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Civic space in Turkey: a social capital approach to civil society

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ABSTRACT

The present study explores civil society organizations' (CSOs) civic and political potential in Turkey. For this purpose, it generates original data from Antalya and utilizes social network analysis to analyze the CSOs' cooperation structure. The analysis points out certain levels of dynamism and diversity in terms of the CSOs' cooperative connections. Yet it also shows variance between the public-goods oriented Putnam-type CSOs and the special-interest oriented Olson-type CSOs in terms of their civic and political potential. This observed variance, in turn, is likely to influence their respective potential to articulate common interests on the one hand, to affect politics on the other hand.


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Introduction

Civil society is a significant and much-celebrated concept in political studies. Scholars of democracy regard the concept highly, pointing to its multiple functions such as enabling citizens' socialization into cooperative norms, providing the link between citizens and politics, and establishing mechanisms of political responsiveness and accountability. These functions, in turn, are frequently associated with democratic consolidation.¹

Civil society participation rates in Turkey have bettered in the last few decades.² In line with this positive trend, the number of studies that focus on the civil society organizations' (CSOs) activism has increased, along with studies that inquire political determinants of civil society participation.³ These studies are significant because they make civil society in Turkey more visible in terms of the CSOs'-level sectoral demands and issue advocacy on the one hand, the ever-present contestation between the political and the civil society actors for civil society boundaries on the other hand. The present

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study aims to contribute to the burgeoning literature on civil society in Turkey by focusing on one of its understudied aspects: the structure of civic space in which the CSOs relate to each other through their cooperative connections. This focus, in turn, is crucial in order to make sense of the CSOs'-level civic and political potential in the country. The study utilizes a social capital approach to account for these potential.

Social capital literature argues for the centrality of social relations in general, and civil society participation in particular, as important components of well-functioning democracies.⁴ This approach focuses primarily on bottom-up citizens'-level attitudes and the CSOs'-level connections rather than on top-down political determinants to explain civil society participation.⁵ In line with this literature, the present study aims to address the following interrelated questions:

- (a) What is the extent of cooperation among CSOs in Turkey?
- (b) Does the CSOs' cooperation structure provide us clues about their civic and political potential?
- (c) Do these potentials vary according to different types of CSOs?

The study is based on data collected from 16 business CSOs and 15 women's CSOs in Antalya, the most populous and developed city in the southern Mediterranean coast region in Turkey, with a population of over two million people.⁶ The focus on Antalya is deliberate for two reasons. The first is concerned with the research question. In order to analyze the structural properties of the CSO-level connections, one should map out all such connections, which, in turn, necessitates a focus on smaller networks. The city-level analysis provides a natural local boundary to collect complete network data.⁷

While the research question requires a city-level analysis, Antalya was chosen as the case study by way of comparative logic. Though the present paper rests on a single case study, it is comparative because it aims to come up with generalizations applicable to similar cases.⁸ The existing research on civil society in Turkey often relies on data drawn from the more visible and the better resourced CSOs mostly situated in Istanbul, and to a lesser extent from Ankara and İzmir.⁹ Yet these are the largest, the most prosperous, and the most cosmopolitan cities in the country. Antalya is the fourth largest city in terms of its socio-economic development and the sixth in terms of the total numbers of registered CSOs.¹⁰ Yet, on both fronts, Antalya also lags substantially behind İstanbul, Ankara, and İzmir. Hence, it stands as a cutting point between these three most central cities and a host of other cities such as Bursa, Kocaeli, and Muğla, which are more peripheral in terms of the CSOs participation, yet which also display certain levels of diversity and role differentiation, making the focus on CSOs relevant. The study's focus

on Antalya is expected to generate CSO data from one of the most important peripheral cities in Turkey, which will be comparable with the CSO data already generated from more central cities. This type of data, in turn, is expected to provide a fuller understanding of civil society in Turkey.

The organization of the study is as follows. The first section discusses the relationship the social capital approach posits between CSOs'-level cooperation and democratic performance. The second section provides contextual background information on civil society in Turkey. The hypotheses of the study are presented in this section. The third section presents the data and the analysis. This section also discusses the paper's major findings. The last section concludes the paper.

Democracy, social capital, and civil society: Why does the civic space matter?

Definitions of civil society vary, yet the majority of definitions focus on two features. The first feature is that a citizen's participation in civil society should be voluntary; the second is that this participation should be relatively autonomous from the political and the economic institutions, actors, and processes.¹¹ Putnam et al.'s influential political study *Making Democracy Work* provides the link between democracy, social capital, and civil society. The authors argued for the enabling influence of citizens' civic capacity across northern regions in Italy through democratic performance, which contrasted sharply with lower levels of civic capacity and democratic performance across the southern ones.¹² The study defined social capital as '[the] features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions.'¹³ Norms of social trust, tolerance, and reciprocity make up the behavioral aspect of social capital, whereas, 'networks' frequently refer to CSOs'-level connections, making up the structural aspect of social capital.¹⁴

In other words, a social capital approach entails a bottom-up inquiry into the civic potential of a given polity, examining the extent to which fellow citizens recognize each other as equals and whether they are willing to cooperate for common ends.¹⁵ The CSOs'-level activities and cooperation are significant indicators of bottom-up civic and political potential in this literature. The citizens have a greater say in their own affairs and they know how to cross-cut different cleavages on an equal footing to achieve common ends in polities where the CSOs are both denser and more active.¹⁶ Likewise, the CSOs' political weight vis-à-vis political actors and institutions increase in this type of settings, which, in turn, makes the mechanisms of democratic responsiveness and accountability work more effectively.¹⁷

As more studies with this focus were published, scholars have also differentiated between different types of CSOs. This differentiation has been

based on Olson's and Putnam's studies, respectively. In his 1982 study, Olson designated a series of CSOs such as professional organizations and trade unions as potentially rent seeking, whereas in a 1993 study, Putnam and his collaborators underscored CSOs such as choral societies and bird-watching clubs as potential contributors to civic attitudes and values.¹⁸ Based on these studies, scholars of social capital literature have differentiated between Olson-type and Putnam-type CSOs. Olson-type CSOs are related to modern economic production, and their tendency to enter into distributional coalitions is higher. In this vein, they are more special-interest oriented. Alternatively, Putnam-type CSOs are related to more post-modern, self-expressive concerns such as community work, recreation, and rights-based activism, and they are more public-goods oriented.¹⁹

The social capital approach is not without its critics. In his review article, Tarrow, for instance, criticized Putnam and his collaborators for neglecting the role of the state-building and the state strategy in their historical narrative of the lower civic capacity observed across regions in south Italy.²⁰ Along similar lines, in their comparative study of Central American states, Booth and Richard argued that the repressive political context observed in these states influenced civil society activism as well as democratic norms negatively.²¹ In their criticism of the social capital approach, Edwards and Foley pointed out to cases when civil society and political society acted as adversary entities rather than complementary ones.²²

Notwithstanding the viability of these criticisms, the present study utilizes a social capital approach to discuss the structure of civic space in Turkey. As noted before, there is a burgeoning literature on civil society in Turkey. Yet, there are no studies to this date that inquire the cooperative connections among the CSOs in a formal manner, and discuss their implications for CSOs'-level civic and political potential. A social capital approach suits well with this objective. The next section discusses civil society in Turkey, and introduces the study's hypotheses.

Civil society in Turkey: literature review and hypotheses

Citizens' CSO participation rates in Turkey have increased in the last few decades. Despite the increase, however, only approximately 10% of the citizens are members of some type of CSO.²³ According to World Values Survey 2010–2014 wave, this figure is more than 70% in Sweden, the US, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and South Korea; around 50% in Japan, Cyprus, and Argentina; between 20% and 35% in Russia, Romania, Ukraine, and Spain.²⁴ Given the lower CSO participation rate in Turkey, discussions on the relationship between political context and the CSOs-level activism are well grounded.

In their study, Heper and Keyman argued for the lasting influence of the strong state tradition in the Turkish Republic, inherited from the traditional Ottoman-Turkish context, whereby both the political and the state elites considered themselves as the patrons of society.²⁵ Alternatively, Kalaycıoğlu pointed out the constitution of 1982, written under the military auspices, as a delimiting factor for CSO development.²⁶ Kubicek posited the persistence of cleavages, in particular that between the Islamists and the secularists, as the main feature that thwarted the triggering of CSOs in Turkey.²⁷

Different from these authors, Keyman and İçduygu focused on the enabling influence of both globalization and the European Union (EU) membership prospect on CSOs in Turkey. In their analysis, they explain how the global political context of the 1990s provided the CSOs with “a space to do politics” between the failure of the nation-state and the trans-nationalization of politics and democracy, an attempt to include into the political agenda “the issue and problem areas around which they organize”.²⁸ For the Turkish context, this simply meant that the already existing identity groups such as Kurds and Islamists, already critical of the secular and state-centric nature of Turkish modernity, have gained a legitimate space for activism. Alternatively, for the secular and Republican groups, comfortable with the secularist and unitary nation-building project, this meant multiple contestations of their identity on the very space they enjoyed state’s favoritism before.²⁹ The enlarged space for the CSOs-level activism, in turn, has made Turkey more pluralistic since 1990s. This pluralism has also been reflected to civil society research on Turkey as the number of studies which focus on the CSOs’-level identity claims, activities and advocacy has increased in the last few decades.³⁰

Some of these studies also inform us on the CSOs’-level cooperative connections; though, their main focus is not on discussing these connections in detail. The 2011 Report of Third Sector Foundation of Turkey (*Türkiye Üçüncü Sektör Vakfı TÜSEV*), for instance, showed that the CSOs in Turkey lacked extensive communication and cooperation connections.³¹ Yet the report focused on many other indicators to assess the CSOs in Turkey besides the cooperative connections. Hence, it discussed neither these connections nor their implications in detail.

Along similar lines, Fisher-Onar and Paker, discussed cooperation among women’s CSOs in Turkey to the extent it was related to discussions on cosmopolitan citizenship.³² Their analysis first introduced different cleavages in Turkey that provided feedback on women’s CSOs. Republican feminism, which focused on women’s changing public roles through secular Republican reforms on civil and political rights, as well as education, had historical precedence until the 1980s. By the 1980s, a second wave of feminists, also secular, became more assertive regarding women’s empowerment and problematized gender roles in private sphere. By the 1990s, Kurdish and Islamic women also

demanded recognition and specificity of their concerns. According to Fisher-Onar and Paker, these diverse groups cooperated in platforms and networks that were especially active on issues such as women's empowerment, violence against women, and education. Nevertheless, tensions and lack of trust were also evident between Islamic and Kurdish women on the one hand, their Turkish secular feminist counterparts on the other hand. In their study on Turkey's Kurdish question, Kaliber and Tocci also argued for a similar CSOs alignment along the existing cleavages.³³

The literature review so far does not present a particularly favorable civic space for the CSOs' level activities and cooperation in Turkey. The heavy hand of the state and the protracted reform of political institutions are likely to put structural constraints on this space. Likewise, the existing cleavages act as sources of mutual suspicions, lack of trust and tolerance at both the citizens' and the CSOs' levels.³⁴ Last but not least, the CSOs in Turkey display weak institutional capabilities in terms of their human capital and financial capital.³⁵ On the basis of these features, it is not unrealistic to expect a substantial lack of cooperation among the CSOs in Turkey. Hence, the first hypothesis of this study can be formulated as

H1. The CSOs' cooperation structure in Turkey displays a sparse structure rather than a well-connected one.

Despite the general trend of a sparse cooperation structure, public-goods oriented CSOs are expected to display denser connections in comparison with special-interest oriented CSOs. After all, citizens who are active in public-goods orientated CSOs are more likely to be motivated with civic concerns; hence, this type of CSOs would display a more cooperative attitude.

H2. Public-goods oriented CSOs are motivated with civic concerns; hence, they are expected to be more open to cooperation with fellow CSOs. As a result, this type of CSOs is expected to display denser cooperative connections.

H3. Special-interest oriented CSOs are motivated with particularistic interests; hence, they are expected to be more skeptical about cooperation with fellow CSOs. As a result, this type of CSOs is expected to display sparser cooperative connections.

In line with the social capital approach, both types of CSOs are expected to seek political connections in order to communicate their interests to political actors and institutions. Yet, the types of these connections are likely to vary according to different types of CSOs. Hence, the hypotheses H4-H5 are as follows:

H4. Political connections of public-goods oriented CSOs tend to be more institutional than particularistic. Hence they are more likely to establish issue-based political connections through party channels rather than individualized connections with local or national level politicians.

H5. Political connections of special-interest oriented CSOs tend to be more particularistic than institutional. Hence, they are more likely to have individualized political connections with local and national level politicians rather than issue-based connections through party channels.

These hypotheses are tested in the next section, which presents the method, data, and major findings. These findings also guide the discussion about the CSO-level civic and political potential in Turkey.

Civil society in Turkey: a CSOs'-level exploration

The method and data

Data for the present study come from a funded project on the relationship between the CSOs' cooperation and institutional effectiveness in Antalya. The fieldwork of the project lasted from November 2014 to February 2015. The study employed social network analysis (SNA) to elicit CSOs' cooperative connections.³⁶ SNA is particularly suitable for research questions that aim to understand the ways the structure of connections among given actors shape their opportunities as well as constraints. Understanding network properties is important because 'what happens to a group of actors is in part a function of the structure of connections among them.'³⁷

Complete network data are collected when the research question is interested in eliciting all existing connections among a given set of actors. This type of data necessitates that the research focus on smaller networks. The decision on network boundary, in turn, is a significant challenge in network analysis because an arbitrary delimitation of a given network may distort the research results.³⁸ Marsden has recommended a series of specifications for complete networks as the reliance on attribute properties like membership in formal organizations or on behavioral properties such as participation in various events like 'publications in scientific journals or Congressional testimony.'³⁹

Taking these methodological concerns and recommendations into consideration, this study delimited the network boundary to CSOs in the Antalya metropolitan area, which is comprised of five district municipalities and a population of approximately one million two hundred people.⁴⁰ In line with the social capital literature's differentiation of different types of CSOs, the study focused on women's CSOs as examples of public-goods oriented CSOs and business CSOs as examples of special-interest oriented CSOs, respectively.

In Turkey, participation in public-goods oriented CSOs does not amount to more than 5%.⁴¹ Given this low percentage, this study focused on women's CSOs as the sample of public-goods oriented CSOs due to their better-established position among this type of CSOs in Turkey. This focus,

in turn, was expected to provide at least minimum numbers of public-goods oriented CSOs to account for. Alternatively, social capital literature has treated trade unions and professional organizations as special-interest oriented CSOs. This study chose business CSOs as the sample of this type of CSOs because, different from trade unions and chambers of commerce in Turkey, they feature as independent citizens' initiatives. In this vein, they are more representative of autonomous organizations expected from the civil society sector.

The study approached 41 active CSOs in Antalya; 30 agreed to complete the surveys. One women's CSO did not accept the invitation. This CSO was also included in the study by utilizing the information it made public via its detailed and up-to-date Web page. In all, the study counted on surveys with 16 business CSOs and 15 women's CSOs, a total of 31 observations.

The study defined the CSO cooperation as a broad concept that included different types of activities ranging from organizing common meetings, sharing of information and documents, preparing joint declarations, and undertaking common projects.⁴² The CSOs' cooperation partners, in turn, were elicited through two separate surveys. The first survey included the complete list of CSOs of the given sectors in Antalya and asked a given CSO to designate its cooperation partners in the previous year. The follow-up questions employed free-recall name generators and asked the CSOs whether they cooperated with a fellow CSO outside Antalya, with CSOs of other sectors or public bodies, with international CSOs or with other international/regional organizations.

The second survey was conducted with a high-ranking member of each organization, usually the organization's chair.⁴³ The CSOs' chairs in Turkey have high leverage and the chairperson turnover is low.⁴⁴ This survey first asked the chairperson to name all of the given CSO's cooperation partners in the previous year. Then, it specifically asked whether he/she co-operated any political or bureaucratic actors at both the local and the national levels for the CSO's activities. The survey employed free-recall name generators to retrieve the network data. This second survey helped reveal the most extensive data available on the CSO's cooperative connections.

Research findings

A short synopsis on the CSOs

The CSOs in Antalya displayed above average institutional capabilities in comparison with the CSOs across Turkey.⁴⁵ Yet these capabilities were also conditioned with general structural problems the CSOs in the country facing inadequate personnel, over-reliance on ad hoc volunteer work, and insufficient funds. This assertion needed a further qualification; that was the stark difference observed in Antalya between the women's CSOs and

the business CSOs in terms of their human resources, financial resources, and technical/physical resources. The business CSOs fared better on all these dimensions than the women's CSOs.

Tables 1 and 2 in the following pages display all CSOs that are included in the present study, as well as their most frequent activity in the given year.

Testing the hypotheses

In order to test the hypotheses presented in the previous section, this study conducted SNA at two levels by utilizing the UCINET software. The first level is concerned with CSOs' Antalya level sectoral relations (see Figure 1). The second level is about all the connections of the CSOs, including those beyond the local context as well as the political connections (see Figure 2).

The nodes in both Figures 1 and 2 show the CSOs, whereas ties that connect the CSOs, indicate the presence of cooperative connections.⁴⁶ In both figures, the CSOs (hence the nodes) are of different sizes because they are ranked according to the number of their total cooperative connections. In SNA, the measure that ranks a given network's actors according to their number of connections is called the degree centrality measure⁴⁷ Hence, Figures 1 and 2 show us the CSOs' cooperative connections according to their degree centrality scores. In both figures, the nodes with larger sizes show the more visible and more central actors in the network.

Figure 1 shows the women's CSOs as squares and the business CSOs as triangles.⁴⁸ At first glance, the figure displays a connected rather than a sparse

Table 1. Women's CSOs included in the study.

	CSO's most frequent activity
Turkish Mother's Association Antalya Branch	Socialization
Turkish Women Union Antalya Branch	Socialization
Turkish Association of University Women Antalya Branch	Long-term vocational training
Turkish Association of University Women Konyaalti Branch	Socialization
Association for Research on Women's Social Life (KASAI) Antalya Branch	Seminars
Association of Women Entrepreneurs and Students	Long-term vocational training
Association for Support of Women Candidates (KA.DER) Antalya Representation	Seminars
Antalya Katre Women's Association	Socialization
Imece Women's Solidarity Association	Short term training for empowerment and raising awareness
Women's Right Committee of Antalya Bar Association	Seminars
Turkish Foundation of Family Health and Planning Antalya Branch	Seminars
Association for Republican Women Antalya Branch	Rallies
Antalya Association for Women' Counselling and Solidarity	Rallies and press declarations
International Women's Solidarity Association Antalya Branch	Socialization
Antalya Metropolitan City Council Women's Assembly	Seminars

Table 2. Business CSOs included in the study.

	CSO's most frequent activity
Antalya Industrialists and Businessmen Association	Seminars
Antalya Entrepreneurial Businessmen Association	Seminars
Antalya Businessmen Association	Seminars
Antalya Young Businessmen Association	Seminars
Antalya Free Zone Businessmen Association	Socialization
Antalya Association of Businessmen from East and Southeast	Seminars
Aksu Entrepreneurial Businessmen Association	Socialization/seminars
West Mediterranean Industry and Business World Federation	Seminars
Successful Industrialists Businessmen Association	No activity
Döşemealtı Industrialists and Businessmen Association	Seminars
Antalya Chamber of Commerce Young Entrepreneurs Committee	Seminars
Antalya Organized Industrial Zone Industrialists and Businessmen Association	Socialization
Yörük Industrialists and Businessmen Association	Seminars
Antalya Chamber of Commerce Women Entrepreneurs Committee	Seminars
Antalya Businesswomen Association	Seminars
Mediterranean Entrepreneurial Businesswomen Association	Seminars

structure of cooperative connections. Three findings come to the fore. The first finding is that only four CSOs did not have any cooperative connections (CSOs #1, 20, 27, 28). Among these four isolates, one is a women's CSO (CSO #1) and the remaining three are business CSOs. The second finding is that the women's business CSOs (#14, 15, and 16) connect the women's CSOs and the business CSOs, which, in turn, connects these two different civil society sectors together at the local level. The third finding is that the left side of the graph, which shows the women's CSOs, reveals denser relations; hence the women's CSOs are more involved in cooperative connections than the business CSOs.

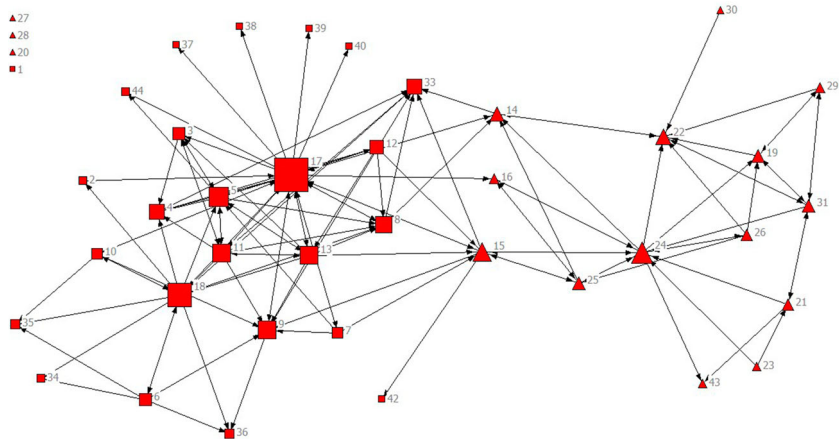


Figure 1. Cooperation network by degree centrality scores (Antalya level sectoral connections).

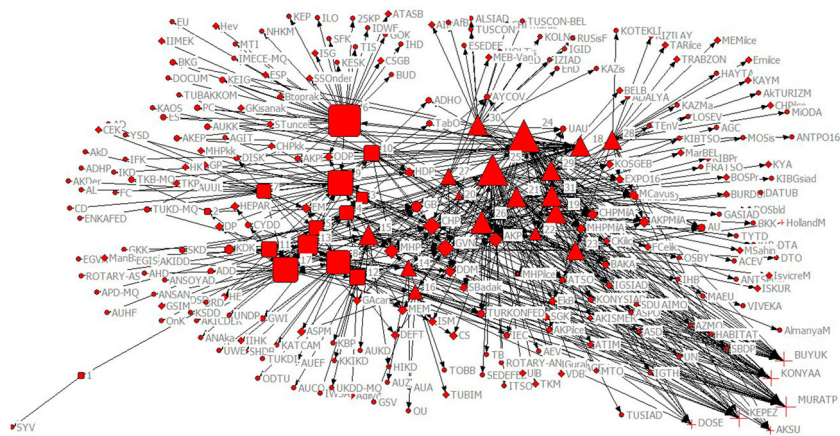


Figure 2. Cooperation network by degree centrality scores (all connections of the CSOs).

All these findings point out CSOs’ well-connectedness in Antalya, which challenges the expectation of a sparse cooperation structure (H1). Yet this hypothesis needs to be tested further by taking CSOs’ connections beyond the local context into consideration.

In order to test H2 and H3, Table 3 below ranks the CSOs according to the five highest degree centrality scores. It also specifies these CSOs’ total number of connections. The striking feature about Table 3 is that women’s CSOs rank higher in terms of their cooperative relations.⁴⁹ Two business CSOs feature as cooperative in Table 3, one of which (CSO # 15) is a women’s business CSO. This finding, along with women CSOs’ denser cooperative relations supports H2 and H3, respectively, which expect different cooperation structures from different types of CSOs. In order to delve further into this assertion, the analysis also inquired whether cohesive subgroups have existed within this local cooperation network. The detection of such groups was expected to provide further information about types of the CSOs that cooperated with each other more extensively and their motivation for cooperation. For this purpose, a 2-plex analysis of a minimum of six CSOs⁵⁰ was conducted in

Table 3. CSOs’ ranking in terms of five highest degree centrality scores (Antalya level sectoral connections).

CSO #	Number of connections	Ranking	CSO type
#17	20	1	Women
#18	13	2	Women
#24	11	3	Business
#5	10	4	Women
#9	9	5	Women
#11	9	5	Women
#13	9	5	Women
#15	9	5	Business

UCINET. This analysis simply examines subgroups composed of a minimum of six CSOs in the network, which are all connected to each other except, at most, one connection.⁵¹ Hence, it shows cohesive groups within which the CSOs forged extensive cooperative relations.

The analysis yielded 13 such cohesive groups with a total of 10 CSOs. All of these were the women's CSOs.⁵² Seven of them (CSOs #3, 4, 5, 8, 12, 11, 13) were of the Republican feminist identity, which set their objectives in relation with the Republic, its founding fathers, and, in particular, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as well as the Republican reforms. Their mission statements have specifically referred to objectives such as bettering conditions for women, representing Turkish women in the best possible way, and protecting the economic and political independence gained by the Republic. The activities of these Republican feminist women's CSOs mostly focused on organizing seminars and panels as well as providing long-term vocational training for women. The majority of these seminars and panels concentrated on gender issues such as violence against women, child marriages, women's legal rights, gender equality in education, women's health, and International Women's Day.

The CSO featuring in cohesive subgroups with a different identity than the Republican feminist identity was CSO #18, which was a feminist women's CSO. What put CSO #18 in well connected, cohesive groups with the Republican feminist CSOs was their cooperation on women's human rights issues, especially on commemorative days such as November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and March 8, International Women's Day. This cooperative tie in turn, connected the feminist Republican CSOs to other feminist CSOs and platforms in Antalya (Figure 1, actors #6, 34, 35, 36). Besides the structural connection between the Republican feminist and the feminist CSOs, the women's CSOs were also connected to women's business CSOs through actors #14 and 15, given the latter's interest in gender-related issues. Structural connections among these three different types of women's CSOs, in turn, point out their civic potential to articulate their diverse interests and positions on women's human rights issues.

In contrast with the women's CSOs, none of the business CSOs was a part of the cohesive subgroups analyzed above. Different from the women's CSOs, which are more likely to cooperate for common objectives despite their different identities, the majority of the business CSOs pursue their interests with fewer cooperative connections despite their similar objectives, which is providing business-related networks to their members. They were also involved in similar types of activities to provide these networks, such as inviting expert guest speakers both from the public and the private sectors, organizing socializing activities for in-group networking, and organizing sector-specific visits for out-group networking.⁵³ Despite the similarity of their objectives as well as activities, the business CSOs in Antalya displayed sparser cooperation connections. This situation revealed a contrary case to the

women's CSOs in terms of the CSOs' civic potential to articulate interests. This potential seems to be lower for the business CSOs.

The findings so far point out to a difference between the cooperation structures of the public-goods oriented and special-interest oriented CSOs in Antalya. In line with H2, public-goods oriented women's CSOs display denser cooperative relations. This well-connected cooperation structure, in turn, increases their civic potential, especially to articulate gender-related issues with particular emphasis on women's human rights. One caveat to this finding is the absence of Islamic and Kurdish women's CSOs within Antalya-level cooperation network. The study inquires whether the designated civic potential of the women's CSOs in Antalya also extends to these types of CSOs once the analysis focuses on all of the connections of the CSOs.

Alternative to women' CSOs, special-interest oriented business CSOs display sparser cooperative connections. This finding is in line with H3. Given the similarity of their main objectives and activities, their particularistic tendencies are likely to explain their fewer cooperative connections. After all, these CSOs have explained their primary motivations as providing sectoral, political, and social connections, as well as the workplace related know-how to their members.⁵⁴ In this vein, they may well choose not to articulate their interests collectively; because, they are formed specifically in order to benefit their members only.

The analysis so far focused on the CSOs' civic potential at the local level. In order to understand whether or not the CSOs' designated civic potential in Antalya extends beyond the local context, SNA was conducted on all of the connections of the CSOs, including their political connections (see [Figure 2](#)). The square nodes in [Figure 2](#) show the women's CSOs; the triangle nodes show the business CSOs; the diamond nodes show the political actors; and the plus shaped nodes show Antalya metropolitan and district municipalities. The remaining circle nodes are CSOs' connections with CSOs inside and outside of Antalya as well as with regional and international organizations.

In comparison with [Figure 1](#), [Figure 2](#) displays a more complex web of relations. No CSOs lack connections in [Figure 2](#). Also, [Figure 2](#) displays one complete network, meaning that all actors shown in [Figure 2](#) are structurally connected. Last but not least, women CSOs' average number of connections (19.4) more than doubles in [Figure 2](#), which was 7.4 in [Figure 1](#). Likewise, business CSOs' average number of connections increases from 4 in [Figure 1](#) to 22.4 in [Figure 2](#). These features show that, even in contexts of low civil society participation, as in the case of Turkey, the CSOs cooperative connections display a certain level of diversity. This finding, in turn, challenges H1, which expected a sparse cooperative structure in Turkey rather than a rather well-connected one. However, the fact that the CSOs in Antalya are structurally connected in a complex web of relations with a diversity of actors does not necessarily mean that these CSOs are aware of these

connections; hence, they use them for civic and political activism. The analysis of the extent to which the CSOs utilize these connections, in turn, sheds further light on CSOs' civic and political potential.

Table 4 below ranks the CSOs in terms of the five highest degree centrality scores for all connections of the CSOs. It elicits seven central and visible actors, four of which are the women's CSOs. The women's CSO # 6 ranks first, along with the business CSO #24. This means it had the maximum number of connections, even though it was not central in the previous Antalya-level analyses. This organization was a branch of an Istanbul-based one that argued and lobbied for the rights of domestic workers. CSO #6 owes its centrality in Figure 2 to its extensive connections to other women's rights CSOs, feminist platforms, trade unions, and politicians, which were active at the national level, as well as connections to regional and international organizations. However, CSO #6 is connected to the more central and visible women's CSOs in Antalya only indirectly, through actors #18 and #9.

The lack of a direct connection between CSO #6 and the Republican feminist women's CSOs, which are central at Antalya-level connections, is indeed a good example in which structural connections remain only as potential channels of cooperation rather than actual ones. Moreover, only one Republican feminist women's CSO (#8) features in Table 4. This finding shows us that the Republican feminist women's CSOs could not sustain their high-tie frequency when the analysis focuses on all the connections of the CSOs.

The Republican feminist women's CSOs' connections with other CSOs outside Antalya are nearly exclusively confined to connections to their main headquarters. Hence, they fall short of carrying their local level civic potential to national and international levels. Alternatively, the feminist CSOs such as CSO #18 and #6 had extensive connections to other feminist CSOs, collectives, platforms as well as initiatives, which are active especially at the national level. Their connections to Women's Labor and Employment Initiative (*Kadın Emeği ve İstihdamı Girişimi*, KEIG), Women's Initiative for Peace (*Bariş için Kadın Girişimi*), and the Feminist Caravan, for instance, are likely to connect these feminist CSOs to some of the Kurdish women's CSOs as well. CSO #18 also had connections to two Republican feminist women's CSOs' headquarters.

Table 4. CSOs' ranking in terms of five highest degree centrality scores (all connections).

CSO #	Number of connections	Ranking	CSO type
#6	41	1	Women
#24	41	1	Business
#25	38	2	Business
#9	31	3	Women
#17	31	3	Women
#8	29	4	Women
#26	27	5	Business

These findings point out to a variance in terms of public-goods oriented CSOs' civic potential. The Republican feminist CSOs' civic potential decreases and the feminist CSOs' civic potential increases once the analysis takes all of the connections of the CSOs into consideration. Given the structural connections between these two groups of women's CSOs at Antalya level, it is possible to argue for the Republican feminist CSOs' under-utilization of the existing cooperation structure to become more active and visible at the national level. Yet another finding is the curious absence of the Islamic women's CSOs in the designated cooperation network despite their increased visibility in Turkey in the last few decades. The available data does not allow for an elaboration on the reasons of this absence, yet it points out to a possible rift between the secular and the feminist women's CSOs' cooperative connections on the one hand, the Islamic women's CSOs' cooperative connections on the other hand. This finding, in turn, is likely to echo the cleavage between the seculars and Islamists in Turkey.

Table 4 is also interesting for the business CSOs' civic potential. Business CSOs #25 and #26, which were not central in Figure 1, emerged as central and visible actors. Indeed, CSO #25 is a federation of CSOs, which is active in the Western Mediterranean region. It is composed of four business CSOs from the Antalya metropolitan area, two business CSOs from Antalya's other districts, one major business CSO from the neighboring city of Isparta, as well as Turkish Industry and Business Association (*Türk Sanayicileri ve İşadamları Derneği*, TÜSİAD), which is one of the oldest and the most influential business CSOs in Turkey. Four business CSOs from Antalya are the two women's business CSOs (#15 and #16) and the CSOs #24 and #26.

The cooperation of these regional-level business CSOs under a single roof (CSO #25), their connection to TÜSİAD at the national level, and the centrality of CSO #25 in Table 4 show the civic potential of this group of business CSOs to articulate common interests. When the study focuses on the remaining business CSOs, they display a better-connected structure than their connections only at Antalya level. Indeed, the CSOs' rankings according to the highest ten degree-centrality scores show that out of 20 such actors, 13 are the business CSOs. Yet many of these business CSOs owe their higher-degree centrality to their political connections rather than to fellow CSOs' connections. In this sense, a variance is observed in terms of special-interest oriented CSOs' civic potential once the study counts on all of the connections of the CSOs.

The last part of the analysis evaluates different types of CSOs in terms of their political potential. The analysis shows a stark difference between public-goods oriented CSOs' and special-interest oriented CSOs' political connections. Public-goods oriented women's CSOs' average number of such connections amount to 6.3, whereas special-interest oriented business CSOs' average political connections are 12.8. Table 5 in the following page shows the ranking of CSOs according to five highest numbers of political connections.

The majority of the CSOs that feature in Table 5 are the business CSOs, whereas the Republican feminist CSOs do not feature in this table. Indeed, the majority of their political connections were limited to Antalya metropolitan and district municipalities. Only a few of them mentioned local branches of political parties and only one of them mentioned members of parliament (MPs) as their connections. Indeed the chairs of these CSOs frequently underlined the reason for their distanced stance vis-à-vis political actors as a way to preserve their distance from all political factions. This distance, in turn, was underscored as a necessity to maintain organizational autonomy.⁵⁵ Alternative to these CSOs were the women's CSOs # 6, #9, and #10 with more extensive political connections. They were mostly connections either to local branches of parties or to MPs. None of the MPs mentioned by this group of CSOs were Antalya MPs.

The analysis draws a completely different picture for the business CSOs. All business CSOs but two had connections either to local branches of the three mainstream parties⁵⁶ in Turkey or to all or some Antalya MPs. The chairs of the business CSOs frequently underlined the fact that they did not differentiate among political parties, and that their doors were open to all party representatives. Especially interesting is the fact that the business CSOs – except for the three women's business CSOs – were male-dominated, and they had connections to Antalya MPs through different channels such as personal acquaintance, work relations, or the MP's prior involvement in business CSO circles.

These findings partly corroborate with H4 and H5. First of all, the present study anticipated all types of CSOs' interest in establishing political connections to communicate their interests. Yet the majority of Republican feminist CSOs prefer not to have contact with any political actors. In this vein, their political potential is particularly limited. Apart from these CSOs, other public-goods oriented women' CSOs rely more on institutionalized political channels to communicate their interests, which is in line with H4.

Alternatively, H5 expected special-interest oriented CSOs to have individualized political connections with local and national level politicians rather than issue-based connections through party channels. The findings of the present study corroborate H5 with one caveat: business CSOs owe most of their political connections to their acquaintances at the local level. Hence, many of these business CSOs just happen to have connections to Antalya MPs on the basis

Table 5. CSOs' ranking in terms of five highest numbers of political connections (all connections).

CSO #	Number of connections	Ranking	CSO type
# 24	22	1	Business
#25	21	2	Business
#21	18	3	Business
#9	17	4	Women
#28	16	5	Business

of the demographic advantage because the male-dominated business CSOs circles and the male-dominated local political circles overlapped. In this vein, it is difficult to argue for their intentional activism to establish political connections for particularistic interests. This finding, in turn, points out a gendered advantage for the business CSOs' political potential.

Conclusion

The present study has shown that, though with varying levels, both the public-goods oriented and the special-interest oriented CSOs in Turkey's periphery are active and cooperative agents with certain levels of accumulated institutional presence and experience. It is difficult to detect this finding either with aggregate data on CSOs'-level activities in Turkey or with data from the already well-established and well-resourced CSOs from the more central cities. The present study has further demonstrated that the CSOs in Antalya are far from being exclusively local entities. On the contrary, they are, at least partially, connected to national and international CSOs' networks; although, some of them are not aware of these connections. The acknowledgement of these two findings, in turn, may energize future studies that focus on bottom-up CSOs'-level civic and political potential in Turkey. They may also help the CSOs to involve in more cooperation with a wider group of CSOs by taking advantage of their structural connections, which they were not aware before. Hence, further research along these lines would be welcome.

Notes

1. Warren, "Civil Society and Democracy," 377–90.
2. For civil society participation rates see World Values Survey 1981–2014 Longitudinal Aggregate Data; For relative increase in the last decades see Şimşek, "The Transformation of Civil Society," 46–74.
3. For increased CSOs'-level activism, see, for instance, Kuzmanovic, *Refractions of Civil Society in Turkey*. For political determinants of civil society participation, see, for instance, Yerasimos, Seufert, and Vorhoff, *Civil Society in the Grip of Nationalism*.
4. Putnam, Nanetti, and Leonardi, *Making Democracy Work*.
5. Grootaert, "Social Capital," 9–29.
6. Antalya Governorship, *Antalya*.
7. Marsden, "Network Data and Measurement," 435–63.
8. Landman, "Issues and Methods," 23–48.
9. See, for example, Kadioğlu, "Civil Society, Islam, and Democracy," 23–41; Sarkissian and Özler, "Democratization and the Politicization," 1014–35; Ergun, "Civil Society in Turkey," 507–22.
10. Gül and Çevik, "2013 Verileriyle Türkiye'de İllerin Gelişmişlik Düzeyi," 10, 20. Also see Toksöz, "Antalya Province Labor Market Analysis," 3–7. For city level CSO participation see Dernekler Dairesi Başkanlığı, *İllere Göre Faal Dernek Sayısı*.
11. Walzer, "A Better Vision," 306–21.
12. Putnam, Nanetti, and Leonardi, *Making Democracy Work*, 83–120.

13. Ibid., 167.
14. Newton, "Social Capital and Democracy", 575–86.
15. Putnam, Nanetti, and Leonardi, *Making Democracy Work*, 86–91.
16. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 48–63. Also see Howard and Gilbert, "A Cross-national Comparison," 12–32.
17. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 31–48.
18. Knack and Keefer, "Does Social Capital Have an Economic Pay-off?" 1251–88.
19. Knack, "Groups, Growth, and Trust," 341–55.
20. Tarrow, "Making Social Science Work," 389–97.
21. Booth and Richard, "Civil Society, Political Capital, and Democratization," 780–800.
22. Edwards and Foley, "Civil Society and Social Capital," 124–39.
23. Çarkoğlu and Cenker, "On the Relationship," 751–73. According to author's calculation, the CSO participation rate is 12% in the most recent 2010–2014 wave of WVS.
24. Author's calculation from WVS's 2010–2014 wave.
25. Heper and Keyman, "Double-faced State," 259–77. Also see Heper, "State, Religion, and Pluralism," 38–51.
26. Kalaycıoğlu, "Turkish Democracy," 54–70.
27. Kubicek, "The Earthquake, Civil Society, and Political Change," 762–9.
28. Keyman and İçduygu, "Globalization, Civil Society, and Citizenship," 226.
29. Kadioğlu, "Denationalization of Citizenship?" 283–99; Pusch, "Stepping into the Public Sphere," 475–505; Yeğen, "Turkish Nationalism," 119–51.
30. See, for instance, Çaha, *Women and Civil Society in Turkey*; Paker et al., "Environmental Organizations in Turkey"; Zihnioğlu, *European Union Civil Society Policy and Turkey*.
31. TÜSEV, "Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum," 91.
32. Fisher Onar and Paker, "Toward Cosmopolitan Citizenship?" 375–94. Also see Arat, "From Emancipation to Liberation," 107–23.
33. Kaliber and Tocci, "Civil Society," 191–215.
34. Çarkoğlu and Kalaycıoğlu, *The Rising Tide of Conservatism*.
35. TÜSEV, "Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum," 87–102.
36. Scott, *Social Network Analysis*.
37. Borgatti, Everett and Johnson, *Analyzing Social Networks*, 1.
38. Marsden, "Network Data and Measurement."
39. Ibid., 439.
40. Antalya Governorship, *Antalya*.
41. Çarkoğlu and Cenker, "On the Relationship," 757.
42. This conceptional definition is informed by TÜSEV's 2011 Report on Civil Society in Turkey. TÜSEV, "Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum," 91.
43. One of the women's CSOs did not respond to project's invitation for this second survey with its Chairperson. Yet this organization provided detailed responses to the first survey, which provided data on its political and bureaucratic connections.
44. TÜSEV, "Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum," 90.
45. This information relies on the comparison of the project data and TÜSEV's 2011 Report.
46. Figures 1 and 2 do not take the direction of ties into consideration. In case a given CSO specified a cooperative relation with a fellow CSO, the analysis assumed the presence of cooperation.

47. Wasserman and Faust, *Social Network Analysis*, 178–192.
48. The total number of CSOs in Figure 1 is higher than the total number of CSOs we included in the study; because, some of the women's CSOs indicated fellow women's CSOs or platforms as their cooperative connections at Antalya level.
49. Actor #17, which ranks the highest in Table 3 is Antalya Metropolitan Municipality Women's Assembly. It indicated a procedural connection to all women's CSOs in Antalya, if not an active and a substantial connection. In this vein, it stands as an outlier case.
50. The *k*-plex analysis designates cohesive subgroups in which the actors are adjacent to each other except maximum *k* number of ties. See Wasserman and Faust, *Social Network Analysis*, 263–266. In the present 2-plex analysis, the minimum number of subgroups was set to six.
51. Wasserman and Faust, *Social Network Analysis*, 263–6.
52. These actors are #3, 4, 5, 8, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, and 33.
53. These information rely on survey data.
54. Ibid.
55. Also see Özler and Sarkissian, "Stalemate and Stagnation," 363–84.
56. These parties are Justice and Development Party (JDP), Republican People's Party (RPP) and Nationalist Action Party (NAP).

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