above the Turkish civil society is suffering severely under the shrinking democratic space, and is not only in need of financial resources but also of international moral support, networking and capacity-building. The volatile political developments make long-term planning and strategies difficult and the current mode is one of survival that impresses with its creativity and endurance.

While the space for civil society actors is circumscribed in Turkey, many new initiatives and projects are being formed, such as journalists' collectives and local women's rights networks. In the current state of emergency rule, legal registration of new associations poses a challenge. For some civil society organizations foreign funding has become a risk factor. Especially foreign funded organizations with strong ties to Europe and the US risk being demonized in the Turkish public sphere.

²⁰ UNJP for the Prevention of Child, Early and Forced Marriage in Turkey 2018-2020 Contribution no: 11712

²¹ [The Rainbow Project](#) Contribution No: 55020105

²² KAMER: An opportunity for every woman 2014-2017 Final Report Contribution no: 55020221

The political polarization in the country along several lines - political affiliation, religious and ethnic divides - also affects civil society. The emergence of several so-called GONGOs in Turkish civil society in the past years is another factor that is affecting the landscape.

Flexible and small-scale support by foreign donors such as the Consulate General is a vital lifeline for these organizations and initiatives, as local support is de facto non-existent.

Portfolio level

The portfolio is implemented both by the Sida and the Consulate General of Sweden in Istanbul (CG), which gives smaller support (average of 250 000 SEK) to primarily local CSOs, think-tanks and media organizations. Sida provides a handful of small-scale short-term “survival” contributions, but most support is medium to long-term and is mostly core-support.

As mentioned, the MTR recommended an increase to CSOs, re-directing funds from government led reforms, mainly in the areas of freedom of speech, human rights and democracy. During the reporting period Sida has agreed on three small-scale “survival” supports, and one long-term (just agreed) agreement with Checks and Balances Network (CBN), on democracy. It has, however, proved more difficult than expected to find new partners, mainly due to low capacity of CSOs. Sida’s perception is that they are not accustomed to work with bilateral donors that provide larger multi-annual support (core support), but rather with donors that provide smaller project-support and have much lower requirements on quality of proposals, financial management, reporting etc. The lesson is to have a broader pipe-line for 2018 to be able to select and work closely with a few potential partners.

Contribution level

The CG has focused on freedom of expression, gender equality, countering polarization and promoting democratic dialogue, pluralism and cultural rights. The CG has made 31 contributions in the range of 20.000 SEK to 800.000 SEK, supporting one-off conferences as well as giving core support to organizations. Due to the infringement of free debate most projects supported gain an important freedom of expression dimension as they all contribute to creating spaces for discussion and knowledge production. The CG has also utilized its special mandate in the Strategy to contribute to increased public dialogue on topics related to the strategy, which is carried out by providing the Swedish Palace as a platform for meetings and events, for support to conferences and communication campaigns and collaborations with culture, academia and media within the strategy area. The CG has given priority to support academics and journalists due to the targeting of these groups in particular.

Sida has invited CSO partners to the embassy on a 6-month basis. Mainly for them to share their experiences, but also in order to discuss sensitive issues in a secure environment. The meetings have been highly appreciated and will continue as long as they are needed. One of the meetings included a RBM training, conducted by Swedish consultants, as quality of reporting has been low. The training was successful and there is already an improvement in both reporting and RBM in proposals.

2.2.2 Objective 2.2: Turkey better fulfils its international commitments on human rights, gender equality (including the EU’s strategy for equality between women and men) and non-discrimination

Development towards the strategy objective

The limits to the Government’s emergency powers are set out in Article 15 of the Constitution. It allows for “partial or total” suspension, “during the state of emergency”, of the exercise of

fundamental rights and freedoms, but only “to the extent required by the needs of the situation” and provided that “obligations under international law are not violated”²³.

Turkey is bound to ensure human rights commitments under International Conventions, e.g. those relating to ‘prohibition of torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment’, ‘principle of legality in criminal law’ and ‘freedom of thought, conscience and religion’. However, these seem to have been violated on several occasions since the implementation of state of emergency²⁴.

During 2017, the State of Emergency also served to limit other fundamental rights such as “freedom of assembly and freedom of expression. Some of the limitations came in the form of outright bans on CSO activities such as the ban on all LGBTI activities issued by Ankara Governorate on 18 November 2017²⁵.

On 17 January 2018, UN human rights experts issued a joint statement arguing that the Turkish state has been using emergency state as an excuse to curtail basic freedoms and expressed their concerns on the crackdowns on academics, independent media, CSOs and human rights defenders.²⁶

Ankara Governorate put a ban on freedom of assembly during August 2017, October-November 2017 and currently since January 2018. The reason being “*intelligence showing that terrorist organizations will carry out violent activities*”. These and similar bans have been issued by governorates attributed to the powers given by the state of emergency. It is expected that it will continue until the elections in 2019.

Reporters Without Borders’ Press Freedom index shows a decline for Turkey, and is now the country with the highest number of jailed journalists. It fell from 151th place to 155th in the press freedom rankings between 2016 and 2017.²⁷ The harsh punishments for journalists and media outlets has led to widespread self-censorship by the remaining news outlets²⁸.

Political representation was also under attack during 2017. After the lifting of immunities of 148 Members of Parliament (MPs) in 2016, 9 MPs from the pro-Kurdish party (HDP) have been arrested²⁹. Local democracy has also been under attack, and a majority of HDP governed municipalities (in the Southeast) have been delegated to a trustee appointed by the current government.

For the situation on gender see objective 1.3. and 2.3.

Portfolio level



In this highly tense political climate and in line with Sida’s Mid-term Review for Turkey, the intention was to increase the number of contributions in the area of Freedom of Expression, human rights and democracy. A number of potential partners were identified and requested to provide proposals. However, proposals were very late (more than 6 months) and of very low quality, which resulted in only one new contribution in the area of democracy (Checks and Balances Network). Three simplified

²³ ‘Opinion on Emergency Decree Laws no:667-676 Adopted Following the Failed Coup of 15 July 2016’ adopted by the Venice Commission at its 109th Plenary Session, Venice, 9-10 December 2016, page 7

²⁴ Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment on his mission to Turkey, page 17

²⁵ <http://www.kaosgl.org/page.php?id=25137>

²⁶ <http://www.un.org.tr/humanrights/images/pdf/UN-human-rights-experts-urge-Turkey-not-to-extend-state-of-emergency.pdf>

²⁷ <https://rsf.org/en/turkey>

²⁸ <https://rsf.org/en/news/life-sentences-landmark-case-journalists-heart-constitutional-crisis-turkey>

²⁹ This number is subject to change as we speak since there are new arrests and verdicts each month against HDP politicians.

“survival” 1-year contributions were agreed, two in the area of freedom of expression (Medyascope³⁰ & Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies, EDAM³¹) and one in the area of human rights (Capacity Development Association, IHOP³²). It should be noted that, despite the difficulties, most partner’s managed to implement activities, especially trainings and documentations. Advocacy and policy work was for obvious reasons difficult.

In the area of gender equality, the increased conservatism made it difficult for CSOs to have a dialogue with the GoT to fulfil its international commitments. The focus for the coming years will be to keep networks alive, and to undertake activities to the extent possible.

Contribution level

Bianet³³ managed to continue most of their work, and the news-site could function as normal thanks to high scrutiny of news items. Furthermore, Bianet published its’ annual report on femicides (see objective 1.3.). Bianet has also launched a new project, which will build on the earlier work of Summer School for Journalism Students (OHO). The organization will run a continuous Journalism School for a larger group comprising of journalism students, social science students, unemployed journalists as well as advocacy/communication officers of CSOs. Due to sensitivities some activities had to be cancelled, especially those that included workshops and/or policy advocacy work.

HRFT³⁴ continued to document and bring accountability to acts of torture and general human rights abuses. It surpassed the target of reaching 570 torture survivors with rehabilitation services by reaching 728 persons.

2.2.3 Objective 2.3: .Women and men have to a greater extent, the same power to shape society and their own lives

Development towards the strategy objective



Gender equality in Turkey has decreased during the strategy period. The Gender Gap Index shows that Turkey has dropped from 120th place in 2013 to 131st in 2017³⁵. The employment rate of women has remained at a very low level. The labour force participation rate is 52 % in 2017, with a large difference between men (72 %) and women (32.5 %). Despite the low proportion of women actively looking for work, their unemployment rate remains significantly higher than the unemployment rate for men. In addition, about one third of women who are considered to be employed are in fact unpaid family workers in the agricultural sector. Employment rates were 65,1 % for men (15+) and 28 % for women (15+) in 2017³⁶. Females' share of managerial positions is only 16,7 %³⁷. The lack of institutions and services to care for children, the elderly and sick people, including for long-term care continue to hinder women’s employment due to the gender bias for caring responsibilities. The total number of ministers in 2017 in Turkey is 27 out of which only two are female. The proportion of female mayors in local governments was 2.9% in 2014 local elections³⁸. In the general elections in

³⁰ Medyascope: 11474

³¹ EDAM: 11312

³² IHOP: 11486

³³ Contribution ID: 55020259

³⁴ Contribution ID: 55020258

³⁵ <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-global-gender-gap-report-2017>

³⁶ <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=27594>

³⁷ <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=27594>

³⁸ <http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=24643>

November 2015, 82 women members were elected in the 550-seat Parliament. Women's share of managerial positions is 16,7 %.³⁹

Since the establishment of the strategy, it has become increasingly difficult to work in the area, due to conservatism, shrinking space for CSOs, and conservative GONGOs monopolising the gender discourse in mainstream media. This has been followed by the family oriented policies taking precedence over the women's individual's rights, through rhetoric on gender justice and gender equity. During 2017 has been there has been rumours and statements by mid-level bureaucrats that Turkey should withdraw as signatories to international conventions such as CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention.

Under the current circumstances, the strategy result will not be achieved.

Portfolio level



The portfolio consists of contributions ILO⁴⁰, Kader⁴¹, Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR)⁴² and UN Women as well as (KAMER and Bianet which have been mentioned previously). The portfolio, on a general level, aims at empowering women in a variety of areas such as women in politics, representation and decision-making processes, access to resources, creating demand for women's human rights, women to become vocal, GBV, economic empowerment, employability etc. The composition of the portfolio covers most thematic and aims at integrating gender equality throughout the portfolio.

As described under objective 1.3 the situation in Turkey has posed several difficulties in achieving results in the area of gender equality. Still, many of the outputs of the portfolio was reached, mainly thanks to partners' flexibility and risk mitigation strategies. At outcome level results were not reached during the year. Hence, the portfolio is partially on track to achieve expected objectives.

The portfolio is expected to remain the same, and there might be room for a few new contributions in the coming year, as there is a need to support organisations on a short- to medium term, in addition to the longer term support.

Contribution level

As reported in the MTR, the support to Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) via ILO has resulted in the establishment of a National Action Plan for Women's Employment. The first of its kind in Turkey. During 2017 the implementation of the action plan was initiated, and focal points have been assigned and designated to all 81 provinces. The focal points have during the year received training on WEE, and how to implement the action plan locally. Local action plans were developed in four pilot provinces (Ankara, Bursa, İstanbul and Konya) to accelerate the implementation of the national action plan. Some outputs are: women benefitting from on the job trainings has increased by 96% and women benefitting from entrepreneurship trainings has increased by 131,5 %⁴³.

³⁹ <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=27594>

⁴⁰ [ISKUR/ILO WEE Main Phase](#) Contribution no: 55020158

⁴¹ [Support to women's political participation Turkey](#) Contribution no: 55020093

⁴² [Women for Women's Human Rights 2016-2017](#) Contribution no: 55020326

⁴³ [ISKUR/ILO WEE Main Phase](#) Contribution no: 55020158

3 Implications for the Continued Strategy Implementation

The recommendations outlined in the MTR will continue to be implemented throughout the remaining strategy period, i.e. to move away from supporting government led reforms, to supporting CSOs in the areas of freedom of expression, democracy, human rights & women's rights. This includes a flexible approach with a handful of flexible "survival contributions", to short- and medium-term support to CSOs, and long-term support to (re)building democracy. The period up to the next Presidential election (planned in April 2019) will be crucial for the democratic future, and the outcome may cement the current path even further. Hence, it is of highly important that democratic voices and human rights activists receive support, both morally and financially.

The dialogue with partners, especially CSOs) has to a large extent focused on security issues and will most likely continue to do so. Dialogue with the government is highly political and sensitive and carried out when possible.