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The EU's combat against gender violence: Europeanisation, Gender Regimes, and Power

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Abstract

ALBA MARÍA VÁZQUEZ LÓPEZ : The EU's combat against gender violence: Europeanisation, Gender Regimes, and Power

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This thesis analyses the role of the European Union (EU) in the combat against gender violence. Its focus is on the power the EU has to implement changes as well as on the role of Gender Regimes in European efforts to tackle gender violence. The thesis seeks to describe the extent of Europeanisation in these European efforts on the basis of interviews with actors inside the European Parliament (EP). The common understanding of the Europeanisation theory is that Europeanisation can have a phasing effect on policy outcomes in EU member states. Therefore, the assumption is that Europeanisation should result in a broad integration process on national policies. On the basis of an analysis of the interviews, the thesis describes the limiting or facilitating factors in the EU's role in combating gender violence as perceived by these actors for change. The research is based on a critical neo-institutionalist perspective; Thus, a top-down approach concerning the direction of implementation of Europeanisation has been adopted: The change process is assumed to start on an EU level and result in changes on the member state level. According to neo-institutionalism, all countries are expected to react in a rather similar way as the process of Europeanisation is the start of the integration process. However, based on the idea of Gender Regimes, path dependencies and different starting conditions in societies with regards to implementing the required policy changes are expected. The thesis details different path dependencies described by the interviewees and shows how they influence the occurrence of Europeanisation together with what is perceived as the lacking power of the EU. The thesis concludes with a suggestion that despite the structural conditions that limit the EU's power, individual actors – such as actors inside the EP -- can make a difference. The thesis describes how Gender Regimes and power partly impact on the EU's role in fighting gender violence. It shows how the interviewees perceive the EU's role as simultaneously limiting and facilitating the institution's fight against gender violence.

Keywords: Europeanisation/ Gender Violence/ Policy implementation/ European Union/ Gender Regimes/ Power

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

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List of Abbreviations used (A-Z)

EC - European Commission

EP - European Parliament

EPP - Group of the European People's Party- Christian Democrats

EU - European Union

FEMM - European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

FGM - Female genital mutilation

FRA - Fundamental Rights Agency

Greens/EFA - The Greens/European Free Alliance

GUE/NGL - Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left

MEPs - Member of the European Parliament

NGOs - Non-Governmental Organisations

OECD - Organisation for economic co-operation and development

RE - Renew Europe Group

REC - Rights Education and Citizenship

1. Introduction

This study addresses gender violence as a silent disease in our society. It is a "global pandemic" (Malgesini et al., 2019, p. 4) which will or has affected one in three women throughout their lives. Within the EU, one third of women experience sexual and/ or physical violence from the age of 15 (Malgesini et al., 2019, p. 17). Gender violence does not just affect the victim but the entirety of society as it has an impact on the general economic and social wellbeing of a nation. This violation of human rights may come in different shapes and forms. The commonly known forms of gender violence are intimate-partner violence as well as trafficking and exploitation of women, which are also referred to as domestic violence. However, there are classifications that go beyond those that are commonly known or talked about, such as sexual violence, harassment, female genital mutilation (FGM), and child marriage (Malgesini et al., 2019, p. 5). As a violation of a person's fundamental rights, gender violence has been discussed on different levels of the society (Malgesini et al., 2019, pp. 4–7).

In this thesis, I am specifically interested in the role of the European Union (EU) in combatting gender violence. Mentionable successes during conferences, and papers influencing the EU stance on gender violence are, for example, the Beijing Women's World Conference 1995 (Krizsán & Roggeband, 2018b, p. 90) and the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, also known as the Istanbul Convention (European Commission, 2019c). The Istanbul Convention is binding in its legal nature, while the Beijing Declaration is not. These influential international pieces of human rights literature influenced the EU to create gender equality policies and a common understanding on how those should be implemented in the member states of the EU (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 223).

Ideas about new hard policies, established recommendations, and soft policies should allow the victims to report the offenders to the judicial systems and prevent the spreading and occurrence of gender violence (Malgesini et al., 2019, p. 8). Improvements should be implemented and an equal accessibility throughout the EU member states should be available, according to the recommendations of the EU. To explore the role of the EU in the combat against gender violence, this thesis turns to the theory of Europeanisation. Arguably, the idea of Europeanisation includes improvement and offers the assumption of the future of the EU as one of the main solutions tackling gender violence issues in all EU member states due to institutional mechanisms. In this view, the EU, as an institution, would have an impact on policies and political implications in the member states. European integration processes trigger transformations on different levels

inside the member states. In initial research conducted in this area, 'Europeanisation' was considered a general answer to broader integration processes and a newly fashionable term to contribute a variety of changes inside Europe (Featherston, 2003, p. 3). This means that Europeanisation, like globalisation, is the entry-point for an analysis of changes in society and policies.

Europeanisation has been considered the leading mechanism for change on different levels such as policy learning, domestic empowerment, and financial conditions (Zartaloudis, 2015, p. 531). This appears to be true in some policy sectors. One example for a broader Europeanisation process would be the Europeanisation of business interests. The EU institutions are significant policy actors, which becomes clear when observing the increasing activity in Brussels as a function of a policy cycle. The focus lays on observing all EU regulations concerning businesses and a day-to-day monitoring in the markets (Coen & Dannreuther, 2003, p. 261).

As the EU tries to improve the lives of victims and possible victims of gender violence, it would be relieving if those structural changes would appear in the gender violence debate, as well. An example for an intervention and change by the EU would be the equal opportunity directives promoting policies which influence both men and women. Terms such as 'gender diversity' are being used for grants, such as the Daphne III Funding Programme, which was developed into the Rights Education and Citizenship (REC) Programme. Grants are currently established and implemented as indirect leverages on states. These grants are awarded if projects support and protect females, especially against acts of violence (European Commission, 2019a). Funds dedicated to the Daphne Objective -REC- were mainly actions grants. The main beneficiaries of the grant are Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), universities, institutional bodies, and research organisations respectively. The main end beneficiaries are girls, unaccompanied migrant children, child victims and missing children (Book et al., 2019, pp. 26–28). Institutions, such as the EP or the European Commission (EC), are capable of change and can interact with actors, processes, and discourses in a gendered and gendering way. Those institutions reproduce subjects which fit a typical gender norm, as such, they perpetuate social patterns and constraints of gender. Lastly, the EU interacts on different institutional levels to enact gender[1] (Kantola, 2011, pp. 1–3). Those assumptions highlight the importance of the EU in combating gender violence as there

[1] Gender can be defined as a societal constructed 'sex' which indicates norms and roles. It does not include biological sex (Stephan & von Braun, 2005, p. 39).

are different forms of power in the institutions that can be used to help the victims and possible victims of gender violence in the member states of the EU.

If the Europeanisation theory can be applied to gender violence, why do opposing voices inside the research area emerge? For example, the amount of gender related violence is different in each member state and the policies which should follow initiatives are different (Börzel & Risse, 2003, p. 62). Georgescu (2014) has expressed a concern about the current development of the Europeanisation process in different European member states. An asymmetrical evolution and a lack of responses or adaptation becomes visible. It was mentioned that the adaptational challenges occur due to historical differences and missing optimal starting conditions of the countries. States which were, for example, situated in the area of the old Soviet Union, post-communist states, face different conditions, even nowadays, when it comes to administration or democratic institutional structures (pp. 136-137). Other studies assume that sociological effects inside society can have an impact on the degree of Europeanisation (Börzel & Risse, 2003, pp. 62–65). As previously mentioned, the expected policy outcome and the reality might not be similar. Policies and soft policies on the European level do not have the same result, as other processes might influence the general Europeanisation effects (Börzel & Risse, 2003, p. 62).

At this stage it is crucial to take actors inside the European Parliament (EP) into account. Their perspective on the combat against gender violence is vital to this study as those actors are holding the main assumptions of a change process and can be the main ally in the fight against gender violence. Their description about the process helps us understand the experienced limiting and facilitating factors in the policy field of gender violence. At this point, an extended theory review followed by an analysis of expert interviews is helpful. This research is aimed to describe the fight against gender violence. The fact that 33% percent of women in the EU are experiencing sexual and/ or physical violence since the age of 15 (Malgesini et al., 2019, p. 17) is alarming and led to the choice of the research topic. Moreover, it would be a mistake to think that Europeanisation offer an instant solution to the problem, although it could play a significant role, for example, through the actors of the EP framing a “cure” for this proverbial societal disease through the power that they exercise.

1.1 Importance and justification of the research task

A common mistake with the concept of Europeanisation is to treat it as an unproblematic and already existing notion. Indeed, it does overlap with common theories

of European regional integration and convergence. Nevertheless, it is a process of a structural change, which can range over history, society, politics, and culture. There are various actors who are being influenced, such as institutions or ideas in society. The phenomenon is related to the concept of a unified Europe and the goals of the EU. Europeanisation is also a matter of degree, as it can overcome borders and even European subnational levels with an impact on neighbouring countries outside the EU. The structural effects do not need to be permanent or irreversible. In current theoretical discussions, Europeanisation approached as an incremental process, which needs different triggers to implement change (Featherston, 2003; Lombardo & Forest, 2015). The theory also suggests that the process is irregular and uneven over time and locations. In the beginning of all research analysing Europeanisation, a general phasing effect was assumed. Europeanisation had a domestic impact while analysing the concept with a top-down perspective on society (Featherston, 2003, p. 4). This means that the EU was understood as a general influencer on national systems and was the beginning of an attempt to describe the emergence of convergence in Europe (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 224).

Reasons for a different impact of the process of Europeanization on a national and subnational level are discussed by different authors, such as the lack of normative power the EP has towards the EU member states (Börzel & Risse, 2003, p. 62). Nowadays, problems in implementing the policies and the lack of a coherent outcome are portrayed (Featherston, 2003, p. 4). At the same time, the problem of implementation varies from the targeted policy outcome. In the context of the present research this means that actors inside the EP can describe their assumptions of the combat against gender violence, which would give us further insights on the facilitating and limiting factors. This is something crucial to take into consideration as the reasons for implementation problems are vast. Especially the agent perspective in the EP are able to portray the role of the EU in the policy change process. The question that this research seeks to answer is: How do actors inside the EP describe the role of the EU in the combat against gender violence and what are problems and solutions they see in the fight?

With this question in mind, the interest in and importance of this thesis is justified. The previously conducted research on Europeanisation is vast and covers different areas from business fields to supranational influences of the EU. Nevertheless, the lack of answers concerning facilitating and limiting factors experienced by agents while describing the role of the EU in combating gender violence is missing and establishes the scientific relevance. Lombardo and Forest (2015) and Lombardo, Meier, and Verloo

(2009) analyse gender policies and Europeanisation. A research gap appears when searching for analysis on power, gender violence, one specific form of gender inequality, and Gender Regimes from the perspective of actors inside the EP. Even though Krizsán and Popa (2012) have analysed the significance of a discursive-sociological approach as an answer for Europeanisation, this thesis further extends the concept with the focus on Gender Regimes and interviews with members of the European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), political advisors and assistants.

The portrayal of gender violence makes obvious the societal relevance of this research. Domestic violence, as a part of gender violence, is a violent act that normally occurs within families or among people who have a close relationship. It can also be called 'intimate-partner violence against women' as the act of violence is over proportionally used by men against women[2]. The amount of gender violence occurring is sometimes not clear as violent acts happen in private spheres (Malgesini et al., 2019). There are studies trying to find the reasons behind the large number of unreported cases, for example, the survey on violence against women of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) from 2014 (Malgesini et al., 2019, p. 16). If put into numbers, domestic violence costs 109 billion euros per year. Those costs include the emotional and physical suffering and after acts of violence or the provision of service, lost economic output, and specialized services such as shelters (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2014, p. 16). Other forms of gender violence, which have already been mentioned, are trafficking and the exploitation of women. This form of violence coexists with poverty and vulnerability of women in, for example, developing countries. In both cases, and especially during trafficking, sexual violence such as forced prostitution is very likely to happen. Harassment, as a form of a forced or tried sexual act on someone, FGM, the mutilation of female genitals for non-medical reasons, and Child Marriage, which normally has an impact on the education and life choices of girls, are also considered parts of gender violence. Each of those violence acts has different numbers in EU member states (Malgesini et al., 2019, pp. 4 –7). It is necessary to point out that violence in private spheres can be conducted by all sexes. It is clearly stated that people of all genders as well as those who are non-binary may suffer from violence[3] (European Commission, 2019b).

[2] Even though gender violence encompasses different forms of violence, gender violence in this thesis is defined as violence in the private sphere or domestic violence caused by men*. Not all forms of gender violence can be analysed as the scale of this research does not allow for it.

[3] The focus of the thesis will be on violence directed towards women, girls, and people identifying as women and are a part of the statistical counting. In this research the victims of violence will be addressed as 'women' or 'girls'. This does not mean that any victims who do not define themselves as the mentioned gender cannot experience violence against women or gender violence.

The focus is not on identifying why gender violence happens as this would exceed the capacity of the paper. The focus is on a descriptive mission, in this case to describe the role of the EU in combating gender violence (Toshkov, 2016, p.31).

As already mentioned, the theory of Europeanisation refers to a change process. To enforce change, the EU uses different forms of influence and power. On top of that, it is important to analyse how powerful the EU is and what ways of power enforcement are being used. Different opinions about the influence and the development of the EU are available in recent literature. The pessimists consider the power of influence, especially in world politics, declining. As an institution, the EU is often referred to as a 'Normative Power Europe' which uses soft powers to influence other countries. Liberals see incentives and sanctions as the main way to enforce change. Therefore, the theoretical concept portrays the power used by the EU and potential influences which are limiting the power (Forsberg, 2013, pp. 26–27).

To take the path dependency of the members states of the EU into account Gender Regimes have been used. Classified as a way to categorise path dependencies of countries in their welfare construct, Gender Regimes can help us identify a male dominated power construct inside a country. The concept of Gender Regimes is an extension of Gøsta Esping-Andersen's (1990) theory on welfare regime models by taking into consideration the female perspective on welfare. Previously, the male role in a family as breadwinner and power holder was the standard. The interesting part on Gender Regimes is that the concept allows a conclusion on the dominant power inside a household, the sphere in which domestic violence happens (Sümer, 2016, p. 19). The relationship between state, family, and market are considered. Gender ratio and the power political constellations take a bigger part in the analysis. Institutions, social policies, and international politics have a relevant gender concept, which is visible in the provision of resources and welfare goods. Political decisions are based on the concept of gender division in tasks and roles and create social policies. Previously, gender and the role of women in families was taken for granted when analysing the welfare state models (Kulawik, 2005, p. 8).

This thesis contributes in finding answers which will aid acting against this gendered form of violence. Later, the justification for Gender Regime categories will be discussed in more detail.

1.2 Gender Regime categories

While working with Gender Regimes, it is important to clarify the regime types of the member states of the EU. Esping-Andersen (1990) categorised all member states into one of the three regimes: social democratic; conservative; liberal welfare states. The interviewees' belonging to a member state and therefore the regime types are important for the research task. The assumption of the EU's role in combating gender violence can be influenced by their own socialisation into a specific path dependency in their home countries. The interviewees which were interviewed for the thesis belong to either the social democratic or conservative welfare state type, and the via-media model, a regime type between the conservative democratic and social democratic category[4]. Therefore, the theory has been used to define the different welfare state types and the research setting has been construed on the basis of that. Esping-Andersen (1990) portrayed Sweden as the country with the highest rates in social democratic welfare state attributes. Other EU member states which belong to the category are Finland and Denmark. The social democratic welfare states have the highest eradication of gender inequalities. In an international context, the Nordic member states of the EU, have a large number of women who have reached a level of equality with men because of the specific design of the social democratic welfare state model. A high rate of political involvement and a high full-time employment rate is also changing the role of women in households. A greater power is given to women due to the change of responsibility in households. Gender equality is considered a widely held idea and a concept embraced in society. Above all, the state's high degree of decommodification was presented as a positive trait and easier access for women to enter the workforce is provided with a general day care system (Sümer, 2016, p. 39). Therefore, a description of a higher degree of adaptation in gender violence policies by the interviewees is assumed. The conservative welfare state model includes for example France and Germany. In a conservative welfare state, the focus is not on the individual. A person is being treated as a part of a family and the family is the main provider of welfare. The state only interferes in individual matters if the family cannot support the individual. This means that the state monitors the family's capacity to service its members and checks if the capacity is exhausted. This also refers to the social rights as they are connected to the status and class a person has. The preservation of the status is the main goal in a conservative regime according to Esping-Andersen (1990). In the Gender Regime approach, the limited capacity for women to decommodify and the focus

[4] Except for Rita.

on family and the traditional family model is analysed. The existing class structure is one of the main elements which should be preserved (Sümer, 2016, p. 21). A rather moderate adoption of policies against gender violence described by the interviewees is assumed. The via-media welfare state faced some changes during the last decades and is represented by the interviewee from Spain. In the mid-seventies, Spain transformed from a dictatorship to a democracy and had a rapid process of modernisation. Spain is a special case in the welfare state model as the welfare state is strongly influenced by political, cultural and socio-economic traits. Current research still struggles to classify Spain in a specific model. Some attempts to label Spain as part of a southern model of welfare failed as attributes declared to this model no longer apply. Spain still has a conservative-familyist character and a huge increase in the labour force participation of women can be considered a relevant social change in recent years (Guillén & León, 2011, p. 3). A partial adoption of policies against gender violence described by the interviewees is expected.

1.3 Research aims, objective, and research question

The overall aim of this research is to analyse how the interviewees perceive of change processes concerning gender violence in the EU. The interviewees might not directly refer to the theory of Europeanisation, thus, themes related to the change process are connected to Europeanisation theory by the author of the thesis as a part of the interpretative task. Especially the role of the EU and the members of the European Parliament (MEPs) during the change process is relevant and describes the setting of the empirical findings. The interview questions are based on the theory and literature review chapter.

For this thesis, Europeanisation is understood as a broad integration process of national policies. The different belonging of the interviewees to Gender Regimes as well as different starting conditions in society with regards to implementing the required changes are important. It is assumed that the interviewees describe the role of the EU in combating gender violence in a different way depending on their belonging to a member state.

As the thesis is based on a critical neo-institutional perspective, a top-down approach has been adopted. According to neo-institutionalism, all countries should react in a similar fashion as the process of Europeanisation is the start of the integration process.

The thesis is a descriptive research, which aims to detect patterns of empirical facts within interviews. This means that for example the reason for Europeanisation to occur or not is not directly the focus of the research. The descriptive mission is to analyse

the limiting and facilitating factors in the EU's role in combating gender violence, as perceived by the interviewees. These views are then related back to the Europeanisation theory, a discursive-sociological approach, Gender Regimes, power and gender equality policies. The views are articulated by the interviewees who are actors in the EP and thus occupy an agent position in the study (cf. Toshkov, 2016, pp. 31–32). The agent position is a key element of the analysis as it allows us to analyse the phenomena from a perspective which impacts the occurrence of Europeanisation and experiences of the theory (Giddens, 1984).

In sum, the research objective is to describe the experienced limiting and facilitating factors in the EU role in the policy field of gender violence. Therefore, the following research question is be the base of the achieved objective:

In what way do actors inside the EP describe the role of the EU in combating gender violence?

The analysis is structured with the help of the theories of Europeanization, Gender Regimes and power.

The research design of the thesis is constructed around a set of assumptions (or hypotheses) that are derived from the theory: H1 Agents' (i.e. in this case, the interviewees') frames can reflect and change normative assumptions about gender violence in discourse with other actors, which can further influence domestic developments. H2. The social democratic, conservative and via-media welfare states will be described by the interviewees in a way expected from their category in the Gender Regimes theory. H3. The interviewees will refer to soft policies as the main changing tool of a Europeanisation process concerning gender violence. H4. Due to the recent developments in the role of the EU in combating gender violence, the interviewees will describe concerns about future improvements in the field.

Most of the terms mentioned in the research question and hypotheses have been operationalised throughout the thesis. Nevertheless, one concept needs to be clarified in order to proceed. It is assumed throughout the analysis that actors inside the EP are part of the structure and independent agents. According to Giddens (1984) the social structure is the outcome of the social action and the medium. Agents interact with structure which gives them a system of norms, but at the same time agents can change their position in the structure. Actors inside the EP are the source of data in the thesis. Their description of a phenomenon needs to be seen in contrast to the definition of Giddens (1984). This

clarifies the reason for the word ‘describe’ in the research question as agents’ own experience has been considered for an analysis of the thesis. The agent position of the interviewees is interesting as it allows us to describe the theory of Europeanisation with agents who are experiencing and facilitating change. Those are experienced by the agents as they describe a valid statement of the phenomenon. Descriptive research relies on inference. This means that empirical evidence is gathered through observing only part of the whole phenomena (Toshkov, 2016, p. 31). In this case, the role of the EU and facilitating and limiting factors of the theory are analysed by using transcripts of ten interviewees. The author of the thesis generalises their experiences and description of the EU’s combat against gender violence or connects their statements to the mentioned theory.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

The thesis has three main parts. Firstly, the theoretical approaches Europeanisation, the concept of Gender Regimes, and power in liberalism will be discussed. The literature review continues with the transformation of the EU gender policies in recent years and a specific focus on policies from the EU targeting gender violence. Different codes were deduced from the literature and used in the method section to create themes for the analysis of the data. Members of the EP and political advisors or assistants were interviewed and questions concerning the lack of responsiveness of the member states, possible influence of Gender Regimes, and the role of the EU in combating gender violence were posed. The questions can be found in appendix A. The selection of interviewees is justified in the methods chapter. The analysis concludes with the description of important factors in the theory concerning gender violence from the perspective of the interviewees. Lastly, recommendations are given for further research, as well as a discussion on research ethics and limitations of the paper and the research question is answered.

2. Europeanisation, Gender Regimes, and Power

This chapter introduces the theoretical orientation of the research. It starts with a general review of the literature on Europeanisation and an extension of Europeanisation by a dynamic element, the discursive-sociological approach. Afterwards, the notion of path dependency which is given with Gender Regimes is discussed. The power the EU needs in order to enforce change is analysed, followed by the transformation of EU gender policies.

The components of the theory chapter relate to each other and show a complete picture of a theoretical approach which is needed to understand the change process, especially as a top-down approach is used. The discursive-sociological approach of Europeanisation allows us to see a responsibility for change of the actors/agents or to be precise of the MEPs. The MEPs are capable of enforcing change by communicating policy recommendations (Lombardo & Forest, 2015). At the same time, actors are influenced by a previous socialisation and the path-dependency of their home countries. This means that Gender Regimes influence the politician's assumptions of gender violence and politician's influence or change member state approaches to tackle gender violence (Krizsán & Roggeband, 2018a, pp. 8–9). The last chapter of the theory part analyses the power the EU is capable of using to implement change. A liberal stance on power is the base of the chapter. This chapter is important as MEPs are not rulers of the EU and can mainly use normative and social power to create change. The power the EU and MEPs have is linked to the discursive-sociological approach as normative and social power are linked to a shared understanding of a norm or the power to shape discourse. The power of the EU can explain why certain steps for a policy change have been taken in a more institutional perspective (Forsberg, 2013, pp. 26–28). Analysing policy changes can be seen from different perspectives and can be influenced in different ways. Nevertheless, the combination of Europeanisation, Gender Regimes, and power give a complete and adequate frame for an analysis in the thesis.

2.1 Europeanisation theory

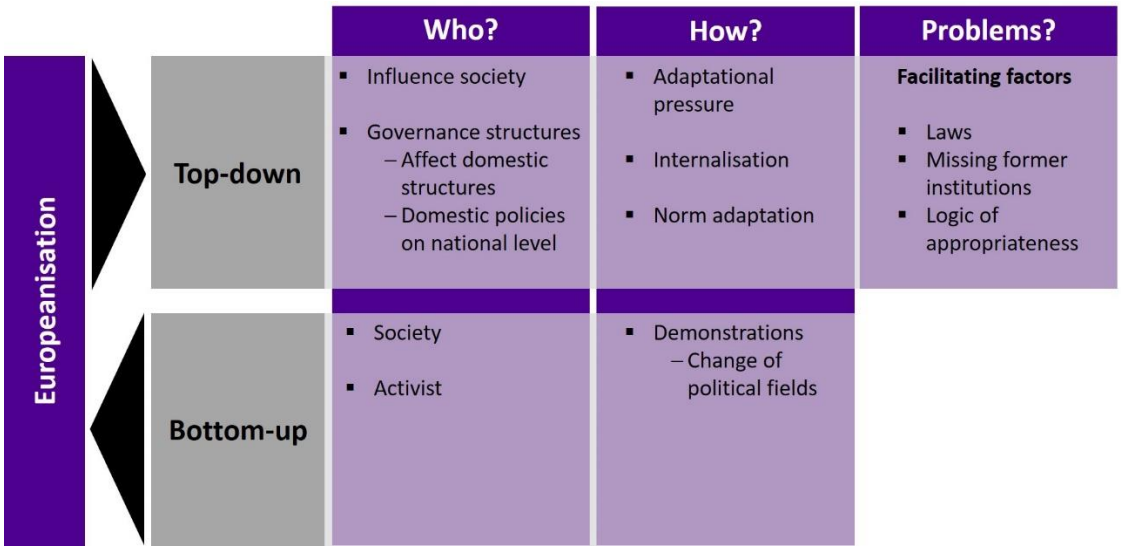
The concept of Europeanisation is quite broad and needs to be specified for the purpose of this research. Reading literature on Europeanisation, it is not always clear whether it is a theory, a concept unifying different theories of European integration and empirical evidence, or a catch-all concept. Nevertheless, Europeanisation studies have had an impact on the current research area, changed the lenses of European integration, and put the focus of scholars on Europe's domestic impact. In this thesis Europeanisation is

defined as a theory composed of different theories to describe an intensified phenomenon. Europeanisation can have a top-down or a bottom-up perspective. The bottom-up perspective mainly focuses on demonstrations and approaches from society to change the political field. The thesis manly discusses a top-down perspective of Europeanisation, in which the EU attempts to influence society. The top-down perspective assumes the adaptive responses of national systems followed by an EU input (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 224).

Europeanisation was developed in the 1990's to analyse the European integration process which exceeds the borders of an integration process (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 224). Europeanisation can be defined and distinguished from integration as the transformation of Europe is a process in which governance structures affect the domestic structure and domestic policies on a national level. Europeanisation can be measured by its impact on domestic structures. The dynamics and outcome of European institutions and their policies can have an impact on social processes inside member states. Europeanisation has a top-down effect on policies in the member states or EU integration on national policies - especially the feedback process between the different levels of national and supranational governance, and EU (Caporaso, 2008).

There are diverse ways to analyse the impact and power the EU has on member states. The pressure that Europeanisation can put on the member states is one possible way of analysing the possibilities the EU has here. Firstly, Europeanisation must be inconvenient for the member states. There must be an incompatibility between the European level and the national level. This misfit will lead to adaptational pressure for the member states as they want to adapt and change in accordance with the European standard (Börzel & Risse, 2003, pp. 62-65). This relates to the need of the EP to create recommendations for a change in gender violence policies. The member states would not implement change without pressure from the EP and this inconvenience exists in the gender violence debate between member states and the EP.

Secondly, facilitating factors need to be able to induce the change. Nevertheless, the misfit does not have to be a sufficient condition for change if other attributes, such as multiple veto points, missing formal institutions which would be capable of exploiting European opportunities, and the 'logic of appropriateness', a sociological concept emphasising the collective understanding inside society for the new given rule constructed for acceptable behaviour, exist (Börzel & Risse, 2003, pp. 62-65). The basic assumptions of Europeanisation are visualised in Graph 1.



Graph 1. Basic perspective on Europeanisation (by the author on the basis of Lombardo & Forest, 2015; Börzel & Risse, 2003; Caporaso, 2008)

To analyse the domestic impact of Europeanisation, it is crucial to see change not as an independent variable which explains policy changes by using EU laws or soft policies. This point can be seen as a development of the basic perspective on Europeanisation. To implement change, it is important to see that change does not happen in a vacuum. Therefore, the process of Europeanisation needs to include outside variables which are influencing the process such as social conditions. At the same time, an institutional discourse helps to extend the boarders of neo-institutionalism. Europeanisation needs to be understood as a dynamic process in which the process of policy coordination and communication is interactive. This plays a role in changing EU attitudes towards policies against gender violence and the assumptions about gender in general. The EU is legitimising the EU norms through the framing and reframing of observed cultural norms (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 224). On the one hand, it is important to see the EU as an agent influenced by society. Especially MEPs are socialised in their home country. The EU as an institution is being influenced by the member states as the EU just exists due to the cooperation of the member states and can be approached by the member states. On the other hand, the MEPs, and with them the EU, want to have an impact on the societies of the member states and use mainly soft power. This point emphasises the stratification model of Anthony Giddens (1984) in the EU.

Lombardo and Forest (2015) extend the classical assumptions of neo-institutionalism with the perspective of institutional discourse and expand the concept into a discursive-sociological approach of Europeanisation. The question of where the discursive-sociological approach of Europeanisation should start arises. Neo-

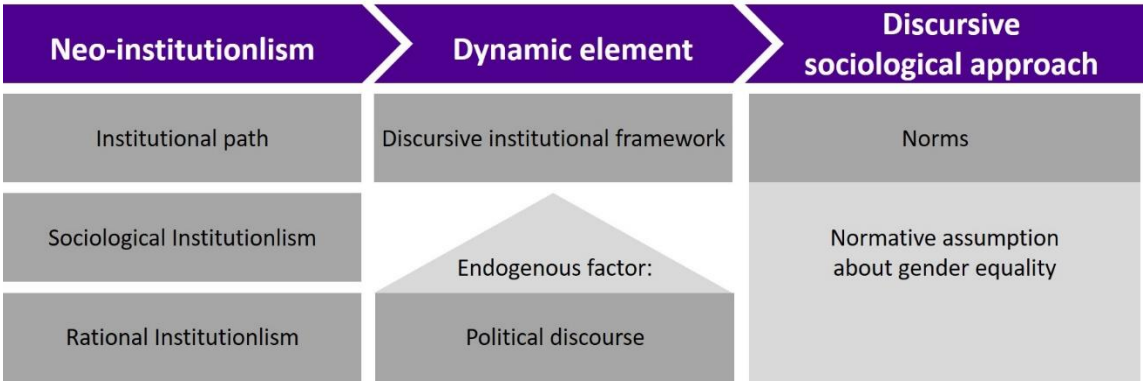
institutionalism can have different perspectives. Some studies emphasise the institutional paths such as historical institutionalism and the institutional legacies that impact the EU. Other researchers focus on actors' dynamics. The rational choice institutionalism would demand the analysis of personal interest, usage of Europe in domestic policies and the power construct in the EU which can be utilised by an individual actor to achieve a certain goal. The same would be considered as an international usage of Europe and a realism perspective on the state and the EU concept. The variation of neo-institutionalism as a sociological institutionalism approach sees different cultural norms, processes of socialization of actors, and the social structures provided by the EU as an institution with assumptions about for example, gender (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 227).

The point is that those neo-institutionalist approaches are in the background of a general analysis of the responsiveness of Europeanisation in this thesis. Nevertheless, they have a static approach to institutionalism as actors' preferences are being taken for granted such as in the rational institutionalism approach or a self-reinforcing path-dependency and influences by historical cultural norms. Europeanisation needs to be extended by a dynamic element which can overcome stiff concepts. The new concept needs to understand the dynamics of change, especially concerning ideas and discursive interactions. The concept of a discursive institutional framework is placed on the centre of the analysis. In this respect, the new framework uses the previously mentioned neo-institutional factors and combines them with an endogenous factor such as a political discourse instead of explaining a lack of responsiveness with an exogenous factor (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 227). Lombardo and Forest justify this choice further by stating "[…] focuses on discourses as key mediating factors for explaining why, how and when political actors internalize EU norms by exchanging ideas and (re)framing their strategic interests within the institutional settings in which they act." (2015, p. 227).

The usage of dynamics of change connected to discursive interactions emphasises the need of analysing actors. A cognitive usage is normally in connection to a strategic or legitimizing use of language. For example, a direct reference of the EU can justify the reforms taken on a national level. This point is particularly interesting in the gender violence debate, as words such as gender or equality have no clear definition or meaning and can be shaped or reshaped by political debates. Gender and equality can have different meanings in different times and places. The changes occur due to actors' intended directions and their strategic framing in political context. Especially important are in respect the norms in a deeper normative assumption about gender equality which are

publicly stated (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, pp. 281–231). The development of the theory into a dynamic approach can be found in Graph 2.

For a further analysis of Europeanisation and the concept of policy change, it is not just the neo-institutional concepts that are important as the way the EU is communicating the policy recommendations, changes, and soft policies are crucial for an adaptation as well.



Graph 2: Extention of neo-institutionalism with a dynamic element (by the author on the basis of Krizsán & Roggeband, 2018a; Lombardo & Forest, 2015)

2.2 Gender discursive-sociological approach

Andrea Krizsán and Conny Roggeband (2018a) analyse gender politics tackling gender violence policy reforms in Central and Eastern Europe. Their basic assumption is that states characterise themselves by their different approaches to policies. They are taking a step back from the mentioned neo-institutional theories and emphasise the need to analyse the domestic context and policy processes instead of historical institutionalism or Gender Regimes (2018a, pp. 1–3).

Theorising the already mentioned dynamic approach, the authors emphasise the role of women's movements in a country and their approach to engaging with state actors. In order to have a clear focus in the thesis, change is depicted from the standpoint of members of the parliament in a complex and interactive process. They are framing soft policies and recommendations by taking their own belonging to a certain political group and country into account. Krizsán and Roggeband (2018a) especially emphasise that female members of the parliament can be critical allies depending on the nation they are from and the quality of involvement by international actors. One focus in literature can be the process of translation and negotiation which are involved in international norms.

This is the case in fields which are defined by soft international norms, which include domestic violence policies (Krizsán & Roggeband, 2018a, p. 11).

The gender discursive-sociological approaches are especially useful for definitions that are established through the framing of policy discourses. It is not surprising that scholars mainly focused on the contestation and meaning of gender policies on a European level. This applies to the hegemonic discourse gender triggers on a European level. Agents' frames can reflect normative assumptions presented in a discourse. This discourse can shape rules of conduct both for men and women. One example would be same-sex partnership rights. The EU has no binding legislation. Nevertheless, actors framed ideas in conversations and discourse and promoted same-sex partnership rights especially as an EU-driven issue. Member states as part of Europe felt the need for 'Europeanness' and changed their position on the matter (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 230).

A sociological dimension is added as the actors are understood as interacting with other change makers, networks, institutions, civil actors and by taking the possible diffusion of cultural norms by the EU. The diffusion can be implemented with the use of soft and hard policies (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 232). Lombardo and Forest (2015) summarise:

> Overall, a discursive–sociological approach that draws on the experience of gender and politics studies can contribute to improve the understanding of policy change in Europe by addressing Europeanization questions on the agenda that have to do with divergent outcomes, multiple framings of the meaning of EU discourses, including their normativity, use and contestation, considering the role of actors and their interactions, and taking into account both hard and soft EU measures that can influence domestic developments. (pp. 232–233)

It is important to recapitulate how Europeanisation is relevant for the thesis. Alongside to Gender Regimes, Europeanisation is the main concept and for the matter of the thesis I agree on its actual existence. The question would be how actors inside the EP perceive the existence of Europeanisation and possible limiting and facilitating factors. Therefore, understanding the complete theory of Europeanisation and the new dynamic approach of discursive-sociological approach is a key part of the thesis. The actors are the dynamic element inside the research and are themselves a part of the theory as they belong to the discursive-sociological approach.

2.3 Gender Regimes

It is crucial to keep a regime perspective in mind. It can provide answers on the impact of policies. Policies evolve and new forms are observed after policy enactment. Political and institutional forces can be considered as mentioned by Krizsán & Roggeband (2018a). They exemplify that actors can act intentional and unintentional when they consider change. With unintentional frames and norms, factors such as the deep culture or institutions have an impact on the actor. This will be interesting later when analysing Gender Regimes (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 231). Krizsán & Roggeband (2018a, pp. 8–9) discussed the need of keeping the regime type of a country in mind when analysing policies and policy evolvement. The previous theoretical approach seems controversial in giving a regime theory such a big space. For example, historical institutionalism has been labelled as inflexible and undynamic in an actor's perspective. Nevertheless, the approach of Gender Regimes was chosen in this research to emphasise the focus on a top-down perspective. In this thesis Gender Regimes are used to understand the underlying path dependency. The last chapter of this section explains why Gender Regimes remain relevant.

2.3.1 Welfare state theory

According to Esping-Andersen (1990) one of the main founders of welfare state theory, countries' origins are created by different historical forces. This emphasises the need to analyse historical institutionalism. A development of the welfare state model, which is frequently used in the field of Gender studies, is called Gender Regimes and was developed by taking critique towards Esping-Anderson's theory into account. This leads to the necessity to understand the roots of Gender Regimes before discussing the actual theory and the varieties of the phenomena. Gender Regimes are a concept which is based on the division of welfare regimes or welfare types. The thought of implementing welfare can be placed around 1880 in some parts of Europe. The welfare state can be defined as the active constructer of rules, security, and directions of economic and social structures, supporting social policies by using resources. The role of a social and supportive state which considers the problems of the working class was new to leaders or monarchs during this time. Considerations of welfare support appeared in different regions and the aim of welfare was defined with different targets (Halwachs, 2010, pp. 20–21).

Most of the states tried to keep the ruling system intact or tried to stabilise the economy by securing an intact working-class. For example, one prominent conservative

school of thought promoted the ‘monarchical welfare state’. A system that guaranteed social welfare, loyalty to the monarch, class harmony and productivity. The role of the authoritarian state would have been the harmonizer of individuals and the community by using discipline (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 23). By studying welfare systems of countries, a perspective on the macro-level needs to be used. A macro-level analysis traces the output of an interaction on a wider level such as interactions between states or societies. The individual law or a country is seen as a part of the broader system or analysis. Esping-Andersen brings up the example of analysing pension. It is important not to concentrate on the money spent on pensions, pensions per se, or the social program of a state. For a general research, the focus should be on the special public-private sector mix in which different nations arrive. This means that pensions are a part of the welfare distribution of a country, nevertheless, the way in which the state established a mix between the private and public sector is important. Welfare states are based on limiting and enabling benefits of workers and sometimes limiting the ability of the economy. The welfare state identity is based on commodification/ de-commodification, public-private nexus, and social stratification (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 13–16).

In order to understand Esping-Andersen, the need of establishing analysable ‘regimes’ in the field of welfare states for a broader analysis is important. Talking about regimes it is necessary to make clear that the countries in one system have features of the same relation between economy and state which are systematically interwoven in a complex organisational and legal system (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 14). To accomplish his approach, Esping-Andersen compared 18 countries and identified three diverse regime-types. He showed that welfare states are not of one type, some of them have a similar logic of stratification, organisation, and social integration (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 14–15). In his book Esping-Andersen distinguished between liberal, Corporatist-Statist or conservative, and social democratic welfare states with specific attributes (Esping-Andersen, 1990).

To understand his categories, it is important to define them. Furthermore, the categories will be extended with the notion of gender and the perspective on family. Esping-Andersen used the concept of commodification. Commodification or commodities were an important part of Karl Marx’s analysis of the class development (Marx, 1990, pp. 150-151). The accumulation process forced independent producers of goods into being propertyless wage-earners dependent on the bourgeoisie. For Marx, commodification was equal to alienation (Marx, 1990, pp. 150–151). Commodification means that humans, ideas, goods, animals, and other things transform into economically

used goods or objects of trade to generate profit. They belong to a capitalistic view and maximising system. It strengthens capitalist accumulation and simultaneously weakens the worker. A liberal system would argue that it is everyone's decision for whom, when, and where they work. Nevertheless, the freedom to choose is fictitious because workers, unlike actual objects, cannot withhold themselves without thinking about alternative ways of subsistence. Workers, in this part, are on the lowest level of influence. Any change such as the change of business cycle can destroy their possibility to survive (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 63–66). By having the status of commodities, workers are redundant, replaceable, and automised. At this point, de-commodification means security and individual welfare. Abstractly speaking, de-commodification allows the worker to be considered as a human being who escaped a capitalistic system and it allows them not to be a commodity. A worker does not need to provide work force in order to be a functioning part of society. Esping-Andersen emphasises that de-commodification is not equal to the eradication of labour as commodity. By considering de-commodification, a state does not need to abolish the capitalistic system. De-commodification allows individuals and families to live independently from market participation and maintain a socially acceptable standard. In a broader sense, de-commodification could be understood as de-proletarianization (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 63–67). By analysing unemployment, sickness benefits, and pensions, he determined three categories of welfare states. First, the liberal welfare state, also referred to as the Anglo-Saxon nations, built entitlements by measuring the means- or income-test without extending citizen rights. The de-commodification right in conservative regimes is characterised by work performance. Rights are connected to a labour-market attachment and financial contributions. In this case, the degree at which a state is a conservative welfare state depends on the relationship between benefits and prior performance. The social democratic system incorporates universal rights without taking the degree of a 'need' for the benefits or work performance into account. A person is eligible if he or she is a citizen or a long-time resident (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 84–95).

Stratification means the process to avoid or influence social stratification in society. In previous research, welfare states were seen as naturally tackling unequal treatment of citizens. The state constructs an egalitarian society on its own. Esping-Andersen argues that states promote a stratification system by different social policies. A state can intervene and correct inequality, but simultaneously promotes a certain system of stratification. One example of an interference into the class system was Bismarck's class politics. He considered divisions among workers and their wages by legislating

programs and support for different status and class groups. Those formed unique rights and privileges emphasising the individual and family. Another motive was to bind those groups to the existing monarchy. A newer concept to tackle the stratification was Adenauer's 1957 pension-reform in Germany. He moved the old pension system from a contribution- to an earnings-graduated benefit system without changing the status-distinctiveness framework (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 43–48). To classify a country by analysing the degree of stratification, Esping-Andersen defined a conservative regime in being captured via etatism and corporatism; a socialist regime its degree of universalism, and a liberal regime through private health and pensions combined with social assistance (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 128).

Esping-Andersen's last variable was the public-private nexus in countries. He refers to the relative roles of the state and the market in providing welfare. He especially focuses on the relation between them which creates structural properties of welfare. Esping-Andersen found out that markets cocreate states and states cocreate markets. An interaction is given. For creating pensions, the state needs to use his power to create a private market. In turn, the market shapes the function of the state by limits and nature. It is interesting to see what the state defines as a public need or a factor which can be solved and influenced by the private sector or markets. This means that regime types can be compared by the connection of responsibilities. This includes the capacity of the market as the market allows a shift in responsibility. It is important to analyse which essential human needs are addressed and solved by the private versus the public sector. This connection of a private and public sector provides the structural content of social rights, the de-commodification and stratification. To see how far the welfare state interferes with the lives of the citizens shows how far the market can freely regulate social rights and helps identifying the welfare state. This includes the private initiative which needs to exist in order to keep society working. Esping-Andersen analysed which human needs are relegated to public or private responsibility (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 109–113). In social democratic welfare states, the dominant welfare provider is the state as the role of the state was defined as the main actor to implement welfare and a change in society. The state is heavily involved in work concerning families and the market. There is a clear shift in state responsibility. The state tries to recognise the needs of the family and to respond to them with political resources (Orloff, 1993, pp. 312–313). The classical liberal theory emphasises the separation of the labour market from societal institutions and the state. This also applies to the equality-efficiency trade-off. Liberal welfare states follow, to a certain degree, a laissez-faire principle to a liberal political economist approach which

includes the argument that equality impairs economic performance. The liberal welfare system relies on the provision of welfare from the market or a company-based welfare (Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 233–234). The conservative regime is pro-active and keeps hold of a large number of welfare activities which crowded out the market. At this point, the conservative states seem to have the same attributes as the social democratic states. In both regimes, pension schemes for rich workers have been forestalled by the state to cover all population strata (Orloff, 1993, p. 310).

To understand Esping-Andersen's (1990) three worlds, it is important to elaborate on how states are classified and what variables to classify them with. For the research design, Gender Regimes are a key factor of a misfit in adaptation and can lead us to a greater understanding as well as an answer of the research question. Furthermore, Gender Regimes can be considered a critique to the established theory of welfare states. The research design depends on the possibility to categorise the member states into different Gender Regimes. This can already be possible by defining new women inclusive variables. Gender violence is related to Gender Regimes as the power construct inside families can be analysed. Another interesting fact is how the state role can be defined concerning an interference in the family model and what role women have in families.

2.3.2 Critique and development

Various critiques came up after releasing the categoric system. First, the claim to create an extensive picture of welfare state typologies is wrong as new forms of welfare states and unspecific labelling show the variety of welfare states which are not categorised correctly. Second, the lack of an understanding for gender plays an important part, especially when creating Gender Regimes. Esping-Andersen took gender constructs in society as a given standard. Three main levels were incorporated without further questioning the given standards they implement in society and which gender division they promote. The general understanding of politics, institutions, and social policies pass on a relevant gendered view of political decision making and, above all, create new social policies (Kulawik, 2005, pp. 7–8). Literature on Gender Regimes fills an important gap in the field. It pictures the importance of gender relations to social provision constructed by the state (Orloff, 1993, p. 303).

The explanation of new categoric systems contains one of the most popular theories and concepts concerning Gender Regimes. Of course, other authors contributed to the study of Gender Regimes and established a new notion of the concept. Nevertheless, the theory and explanation created by Ann Shola Orloff (1993) gives a

fitting framework for the thesis. She applied mainstream variables and theories, mainly those of Esping-Andersen, to an analysis of welfare states which focuses on gender (Sainsbury, 1994b, p. 150). She recognised the power of the state to regulate gender relations in different spheres, which are polity, market, family, and less relevant areas. The basic assumption is that public social provision affects the lives of workers but also women's material situation. It can shape gender relationships, the participation in society, and formation and dynamics of identities and interests. The state can decide what political resources are distributed to women and other subordinated groups in our society. The state can enforce and reproduce male dominance. It is important that Orloff emphasises the gendered characters of the welfare state and the importance of the agency of women because the mainstream definition of welfare states can be labelled as genderblind by understanding citizenship, economy, and class as constructs surviving without reproduction work. Orloff established a theoretical construct around Gender Regimes by pointing out the missing research in a comparative analysis of states concerning their understanding of women (Orloff, 1993, pp. 303–304). She takes a more accurate view on countries to extract their actual behaviour towards women. Orloff focused on the power resources the state can provide to women. She acknowledges Esping-Andersen's work as a useful tool for an analytic coherence to diverse comparative research and a useful clustering of states which focuses on social provision. Nevertheless, they lack attention to gender (Orloff, 1993, pp. 309–310).

As already discussed, the public-private nexus or the state-market relations show who distributes welfare and under what circumstances. In different countries human needs are satisfied by social policies instead of the market (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 41). Social provision can be distributed to the family role (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 21). One of the main critiques is the missing understanding of the family as an equally as important provider of welfare. The whole category should not be named State-Market relations as State, Market, and Family relations would fit the actual situation of welfare provider. In Esping-Andersen categoric system, families are ignored as private providers of welfare goods. The nuclear family consists of a woman and a man with one or more children. In a conservative scenario, the husband is ascribed the role of the family's provider. The wife needs to do unpaid work in the home sphere. Instead of counting female reproduction work as provision of welfare, Esping-Andersen includes welfare solely when it occurs through state or market activities. Additionally, sexual division of labour inside families, markets, and states goes unnoticed. By restructuring and renaming the category, the important work of women for social welfare can be acknowledged and

the recognition of gender patterns established. The countries should thus not be defined by looking at the shifting responsibility for welfare from the market to the state and the state to the market. Instead, shifting the responsibility of unpaid work to the partner or the family responsibility for welfare to the state should be the focus (Orloff, 1993, pp. 313–314).

Esping-Andersen (1990) generally recognised the capability of women to enter the paid labour market. Nevertheless, he does not reflect on the way in which care is provided and therefore ignores female employment patterns. He does not analyse the specific style of pattern in different countries. For example, women in Germany are pressured into housewifery by specific structures such as institutional structures and the taxation system. Esping-Andersen reproduces analytical inadequacies. First, he neglected the relations inside a family and power constructs. Second, he does not incorporate any feminist scholars or gender theories, which were established during his writing process. He sees women as active creators of their reality (Orloff, 1993, pp. 313–314). As if women can openly choose between paid work in their household and unpaid labour. He sees paid work as something openly available to everyone if states support entering the labour market. He ignores the compulsory altruism women are forced into. The sexual division of labour in our society forces women into performing most domestic work, nonetheless, the state provides different amounts of welfare goods to embrace equality between the sexes. It is questionable if western welfare states actually want to relocate the division of unpaid labour as they depend on this division of care for the continuation of their own system. The division of labour is also a display of the power construct outside the family as the market can implement different needs than the state, if it is the provider of welfare. This applies to the sphere within the family as well. By forcing women into the provision of unpaid work, men can gain control over women's bodies and decisions. This describes the power imbalance as the resources to monetise labour lay completely in control of the one in power. It does not mean that women are completely powerless. However, it does mean that women cannot decide freely on their provision of labour. This power construct is a main part of social policy and therefore Gender Regimes. To eliminate the power construct, the burden to provide unpaid labour needs to be shifted from the family to the state and from the market to the state (Orloff, 1993, pp. 313–314). The responsibility for unpaid labour also has an impact on the power construct between the sexes, which can lead to the thought of recognising unpaid care burden as a main reason for violence in families.

The stratification dimension was criticised as it analyses the class hierarchies established by state social provision but ignores gender hierarchies. The state can create gender differences with its allocation of benefits. It creates disproportional disadvantages for women and embraces the inferior status. For example, due to work-related inequalities the state gives privileges to full-time paid workers instead of unpaid fulltime, part-time, and care workers. Additionally, the welfare system reinforces the sexual division of labour as women are pushed into unpaid work. This happens due to the fulfilment of men's claims which are based on paid work (Orloff, 1993, pp. 314–316). Esping-Andersen (1990) elucidates the work-based claims and high benefits a person gets in certain country. Of course, this analysis is important as it can divide the states into certain groups. Nevertheless, the role and opportunities of women are not being taken into consideration, even though it would be very important as women are the majority of clients in most social welfare programmes if unemployment insurance is omitted. The man is the right bearer in the family as rights and treatments are depending on the male breadwinner model. Another point would be the different treatment of social insurances and social assistance. The states give priority to the social insurance debates and financial support, which, once again, mainly considers male breadwinner families. Social assistance is usually applied by women who maintain a family and need to claim status as mothers and carers. In a certain number of countries, benefit claims on a paid work basis receive a higher funding than public services that mainly women depend on (Orloff, 1993, pp. 315–317). The main problem at Esping-Andersen's category is the misunderstanding of women as a homogeneous group that should not be treated as a general unspecific part in each society. The welfare state gives women a role and right to be in a certain status. The focus needs to be on the specification of women as mothers, wives, or individuals. It is not the norm to receive welfare on the basis of citizenship. The problem of acknowledging the correct status of women is grounded on the struggle to also see certain types of unpaid work as legitimate work and a basis for welfare rights. There is no clear way and structure on how to prove unpaid work. For example, tax systems have a blind spot when it is about domestic responsibility or trade division of labour. This difference of status has a political significance as it reinforces family models and power constructs in families (Orloff, 1993, pp. 314–317).

The decommodification category is the last category which was criticised. To fit this part into the theory of Gender Regimes Orloff questions the actual rights a citizen has in a country to decommodify (Orloff, 1993, p. 311). As already explained, decommodification should be the variable which measures how depended a human is on

paid labour and welfare substitutes. The main problem is that women are not capable of commodifying in the first place. To actually profit from decommodification, a person needs to commodify first. Someone who has never been a proper part of commodification cannot benefit from its counterpart. This means that decommodification can just partially be applied to the lives of women. Welfare states should be compared by analysing the actual work realities and life circumstances of women. Women need to get access to commodification in order to gain independence from the market and family. The concept of decommodification needs to be changed into the analysis of independence from members of the family as the breadwinner model and the income difference inside a family reflect an economical dependence (Gornick, 1999, p. 210). Orloff (1993) extends the critique on Esping-Andersen's category of state social provision. She claims that his concept is inadequate for all workers. Decommodification is a concept which is connected to gender relations and needs to be extended with the responsibility of the state to ensure that women can balance care or unpaid labour at home in combination with paid labour. This includes the possibility for them to enter paid labour. The state needs to influence institutions which are responsible for a balanced lifestyle. Unpaid work provided by women gives men greater power as this kind of work enhances male workers' capacity. The problem is, once again, a misleading understanding of the starting condition. Women do not have the possibly to choose between unpaid or paid work nor can they ignore their domestic responsibility. In Esping-Andersen's category women do not have that responsibility or their responsibility disappears from the analysis after entering paid labour. They become indistinguishable even though their realities are different. Women are not freed from work per se if they decommodify themselves. Decommodification, which can help men to live an independent life, can cause problems for women depending on how the systems supports the rest of unpaid work they need to do. Analysing the access to services supporting unpaid care work and the social organization is the best way to change the category into a gender inclusive variable. Analysing them needs to be done under the condition if those services and the reality of social organisation are tied to citizenship or paid labour force participation, family status, material, money, or financial need (Orloff, 1993, pp. 317–318).

2.3.3 New Categories

Orloff (1993) created two new categories to identify the reality of women in different welfare states and accomplished the theory of Gender Regimes with them. Of course, other authors such as Diane Sainsbury (1994a) analysed the feminist analysis of

welfare states and the resulting new theory in a different way and include another concept. For example, Sainsbury (1994b, p. 150) lays a bigger focus on the different family provision such as the male breadwinner concept and criticises Orloff for her repetition of a mainstream established theory with an addition to gender. Nevertheless, the categories extended by Orloff fit to the upcoming description of the countries. Additionally, the breadwinner family model has been criticised as the male breadwinner norm was labelled as the single decisive factor for women's disadvantages. Variables such as gendered socio-economic inequalities have not been treated as an independent and developed way of women's subordination (Sundström, 2003, p. 23).

The first additional category is called "Access to paid work" (Orloff, 1993, p. 318). Commodification for women is the first step to emancipation. Unlike some men, women intend paid work as a part of independence and resistance in marriage. The power relations in marriages are often based on economic dependence. By acknowledging their right to decommodify, women gain independence. The state can give access to paid work and implement as well as maintain mechanisms that ensure jobs. Examples for state support would be free day-care or tax incentives. Indeed, the access to paid work also means dependence on employers or the market. However, Marx already explained the step of becoming a proletarian as the main factor to gain emancipation as their status as workers. This can also lead to decommodification later. The formerly expressed wish to have access to decommodification was based on a gender division of labour and constructed around the help for working-class men to stay as the family provider (Orloff, 1993, pp. 318–319).

"The Capacity to Form and Maintain an Autonomous Household" (Orloff, 1993, p. 319) is the last category Orloff established to gain adequate categories for Gender Regimes. If an individual does care work or domestic work, even next to secondary work, it affects the income distribution within the family. In a nuclear family model, the husband shares his income to protect the other parts of the family. If the nuclear family model does not work out or the main earner of the family is a single mother, a higher risk of poverty can be deducted. This means that the dependency women are facing is a significant base for men's power advantage in families and supports the patriarchal structures. The category of decommodification needs a new parallel category which analyses the pure autonomy without any dependence. The difference between the criticised decommodification category and the new one is the generic aspect. Autonomy is the main step to understand the dependent structures women live in. To grow individualisation, women need resources. Programmes which establish independency need to be analysed.

Of course, no human being is completely autonomous as everyone is somehow connected to interdependencies. However, different actors, such as the state or private institutions, can change the vulnerable position of someone. One way to do so would be to secure income for women who work fulltime in the domestic unpaid work. This would reduce the caring burden. This can help women decide whether they want to stay in or enter a marriage because of their vulnerable position. Power relations can be altered and Orloff explicitly acknowledges states' efforts, in some countries, to establish a leverage within marriage, which would have an impact on gender violence within families. Some of the programmes guaranteeing independence for women are more of a compensation for a failed family standard and just help women to survive the time after the end of the relationship. Other critique came up and tackled the entire attempt to pay women for unpaid domestic and care work. The question is if paying women to stay home can be the solution? The other way would be to increase work possibilities and to shift the responsibility for domestic work. Women should be able enter paid labour full-time without feeling obliged to be in charge of domestic work. Equal rights can create conditions enabling men and women to be independent. Policies which support women's access to employment, establish equal opportunities and increase women's wages. Especially the professions dominated by women are normally underpaid and can barely provide the necessary income for an independent life. Another way to increase the autonomy of women would be political power. Social rights to face oppression can just be realised with women's political participation and power. Social programmes can merely reflect the true reality and concerns if women are a part of policymaking. If women are not a part of policymaking, their concerns are ignored or addressed in an incorrect way (Orloff, 1993, pp. 319–322).

2.3.4 The social democrats

In the Nordic social democratic regime emphasising the core values of individualism, egalitarianism, and decommodification is important. The state-market-family relation shows that the state has a strong political commitment to the idea of welfare provision. At the stratification category, the state promotes a dual earner household or dual breadwinner model and the consideration of women as individuals. This becomes visible with the example of regulations in Sweden such as an individual taxation system with high and marginal tax rates. Additionally, the parental leave system gives every citizen the right to temporarily receive compensation whilst enjoying a reduction of working time, which strengthens the role of women as breadwinners in the

family. This shows possibilities for women to decommodify and access to services dedicated to unpaid care work as well. Women's status is not linked to their participation in the labour force and considers citizenship rights as the main factor. The last category measuring the autonomy of women emphasises that women receive income compensation for reduced hours while working part-time (Anxo et al., 2007, pp. 2–3). The domestic responsibly for care work shifts to men in the family construct with laws such as parental allowance, a gender-equality bonus, or tax benefits for couples who share care work (Alsarve et al., 2016, p. 80). The right to" […] Form and Maintain an Autonomous Household" (Orloff, 1993, p. 319) is being addressed through the high participation of women in the political process and governmental bodies, labour market organisations, and other agency (Anxo et al., 2007, pp. 2–3). Another point would be a compulsory insurance system which treats women as individuals and not members of families. This allows them to live independently from the family (Sainsbury, 1994b, p. 162).

The right to commodify shows some weaknesses in the perfect system as some gender differences occur. A large share of female employees works in the public sector, which is one main field dominated by women. This leads to the question why women still face boundaries in choosing any kind of occupation and why so called 'secure' jobs are still popular? Another weakness of the right to commodify would be the number of women working part-time. The access to paid work seems limited as women still prefer to work part-time and take care of unpaid domestic work. It seems like the initiative of the state provokes a double burden on women (Anxo et al., 2007, pp. 2–3). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows in the share of part-time employment a total of 11.2% of women and 5.3% of men in the age group 25-54 in the year 2018, which means a decrease in the last years. While comparing those numbers to 2010 with 13.4% of women and 5.0% of men with the same age range in part-time work, the statement of a decrease of part-time working women can be supported. Additionally, the number is below the OECD average. Part-time work is defined as a total number of 30 hours or less a week of paid work (Organisation for economic co-operation and development, 2020). It would be interesting to investigate why there is a small but existing difference between the two sexes. The question of gender differences, especially when it comes to full-time work opportunities for women, in the country still exist.

2.3.5 The conservative welfare regime

The conservative welfare system relies on the family for welfare provision. For instance, female labour force in Germany, the stereotypical conservative welfare state,

has historically been low. The country mainly uses the family to establish a functioning welfare state. According to Birgit Pfau-Effinger (2005, p. 2), the human individual is always considered as a part of a family who is accountable for the activities inside the family. This means that the family acts as the main producer of care work. Looking at the State-Market-Family relations, welfare concerning reproduction work is done by women in families (Pfau-Effinger, 2005. p. 2).

In Germany most care work is performed by the family with residual social assistance from the state depending on family failure. The mother contains the role to help the family in keeping up a secure and economic wellbeing, including adult children or elderly. For the stratification category, this means that full-time work has advantages to part-time or unpaid work. Legal obligations for care work in families exist and the amount of support such as day care services is limited. Familisms are proactively supported through for example joined taxation for married couples *Ehegattensplitting*. Suggested reforms such as care vouchers or family benefits fit the policy line of re-feminisation. This means that the category of access to paid work is not available to all members of the society. Decommodification such as work reliefs are available for citizens who exit paid labour. Indeed, parental leave support exists, but does not have the same impact as the Swedish support systems when entering paid labour is concerned (Sundström, 2003, p. 27).

France has been classified as an EU member state with a moderate breadwinner model. Historically, protecting the family was one of the most important tasks of the French welfare state. Nowadays, the conservative welfare regime lies between the weak and the strong breadwinner model (Kulawik, 2005, pp. 8–9). Welfare provision relies on the contribution to the labour market which is the reason for a classification into a conservative welfare regime (Beckmann, 2008, pp. 122–123).

New literature sees a shift in different conservative welfare regimes (Beckmann, 2008; Henninger & Von Wahl, 2018). France faces new approaches due to the reconsideration of the importance of marriage. Nowadays, a family in France is considered as such if there is a parent/parents and a child, regardless of the marital status. Additionally, the state tries to give incentives for an increase in fertility rates, with public childcare. A clear indicator for social democratic welfare state policies (Beckmann, 2008, p. 123). Another example would be the shift of Germany towards a social democratic welfare regime. Especially policy reforms by the grand coalition have opened the debate about equal opportunities and individualism. A modernisation and a de-ideologisation of family policy changed the conservative model to an optional familiarism. Implemented

reforms worth mentioning are the family policy reforms, which implemented new parental benefits for parents with the goal of reconciliation of care and paid work. This also applies to a longer support for part-time workers and initiatives for both couples to enter the workforce. This reform switches the responsibility for unpaid care work partly to the state and has an influence on the state-market-family relations (Henninger & Von Wahl, 2018, pp. 471–474). Additionally, the state recognised the burden of childcare for women and tried to give initiatives for men to stay at home with the child for a certain amount of time. For example, payment in the last two months of parental leave solely applies if both parents stay at home for a certain amount of time. With work initiatives the state tries to change the access to paid work for women into a more egalitarian society. To change the opportunities in the labour market, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) proposed ideas and made a sustained effort to emphasise equal chances for men and women. A quota for women in different fields, such as management positions, and ideas for a securitisation of equal pay were made. Even though, the reforms had some backlashes as, for example, a personal voluntary target for a quota was openly not accepted by the companies, those efforts can be counted as step towards a social democratic welfare state with a dual earner model. The state tries to support public childcare, care-incentives for fathers, and parental allowance for short periods of parental leave (Henninger & Von Wahl, 2018, pp. 471–474). Unfortunately, pre-existing laws such as the joined taxation for married couples have not changed and promote a male-breadwinner concept (Henninger & Von Wahl, 2018, p. 474). In France the focus on paid labour still exists for an eligibility of welfare resources (Beckmann, 2008, pp. 122–123). The conservative welfare regime can be portrayed with a strong tendency of change.

2.3.6 'Via media' welfare state

The 'via-media' model, in this case Spain, can be seen as an exceptional case, but a really interesting one for this thesis as the welfare state is strongly influenced by socio-economic, cultural, and political traits. Additionally, the welfare state faced an array of changes during the last decades, which means that a clear classification might be challenging. Some researchers retried to classify Spain as a conservative-familyist welfare state. Those traits do not apply to Spain anymore as the country faced a huge modification process in recent years. Nevertheless, since the economic crisis of 2008, the welfare regime turned back to some conservative traits (Guillén & León, 2011, p. 3). The status of women in the right-wing authoritarian country, which was led by the dictator Francisco Franco, who died 1975, was based on values and norms of the Catholic Church.

The welfare state aimed to protect the male-breadwinner model in which women had no independence or authority. Their role was to be a mother and housewife serving men. Motherhood was the only role they should aim for. This applies to all welfare services as well as policies concerning women. After Franco's death, the fast transition of Spain into a gender egalitarian country can also be measured with the Gender Equality Index, which was released by the European Institute for Gender Equality in 2013. Spain performed better a couple of countries of the old EU including Germany and Austria (Bustelo, 2016, p. 108–110). Especially, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero had a long-lasting impact on equality policies in 2004. Just to name some of them, during his legislation the gender violence law was approved, as well as the so-called dependency law that offers services to people who need support because of illnesses, old age, or disability (Bustelo, 2016, p. 110–111).

The progress turned the responsibility for welfare to a more public one. Indeed, women mostly perform care work, but increasingly contribute to the household income and their political representation in the parliament and politics have stabilised (Lombardo, 2017, pp. 20–21). The main traits Spain shows of a social democratic regime are the development in education and medical management as they have become universal rights. The social security system has been developed and care for citizens such as dependents has become a legal obligation for the state. Still, the Spanish welfare state shows some major traits of a conservative-familialist country. The state-market-family relations are divided between a responsibility of the state and the families. The social security can be clearly classified as a conservative trait and the minimum income as a liberal one. The growth in the labour market was based on a high level of inequality. For example, great social protection is provided for paid work and women's unpaid work is about 93 per cent, immensely reliant on female reproduction work. This means that the decommodification category gives less access to women as work life balance is not intact and decommodification rights not completely applicable. Access to paid work exists as more women enter the work force, but the services to support unpaid labour are limited (Lombardo, 2017, pp. 22–23). One example would be the unequal parental leave system:

> While maternity leave regulations grant mothers six mandatory and non-transferable weeks (ten can be transferred to the father but there are no incentives for it, so traditional gender norms tend to prevent fathers from taking the leave), fathers enjoy only two weeks of paternity leave. This 'female caregiver model'

> and ‘male breadwinner model’ of social policies, together with Spain’s inadequate provision of welfare services, make it difficult for women to be freed from the work of care and engage in paid work. (Lombardo, 2017, p. 23)

Concerning the dependency of women and the possibility to maintain an independent life, women in Spain have a hard time remaining independent. Spain is a welfare state with rights based on paid labour, social benefits are not provided for married women who are not in a paid labour position. Lombardo (2017) verbalises a step into a more conservative direction after the financial crisis as budget cuts are affecting policy areas which aimed to protect the status of women. The description of the Spanish welfare state can be seen as a definition for the ‘via-media’ welfare state model.

2.3.7 Relevance of Gender Regimes

Chapter 1.1 explains the relevance of the concept of Europeanisation and the necessity of a thesis concerning this topic in general. One could argue that the theory of Europeanisation and the gender discursive-sociological approach are enough to verbalise a concern or a gap for further research. Additionally, Gender Regimes have been criticised especially by authors of the gender discursive-sociological approach as an outdated and stiff concept (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 227). Indeed, a dynamic element has been added with the discursive-sociological framework. The path dependency was mentioned as a factor for unintentional and intentional consideration of change, norms, and frame factors of culture as important, but the main factor was the dynamic component (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 231). I argue in favour of both concepts as they are equally important, based on the same reasons Lombardo and Forest (2015) emphasise the dynamic importance. After analysing the regime types in Gender Regimes, a dynamic change inside policies and aspirations of governments can be deducted. Those can, of course, be caused by the Europeanisation effect of communication between different actors. However, the extent of change and the movement of the civil society leads to a dynamic picture of Gender Regimes. There are various questions that appear. For example, if stiff structures of a, e.g., conservative German regime might have never existed, and if an underlying goal to equality and change in society exists, why is there a visible difference between the member states? The concept of Gender Regimes gains a dynamic approach and the discursive-sociological approach of Europeanisation gains a perspective of past influences. At this point the ‘logic of appropriateness’, the collective understanding inside society for new norms, rules, and laws, can be applied (Börzel &

Risse, 2003, pp. 62-65). Both concepts of the changing Gender Regimes or their dynamic path dependency and the gender discursive-sociological approach need to be treated as two important theories for the thesis.

The main research task is to analyse interviews of actors working for the EP describing the role of the EU in combating gender violence. The concept of Gender Regimes needs to be seen in connection to domestic violence. It is unfortunate but true that welfare states and Gender Regimes can have an impact on the amount of gender violence. Welfare states can create a weak status for women, which supports patriarchal power imbalances in families. Mary Daly (1994, p. 104) describes this status as an externally caused dependence of women, which is reproduced in the household. If women cannot live an independent life from the male breadwinner of the family, the power to decide and change the living conditions is owned by men. Women need to fear poverty as they cannot maintain an independent life. Graciela Malgesini, Letizia Cesarini Sforza, Marija Babović (2019) already expressed the close relationship of poverty and violence in our society. The conservative welfare state does not acknowledge alter trajectories of women in our modern society and gives space for violence inside an abusive relationship as a divorce would be a threatening step into poverty. Orloff (1993) created the categories using the ways power constructs are reproduced and how the weak position of women can cause a subordinated role and behaviour. Those arguments show the importance of Gender Regimes for this research and its interviews.

2.4 Power

The previous chapters discussed how Europeanisation can be influenced. A discursive-sociological approach and Gender Regimes can have an impact on the process. The following chapter discusses the actual power the EU has to implement a possible change. Without the analysis of power, the omnipotent actor who can change norms however wanted would be created. By taking the actual power into account, the EU and its actors can be analysed with limitations.

As this thesis analyses a described change process, a certain degree of power is assumed from the institution which leads the change process. Power can be defined throughout theories in different ways. For realists, the concept of power is associated with military force and the security of borders. This explanation of power does not apply to the theory as a we do not assume that the EU needs to be a superpower which guarantees any kind of security for the member states. Additionally, realists see the EU as a weak actor as its relative power is quite low (Forsberg, 2013, p. 26).

In contemporary international politics, military power has lost in importance. For liberals, economic power, the power to exchange, and the power to produce are those main factors. Economic power, for instance, can be established through sanctions and incentives. For example, states agree to the conditions of the EU as they want to become a member and take advantage of the resources the EU has to offer. One important part in this concept of power is the third form of power. Cultural power or the so-called soft power/ normative power acknowledges the main power in attraction rather than coercion, which would be a power resource of hard powers. Some researchers argue that the main power of the EU rests primarily on a normative power as the ability to shape discussion and persuasion are main actions of the EU. Furthermore, the EU has social power as it can establish perceptions and shared understandings. Contrasting physical power, social power depends on one's perceptions of others' power (Forsberg, 2013, pp. 26–28).

The EU is not a single actor and different bodies of the EU have diverse powers and opportunities over the member states. The EC has executive powers and power in legislative initiative. Executive powers can be policies concerning competition, external trade, or other matters (European Parliament, 2020a). The European Council provides the impetus for the development of the EU. Additionally, the Council sets out general political guidelines (European Parliament, 2020b). The Council of the European Union is mainly a legislative organ. The Council adopts EU legislations based on proposals. It uses regulations and directives and can propose non-binding recommendations or prepares decisions (European Parliament, 2020c). The Council of the European Union does not work independently as it adopts European legislations with the EP, but the EP does not possess legislative initiative. The EP is composed of 405 Members. The legislative branch holds the budgetary authority of the Union. The EP and the Council of the European Union need to agree upon the yearly budget of the EU. The EP holds the control of the executive or the organs of the EU and especially the work of the EC. In the Lisbon treaty, the relationship between the EU and the member states' parliaments were defined and the EP is in close contact to the national parliaments (European Parliament, 2020d).

3. Transformation in EU gender policies

This chapter explores the transformation of EU policies tackling gender inequality in Europe and later on, gender violence. This part of the thesis is important as it refers to concrete terms, transformations, and information, actors of the EP are confronted within their work environment. Gender equality is the generic term for gender violence as gender violence policies are classified as a part of policies tackling gender inequality (Jacquot, 2015). Nevertheless, other areas such as equal pay reforms can be considered gender equality approaches. Due to the changing attitude of the EU concerning gender policies, a difference between a general change of policies against gender inequality can be deducted. In the scientific field, it is interesting to observe emergence, evolution, and institutionalisation of change (Jacquot, 2015, p. 2). Gender equality policies are defined as public policies fighting against gender inequality and supporting equality of all sexes. A general approach to change is taken as, for example, anti-discrimination policies incorporate an individual approach to change making and a juridical treatment of inequalities in public actions. It is important for the thesis that gender equality policies describe different forms and can be seen in different policy sections. Just to mention a few: rights, political representation, and violence. There are different strategies to implement change. One is equal treatment which is based on equal rights and on laws; equal opportunities, which acknowledges differences and enforces change through positive discrimination; and an equal impact, which uses gender mainstreaming implementations. The principals of strategies for gender equality have led to a variety of political strategies. Nevertheless, gender equality can just be implemented if all strategies are balanced and the principles of gender equality are implemented (Jacquot, 2015, pp. 3–4). Regarding the promotion of gender equality, the EU was one of the advanced political systems, especially at the turn of the century. It was one of the most advanced policy fields, even compared to other social regulations. Gender equality was the only field of action without minimalist compromise. The EU imposed a variety of norms and values on member states, which are even more advanced than those contemporary in most of the EU member states (Jacquot, 2015, p. 175). This advantage changed as the main characteristics of the anti-discrimination model changed into a subordination of quality to the market norm. Equality was no longer considered as a policy field in its own rights but was instrumentalised for other public policy priorities, especially economic ones such as market growth. It lost its exceptional legitimacy, and inequality between the sexes was classified as a form of discrimination. Gender mainstreaming was the new focus of European gender equality policies. Mainly models working against discrimination were

established, but funding and focus had trickled away. Gender has become insignificant (Jacquot, 2015, pp. 177–178).

As already explained, gender equality policies contain a variety of fields which need to be tackled in order to gain equality. One of them is violence or the violent act which has a connection to gender. The following chapter discusses the changing attitude of the EU towards gender violence policies, regulations, and laws over the last couple of years. In addition, the EU policy frameworks are discussed to further stretch the ambivalence attitude of the EU towards a fixed implementation of laws over the matter.

3.1 EU gender violence policies

Analysing gender violence policies, the question of a different way of responsiveness when it comes to a variety of policy areas can be expressed. The previous chapter showed an ambitious start of the EU tackling gender inequality, including notion of gender violence. Other areas of policy change have been quite successful in recent years. As already mentioned, the EU is one of the most significant actors when it comes to the Europeanisation of business interests (Coen & Dannreuther, 2003, p. 261). The same happened in 2002, when the EU pressured different European countries towards greater market orientation. After several policy discourses and recommendations, the economic liberalisation took place. It might be assumed that the open communication of interests in the EU is easier when it comes to economic and capitalistic questions rather than questions about gender (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, pp. 227–228). Additionally, justifying the need of equality between the sexes might seem rational when a connection to market growth can be made (Jacquot, 2015, p. 177).

One example for a transformational change of EU gender policy norms can be seen in 2011. The change the EU faced after an external convention about women's right and violence, which was internalised and forwarded to the EU member states, is the "first international instrument to set legally binding standards to prevent gender-based violence" (European Parliament, 2019a, para. 1). The EC has pointed out that the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (European Commission, 2019c), better known as the Istanbul Convention, was one of the main events against gender-based violence and open to signatures in May 2011. Even though the Council of Europe is not proportionally as powerful when compared to the EC, it is still evident that the Convention influenced the EU. New policy frameworks were formulated after the Convention and discussions on grants or recommendations started. One policy example would be the Directive of the EP

and the Council in the Official Journal of the EU (Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and the Council, 2012) for a minimum standard on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime. The directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and the Council (2012) states*:*

> […] EU policy framework to fight violence against women (8) the proposed a strategy to combat violence against women, domestic violence and female genital mutilation as a basis for future legislative criminal-law instruments against gender-based violence including a framework to fight violence against women (policy, prevention, protection, prosecution, provision and partnership) to be followed up by a Union action plan. […]. (para. 6)

Despite undeniable progress and work in the field of gender equality the current EU legal framework tackling gender violence can be considered as weak and the outcome of the policy transformation is rather disappointing. National legislations of the member states show unequal protection for women against any mentioned form of violence. The measures concerning prevention of violence present a considerable gap. In 2014, the EP asked the EC in a resolution on "Combating Violence against Women, based on a legislative initiative report by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality" (Shreeves & Jurviste, 2019, para.7) to state a proposal for a legal act, establishing measures to implement safety and support for women and girls in order to prevent violence (Shreeves & Jurviste, 2019, para.7). Additionally, the EP asked the EC to add the Istanbul Convention as a complementary document to the EU directive. In the following years, the EP continued to emphasise the need of progress on recommendation, including binding legislations and binding measures to protect girls and women. Rosamund Shreeves and Ülla Jurviste (2019) further explain that new recommendations such as the fundamental rights resolution condemns violence against women including new forms of violence. Furthermore, it called all member states to ratify the Istanbul Convention as seven member states, Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovakia and former EU member, the UK, refuse to take action (European Parliament, 2019a; Shreeves & Jurviste, 2019). As of May 2020, the Istanbul Convention has been signed by all EU member states and was ratified by 21 EU member states such as: "[…] Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania,

Slovenia, Spain and Sweden […]" (Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, 2020, para. 1).

Taking the chapter about power into account, the past actions of the EU show that especially the EP calls for action, but no further steps were taken. The EP tries to implement hard policies which could force all member states to implement safety measures and rights tackling gender violence. Until now, solely soft policies, such as the Daphne III Funding Programme, or recommendations for the member states have been made.

Celeste Montoya and Lise Rolandsen Agustín (2013) formulate the power the EU used to prevent gender violence quite accurate:

> Over the last several decades, the EU has become increasingly involved in the effort to combat violence against women. Although it has yet to adopt binding legislation, it has issued a number of soft law documents (resolutions, guidelines, and communications), facilitated capacity building for local and transnational efforts, and provided some oversight in monitoring conditions and efforts for countries seeking membership […]. (p. 540).

3.2 EU policy frameworks

The EP acknowledges the lack of a binding instrument to protect women from gender violence, but at the same time emphasises the cross-border element of established legal instruments for crime-related actions which include some forms of violence against women. Member states are being portrayed as nations which naturally have a different approach to problems and the act of domestic physical violence and sexual violence are punishable by law in all states. This seems rather obvious as all acts of physical violence in the EU are a human rights violation. Next to legislative provisions, the member states adopted policy strategies in form of a national action plan against violence and tried to promote social inclusion (Shreeves & Prpic, 2019, p. 7).

Next to acknowledging differences and adoption of member states, the European Parliamentary Research Service makes clear that some areas are underdeveloped as for example those of women who have been victims of gender violence and therefore need special protection (Shreeves & Prpic, 2019, pp. 7–8).

One of the most recent resolutions of the EP, the parliament resolution of 13 February 2019 on experiencing a backlash in women's rights and gender equality in the EU (European Parliament, 2019b), shows a backlash to progressive social rights and missing initiatives of the member states of the EU. Especially the combating and

preventing of all forms of violence against women have intensified. The violence in this case is defined in a broader sense. The EP recalls the need to implement protective and preventive measures and the importance of the implementations of the victim's right directive (European Parliament, 2019b).

The parliament resolution of 13 February 2019 on experiencing a backlash in women's rights and gender equality in the EU (2019b) states:

> Notes that the nature, intensity and effects of the backlash against women's rights have varied among countries and regions, in some cases remaining at the level of rhetoric while in others it has been concretised into measures and initiatives; whereas, nevertheless, it is noticeable in nearly all the Member States; takes the view that the backlash is also shaped by debate and policy options; […]. (para. 2)

Other actors who openly state their concerns of an implantation are MEPs. In 2018, the implementation of the European Protection Order Directive[5] was criticised by MEPs. At this point, especially the member states have been criticised as "[…] thousands of national protection orders have been issued in recent years" (European Parliament, 2018, para. 2). Additionally, the EC has been criticised for not submitting a report on the application of the directive. This shows that several actors are responsible for the lack of implementation of the directive. Soraya Post, a former MEP, was a co-rapporteur of the article and states:

> […] The fact that only 7 EPOs have been issued, when over 100,000 women in [the] EU are covered by national protective measures related to gender-based violence, is a sign that the Commission and member states have failed in their duties to protect their residents. Also #Metoo showed that the EU hasn't taken violence against women seriously. We have to change the EU Agenda on Security so that it includes personal safety and prevention of gender-based violence as priorities and the EPO is one tool for this change. (European Parliament, 2018, para. 10)

[5] The European Protection Orders can be defined as "[…] cross-border protection measures enabling victims to avoid contact with offenders" (European Parliament, 2018, para 1). One group that especially profits from those orders are women, who are oftentimes the target of, for example, stalkers (European Parliament, 2018).

4 Methodology

This chapter describes the process of conducting the empirical part of this thesis and especially the data collection. First, the research design is described. Second, the interviewees are presented and an explanation for the selection of participants is given. Third, the thematic analysis will be explained and justification for the method is given. Fourth, the six-step process for a thematic analysis is explained and applied to the analysis. Chapter 4.5 will describe the connection between the theory and the data with a coding table and indicators. The last point concerns ethical considerations.

4.1 Research design

The overall aim of this master's thesis is to describe actors' views and experience of the EU's combat against gender violence and relate them back to the assumptions derived from the theory. The connection to Europeanisation and the Gender Regime theory are created by the author as it was not likely that the interviewees know about the concept per se. In the previous chapters, we examined what Europeanisation means and how a discursive element is part of the theory of Europeanisation. Furthermore, Gender Regimes have been explained and it was discussed how they can have an influence on Europeanisation. To sum up the chapter about Gender Regimes, different realities for women have been established over the years and the societal and institutional assumptions of women's lives are manifested in laws and regulations. It seems plausible to conduct interviews with MEPs, political advisors, and assistants of MEPs as they are the agents acting inside a structure which facilitates and limits Europeanisation and influences the process. Additionally, the agents change their own habits due to the structure they are situated in, which is reflected in the interviewees.

The possibilities of conducting interviews came up after the discursive-sociological approach of Europeanisation was analysed. The thesis analyses a change process and the responsibility for change lies on the agents or, in this case, on the MEPs. According to the discursive-sociological approach MEPs use communication to implement policy recommendations. This thought can be extended to political advisors and assistants as they directly influence MEPs and the policy outcomes of the parliament (Lombardo & Forest, 2015). Another argument for conducting interviews would be the possibility to include the interviewees' reflections of their personal influence into the analysis, their previous socialisation and the path-dependency of the home countries of the interviewees (Krizsán & Roggeband, 2018a). This is interesting as the research of the

theory has a descriptive mission, "[…] interpreting a case […] that can be used as evidence in subsequent theory building or hypothesis testing." (Toshkov, 2016, p. 31). To recapture the research aims, the theory is depicted from the standpoint of actors working in the EP in a complex and interactive process. They are framing soft policies by taking their own socialisation, belonging to a certain political group and member state into account.

For the interviews, it was decided to have semi-structured questions as new ideas and thoughts of the interviewees can be included. This, again, seems fitting as the research attempts to grasp an experienced change process in the answers. The interviewees are experts in their field due to their work, environment, and previous studies on the topic of gender violence. At the same time, they can be seen as agents who facilitate the change process and have an influence on the matter. The guiding questions are based on the theory chapter and the literature review. They can be found in appendix A. The questions are divided into the following categories: the EU's attempt to change gender violence, the relationship between the EU and the member states concerning gender violence, the discursive-sociological approach in the parliament and national states, the possibility of Gender Regimes to prevent and facilitate recommendations, the use of power of the EU, and the possibility to overcome regional differences.

4.2 Selection of interviewees

The selection of interviewees took a rather long time as it was very important to have experts who work in the field of gender and gender relations. Additionally, I wanted to conduct interviews with people who work for the parliament as their work position gives them additional knowledge and a specific role in the change process. As I do not know anyone working for the EP, I decided to try a cold acquisition. I contacted possible interviewees via email and hoped for a positive answer on my interview request. I contacted more than 60 possible interviewees and received ten positive answers. At the beginning of the process, the goal was to have interviews with just MEPs. Nevertheless, I realized that political advisors of gender policies working for the parliament groups such as The Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA) and assistants of MEPs working for the MEP on gender related topics are as valuable as MEPs for my research. They are a direct influence on the MEPs, can reflect on the national policies and they understand Europeanisation. This become clear during the analysis of the interviews. The MEPs were selected out of the FEMM committee which works on the topic of Women's Rights and

Gender Equality (European Parliament, 2020e). Only Rita[6] is working for a MEP who does not belong to the FEMM committee but to the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs. She previously worked for Soraya Post, a former MEP from the Feministiskt initiativ of Sweden (European Parliament, 2020g).

At the beginning of the interview process, I intended to have an equal number of male and female interviewees. This turned out to be impossible as the FEMM committee has a total of 57 members and a minority of them are male[7]. Nearly all interviewees in my research are females, except of Nicolaus Fest. This can be considered as a weakness of my work or even a strength if we recapture the thought of Krizsán and Roggeband (2018a), who emphasised that female members of parliament can be critical allies in fighting for equality depending on the quality of involvement and the nation they are from. To express this in more detail, actors describe and frame soft policies and recommendations by taking their own socialisation into a specific gender role, their own experiences, and their standpoint in society into account. People identifying as women can portray the problem in a different way than, for example, people identifying as men, living in different gender roles.

Another important criterion for the selection of interviewees was their belonging to different parties or political groups. I tried to get interviews with members of all groups of the EP. This did not work out as I did not receive a response from members of all groups. Especially due to the current pandemic, several MEPs answered my email apologizing for not being available for an interview. I received one positive answer from a policy advisor of the Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL); two positive answers from MEPs from the Group of the European People's Party- Christian Democrats (EPP); two positive answers from MEPs from the Renew Europe Group (RE); one positive answer from political advisors, two assistants and one MEP of the Group of Greens/EFA; and one positive answer from a MEP of the Identity and Democracy Group (European Parliament, 2020f). Unfortunately, no one from the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, the European Conservatives, and Reformists Group replied positively to my request. Some of the MEPs are substitute members of the committee. The last important consideration was the member state the MEPs, assistants, and political advisors belong

[6] Nearly all the interviewees agreed on me using their full name, occupational status, and party belonging for my research. Only Rita agreed on me using her first name instead of the full name. It is not an alias.
[7] I am assuming the gender of the MEPs by using their names as I could not find more information on their preferred gender. I apologize for any incorrect use.

to. Nearly all interviewees[8] belong to the conservative, social democratic or via-media regime type in the Gender Regime theory. They can report about welfare state policies, role models of women, and their assumptions about gender violence policies from their own member state perspective. For example, an interviewee from Finland might describe less progress on the EU level as they are used to the same progressive reforms in their EU member state as Finland belongs to a social democratic welfare state model. The different perspectives might give insights on the topic. The summed-up information of my interviewees can be found in appendix C.

4.3 Thematic analysis

The participation in this study was voluntary. The interviews were conducted digitally, I used programmes such as Skype and Zoom. All interviewees agreed to me recording the interviews with a recorder. The language of the interviews was English and German. I aimed at having an interview time of at least 30 minutes each. The length of the interviews varied between 26 and 75 minutes. The interviews took place in June and July of 2020 and resulted in 84 pages of transcribed interviews. I used the letter of the first name of each interviewee for my transcripts and the full names in the headings of the documents.

Thematic analysis was chosen as a method for data analysis. Thematic analysis is a suitable way of analysing the data for the given research aim. Using the definition from Virginia Braun & Victoria Clarke (2006) thematic analysis is a method analysing and identifying patterns which are called themes with conducted, observed, or compared data sets. Thematic analysis is used to reflect reality and to unravel content which lays in-between realities. Themes are used to identify important facts in the data in relation to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 81).

Mojtaba Vaismoradi, Hannele Turunen, Terese Bondass (2013) express the need of defining thematic analysis in contrast to qualitative content analysis to justify the use of one of the methods as thematic analysis is sometimes confused with qualitative data analysis. In research, these methods are often used interchangeably, and the differences are not pointed out. The absence of a clear boundary can be perceived in different fields. In this regard, it is even more important to give a clear justification and to qualify elements of the method. Thematic analysis is seen as a poorly defined method and sometimes it is not named as a method of analysis. Indeed, both analysis methods share the same aim of

[8] Except for Rita as the belonging to an EU member states cannot be reviled due to privacy reasons.

examining narrative materials from life stories such as interviews and aim to break them into small units for description. Nevertheless, according to the authors, thematic analysis is an independent way of analysing data with a couple of shared traits with content analysis. The research method has different features relevant for this master's thesis. First, thematic analysis is a flexible and useful method to analyse data such as interviews reflecting realities. Second, the identification and search for common threads across the entire interviews are a key factor. Third, it provides a purely qualitative, nuanced, and detailed account of an analysis. Conversely, content analysis uses a descriptive approach (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 400). The aim of the research is not to analyse the context of an interview. A general answer to the stated question is the goal, a common thread throughout the interviews needs to be pointed out.

During the data analysis process, such as the "consideration of context of data" (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 401) or the "description and interpretation" (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 401), further distinction of both methods can be expressed and the justification for a thematic analysis becomes clear. While describing and interpreting, thematic analysis gives a minimal description to data sets, and allows us to interpret various aspects of the theme and research topic. Data sets are the important parts of the data corpus. In the case of my research, the data corpus are the interviews but at the same time all the information I gathered throughout the previous chapters such as theoretical assumptions or the literature review. The data set is the actual material I worked with while analysing. I used the data set of all interviews for the analysis.

Stages such as familiarising with data and generating initial codes seem quite similar in both methods. The next difference appears when it comes to searching for themes. In the thematic analysis, "Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme" (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 402) is an important step to create a thematic map for the conducted data. Themes are not connected to quantifiable measures. They capture important points in relation to the research question. They do not need to be the most prevalent themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). Contrary to qualitative content, analysis uses peer checking as one way to justify the used coding (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 404). This would be the organising stage of content analysis with defined coding categories and subcategories. This distinction can be expressed as:

> […] the difference between a theme and a category is that the latter refers mainly to a descriptive level of content and can thus be seen as an expression of the

> manifest content of the text, whilst the former is the expression of the latent content […]. (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 402).

The method just requires the researcher to be persistent in how to do the thematic analysis and the creation of themes. Otherwise the method leaves space for a flexible approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 83). Another justification needs to be done in order to proceed to the details about data analysis. I decided to conduct a theoretical thematic analysis also called a deductive way of analysis. The top-down approach is driven by the research theoretical viewpoint and the researcher's analytical interest. The pre-formulations of the codes are made from the theory I used. A detailed analysis of the data can be provided. The decision for a deductive approach and not, for example, an inductive approach also lays on how and why someone wants to code the data. According to Braun & Clarke (2006), "you can either code for a quite specific research question (which maps onto the more theoretical approach) or the specific research question can evolve through the coding process (which maps onto the inductive approach)."(p. 84). With deductive coding, a researcher needs to pre-formulate the codes and look for the presence or absence of these in interviews. Nevertheless, a possible latent level of thematic analysis allows the researcher to examine and identify underlying ideas if possible. A latent interpretation gives the possibility to reveal personal assumptions or social content (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84).

The deductive way of analysis fits the research aims and the previously presented theory chapter. The general aim of the thesis is to analyse the interview data and to find out themes in the analysis process. Gender Regimes and the power of the EU are factors which can either facilitate the process or limit it. The deductive approach is useful if the goal of the research is to see if theory-based assumptions, hypotheses, appear in the data using already distinguished codes in the theory (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 401). Another important factor would be that researchers cannot free themselves of their epistemological or theoretical commitment. After researching different theories, it seems deceptive to possess an epistemological vacuum, which an inductive approach would claim to have (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84).

The analysis has some weaknesses. First, the interviewees are not as diverse as I would have wanted them to be. Having four interviewees working for the green party has an impact on the data as a more conservative view on the topic is underrepresented. Furthermore, the group seems rather homogeneous due to the lack of men in the committee. Second, the method of thematic analysis has some weaknesses. Especially in

contrast to the qualitative data analysis which can justify the use of categories with the amount of codes. Another point is the clear extraction of meaning in the text. A thematic analysis can be more qualitative and abstract, but this might take some transparency out of the process.

4.4 Six-step process for a thematic analysis

The data is analysed by using a six-step process to identify common themes, topics, and ideas. The process of analysing the data is a recursive process. The movement can be followed back and forth if needed. Some steps of the table are already quite explanatory such as step one. The transcripts have been written right after the interviews. 'Gap fillers' such as 'Uhm', 'like', 'such' and 'hm', repeated words, laughing, stuttering and sneezing have not been taken into consideration. For step two of the analysis, I use ATLAS.ti, a software normally used for qualitative content analysis for my thesis. The user-friendly interface of the software allows me to have all transcripts in one software. As I have already extracted the codes out of the theory chapter, I use tools such as 'assign a code', 'code with list', 'use last used code', and the memo option. This helps me to keep track of all codes and to have a fast coding process. I easily identify segments of meaning in the data, label them with a code, and put them into contrast to other interview data. ATLAS.ti is handy for organising my analysis. Codes can be all kinds of information in the interviews that might seem interesting for answering the research question. In a thematic analysis, the amount of a single code does not define the importance of a code. The codes did already exist due to the deductive approach. The memo option is useful to write notes for possible themes, which relate to step three of the thematic analysis table. With this step, I start to generate themes by looking at patterns among the data and the codes. In step four, the material and themes need to be reviewed, I need to give them precise names and discard some of the codes. The codes may be as well discarded if needed in step four depending on their importance for the theme. Step five relates to this process as I connect the reviewed themes with statements, and I start to elaborate the meaning of the theme for the analysis. Especially the specifics of each theme are important at this point as overlapping themes would question the specific answer a theme can give us. In step six I decide on extract examples and concluding the analysis chapter with finished themes.

The following table explains the six-step system of the thematic analysis.

Step	Phase	Description of the process	Thesis
1	Familiarisation	Getting to know the data, transcribing and re-reding	Transcribing the interviews after the conduction, re-reding the material
2	Coding	Coding the data-set in a systematic way, collating data	Using ATLAS.ti for coding, especially tools such as 'assign a code', 'code with list', 'use last used code'
3	Generating themes	Identifying patterns among the codes, start collating codes into themes	Memo option to identify patterns and first themes
4	Reviewing themes	Reviewing the codes and possible themes	Discard some codes and re-name themes
5	Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis, describing the overall story for the analysis, clear definition of themes and names, pointing out the specific of each theme	Use the material in ATLAS.ti to write clear definitions of themes and names
6	Producing the report	Finalising the analysis, compiling extract examples	Finalising the analysis and adding a table to the text

Table1. The six-step system of thematic analysis (by the author on the basis of Braun & Clarke, 2006)

4.5 Connection between theory and analysis

The chapter describes the connection between the theory and literature review, the deducted codes for the analysis, and the themes as the final output. The hypotheses, mentioned in chapter 1.3, are the key element between both sections as hypotheses are assumptions based on the theory and literature review chapter. The analysis follows the structure of the hypotheses.

The theory describes a general view on Europeanisation and the new gender discursive-sociological approach in the theory (Lombardo & Forest, 2015). Further, Gender Regimes, the concept of power, and literature review with the transformation in EU gender policies take a role in creating the hypotheses for the thesis (Orloff, 1993; Forsberg, 2013; Jacquot, 2015). Additionally, tables describing the deducted codes, indicators, and the connection to the theory can be found in the chapter. Indicators are used during the coding process to identify segments which need to be coded. For example,

women as actors is one sub-code. In order to find segments in the interviews fitting to the sub-code, indicators are used. The indicator for this sub-code allows coding of segments which take women as a central requisition for combating gender violence as women's movements or discussions about female members of parliament as alias are mentioned as key terms in the theory (Krizsán & Roggeband, 2018a). This indicator was created using the theory and mentioned characteristics of women in the gender discursive-sociological approach. One example for a coded interview fragment of this sub-code was Maria Træholt's statement: "So, I think they are a lot more represented and I also think when women get elected, they will also influence the movement of the initiative." A coded interview fragment might include several codes. The themes have been added to table two, three, four, and five during the fifth step of the thematic analysis process.

The gender discursive-sociological approach to Europeanisation presumes that agents' frames can change other actors' attitudes and norms about gender violence. At the same time, their own assumptions and norms are reflected and contested during the discussion. This can change developments on a domestic level as those discussions also take place with national politicians (Lombardo & Forest, 2015). This code is important for the research question as it describes why actors describe the role of the EU in combating gender violence in a certain way. I have referred to this code as 'Dynamic discourse' with sub-codes describing the way normative assumptions of gender violence are changed by discourse on the domestic development level.

Theory	Codes	Indicators	Theme
Gender discursive-sociological approach	**Dynamic discourse**	Interactions framing ideas and discourse with political actors and changing EU norms. Interactions as a dynamic process, mentioning change in the EU attempts tackling gender violence.	Actors as agents
	Concept framing	Concrete changed concepts during the framing process with actors.	
	Women as actors	Women's movements, discussions about female MEPs as alias in the EP during the discourse.	

Table 2. First coding table (by the author on the basis of Krizsán & Roggeband, 2018a; Lombardo & Forest, 2015)

The second code relates to the Gender Regime theory (Orloff, 1993). It pays attention to whether and how the interviewees to report differently about the role of the EU in combating gender violence in each EU member state, related to the conservative, social democratic and 'via-media regime type. According to the theory, Gender Regimes are norm givers in society, and it is assumed that they can be limiting and facilitating factors for Europeanisation (Orloff, 1993). I coded the data with reference to whether and how the interviewees evoke the idea of gender regimes. The hypothesis is coded as 'Gender Regime traits'. Sub-codes are used to describe the regime type specific differences.

Theory	Codes	Indicators	Theme
Gender Regimes	**Gender Regime traits**	Categories mentioned in the theory related to norms in member states of the EU concerning gender violence.	Facilitating and limiting path dependency
	Conservative welfare state traits	Mentioned low adaptation rate due to historical path dependencies and conservative welfare policies.	
	Social democratic welfare state traits	Mentioned high adaptation rate and progressive assumptions about gender violence.	
	'Via media' welfare traits	Progressive assumptions about gender violence, limiting welfare policies.	

Table 3. Second coding table (by the author on the basis of Esping-Andersen, 1990; Orloff, 1993)

The third code refers to whether and how the interviewees describe soft policies as the key changing tool of the EU concerning gender violence. The theory chapter discussed the power the EU has to implement change. Liberals see economic power, sanctions, incentives, and the third form of power, soft power, as the main way to implement change. Especially attraction, shaping discourse, and persuasion are the main actions of the EU. Additionally, the chapter discussed hard power with mainly coercion to implement change (Forsberg, 2013, pp. 26–28). The Lisbon treaty, the relationship between the member states of the EU, and the EU were defined, and the member states competence was discussed on certain matters (European Parliament, 2020d). The different bodies of the EU have been mentioned to show the power structure indies the

institution (European Parliament, 2020a; European Parliament, 2020b; European Parliament, 2020c). For this part, the main codes are 'Hard power', 'Soft power', and 'Economic power' as three ways of power enforcement mentioned in the theory chapter. The code 'Hard power' has a sub-code as hard power can be limited due to 'Member state competence'.

Theory	Codes	Indicators	Theme
Realist's and liberal's definition of power	**Hard power**	Mentioned laws and regulations of the EU to implement change.	EU power for change
	Member states competence	Relationship between EU and member states about competences.	
	Soft power	Mentioned discourse shaping, persuasion, attraction of the EU to implement change.	
	Economic power	Mentioned monetary sanctions and incentives.	

Table 4. Third coding table (by the author on the basis of Forsberg, 2013)

The fourth code relates to the predictions of the interviewees concerning developments in the combat against gender violence in the EU. Chapter three described the transformation in the EU gender policies. According to the literature, the EU orientation in the field of gender equality changed over the past years into a subordination of quality to the market norms. Inequality between the sexes was classified as any other existing form of discrimination. Questions about gender have become marginal (Jacquot, 2015). A continuation of the marginalisation and a disappointing vision for the future is expected. The code 'EU role prediction' codes segments indicating the future role of the EU in combating gender violence. Sub-codes are related to statements describing concrete actions of the EU which might lead to a future role and previous ambitions in the combat as they might lead to a possible assumption of the future.

LR.	Codes	Indicators	Theme
Transformation in EU gender policies	**EU role prediction**	Described roles of the EU in combating gender violence in the future.	Future of the EU's role in combating gender violence
	Current/Past actions of the EU	Examples of current/past actions against gender violence.	
	Possible influence on the future role	Examples of possible influences.	

Table 5. Fourth coding table (by the author on the basis of Jacquot, 2015)

The analysis of the coded segments describes the role of the EU in combating gender violence described by actors working inside the parliament, agents, political advisors, or assistants. The analysis should give an assessment of the EU in the fight against gender violence, the way of implementing change in the member states of the EU and limiting as well as facilitating factors for change.

4.6 Research ethics

For the research ethics, I have been following David Byrne's (2016) explanation. The ethical considerations have been important for my study as I interviewed experts working for the EP. I have taken steps in order to ensure the correct conduct of data. I have been honest with the participants and informed them about my study, aims, and study purpose well in advance. The consent for recording was confirmed with a consent form. The consent form can be found in appendix B. At the beginning of each interview, I asked the interviewees how they want to be addressed in my thesis and other usage of personal data such as name, occupation, and political opinion or the belonging to a political party. The participants received the consent form via email after contacting me about my interview plan. All of them agreed to the conditions with their own signature sent to me on the 'Informed Consent' document[9] and verbally at the beginning of each interview. Only one interviewee agreed on the consent form by sending me an email with a written agreement. I informed the interviewees at the beginning of each interview about the recording, my written notes, and my use of personal data. I stored the interviews on an external hard drive for safety reasons. The interviewees agreed on having me use the data for my thesis. Every opinion has been considered for minimising a biased assumption

[9] Except of Rita as she sent me an email stating that she agrees with the Informed Consent document.

on my side about the research topic. The interviewees were given the chance to ask questions and express their thoughts anytime they wanted. Additionally, I have been aware of any form of plagiarism.

5 Analysis and presentation of findings

This chapter will discuss the findings that emerged throughout the data analysis. As already stated, the analysis is based on interviews with ten interviewees with people working for the EP, such as MEPs, assistants, and political advisors. The goal of the analysis was to analyse in what way actors inside the EP, i.e. the interviewees, perceive of and describe the role of the EU in combating gender violence, using the theory of Europeanisation, Gender Regimes, and power. The analysis has a descriptive mission and gives space to the actors to describe the combat and their position in the fight against gender violence. Throughout the analysis, the interviewees describe the role of the EU from different angles, framing facilitating and limiting factors of a change process. Of course, the actors have different opinions on certain topics, influenced, for example, by their party belonging or their own socialisation in an EU member state. Thus, a thematic analysis was useful as the emerging themes are not based on a prevalent, most expressed opinion in the interviews. The analysis pictures a thematic map fitting the research question and important observations during the interviews in connection to the hypotheses (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The hypotheses, the expected empirical reality, are the structure of the analysis. The hypotheses are H1 Agents' (i.e. in this case, the interviewees') frames can reflect and change normative assumptions about gender violence in discourse with other actors, which can further influence domestic developments. H2. The social democratic, conservative and via-media welfare states will be described by the interviewees in a way expected from their category in the Gender Regimes theory. H3. The interviewees will refer to soft policies as the main changing tool of a Europeanisation process concerning gender violence. H4. Due to the recent developments in the role of the EU in combating gender violence, the interviewees will describe concerns about future improvements in the field.

5.1 Actors as agents

The theoretical term of 'agents and structures' became visible during the interviews. In the theory chapter, these themes were examined in relation to the assumption that the agents, during dialogue, create discourse with other actors and reframe their opinion about a certain matter. Understanding the actors inside the EP as agents leaves us space to acknowledge them as individuals and capable of making choices. The structure they are situated in limits or opens opportunities for decisions.

Agents are capable of social actions formed by social structures. Agents need to behave in a certain way in a system of norms, which can be formed by the agents (Giddens, 1984).

This theoretical construct can be applied to the actors inside the EP and their conversation with other actors. In the interviews, the interviewees expressed the role of the actors inside the EP in implementing change (see esp. interviews with Abir Al-Sahlani and Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield). They argued that conversations with other actors shape the view on certain matters and enable them to further influence other actors such as EU member state politicians. This supports the idea that MEPs are actively forming the discussions with their belonging to the nation states that they represent. The dynamic element can, subsequently, be found in the discussions between MEPs and national politicians. The following segment from my interview with Al-Sahlani (MEP, Sweden, RE) illustrates how the MEP perceives of the dynamic influence of conversations also in relation to the MEPs' home countries:

> […] we are not living in a vacuum, especially in this house where we have to balance the impulses of the institutions and each other but also the notions from their home countries which can picture the issue in a completely different way.

This resonates in an interesting manner with the discursive-sociological approach. According to it, actors are the dynamic element allowing endogenous factors into the debate of Europeanisation. According to this theory, actors are being socialised inside the EP and take the notions from their home countries into account while framing ideas in conversations with other actors (Lombardo & Forest, 2015).

Al-Sahlani's words of 'not living in a vacuum' calls to mind the fact that actors interact with members of the EP, NGOs, networks, and other stakeholders such as civil actors. The discussion on gender violence in the resent years has been extremely dynamic. Such communication paves the way for interaction between different actors and is used for definitions that are established through the framing of policy discourses. The frames of MEPs of the discourse and the polarising topic of gender can reflect the normative assumptions they internalised during their socialisation. At this point of the analysis, the sociological stance in the theory is being discussed. The communication of the MEPs and other actors inside the EP are understood as a continuing interaction with other change makers, networks, institutions, civil actors. Those discourses can legitimise norms of the EU by using observed cultural norms (Lombardo & Forest, 2015, p. 232).

The EP is a space in which individuals bring various cultures and perspective into

the debate about certain topics. For example, MEPs can block progress in the gender violence debate depending on their own attitudes and norms. Sirpa Pietikäinen (MEP, Finland, EPP) expressed concerns about right-wing politicians blocking progressive conversations about gender inequality and violence. At the same time, the conversation between different agents can change due to the exchange of norms and debating culture. Those conversations create the general norms and at the end the target of policies the EP uses to implement change in the member states. As an example, for change Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA) mentioned the current pandemic as a topic in connection to which gender violence has been discussed highly in the EP. Her statement is especially interesting as it highlights the dynamic evolvement of conversations in the EP. The quote reflects the mentioned role as agents, MEPs, reflect and evolve alongside society. Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA) expressed her thoughts on the current Covid-19 crises as:

> In the Covid-19 situation where we saw that things were exacerbating in a number of countries on these topics, the parliament did strong votes and majorities which you probably would not have found a few years ago. To finish, it reflects, it evolves at the same time as society. I was really struck that at the time of Covid-19, the topic of family violence and gender violence was really concerning and talked about in a lot of member states and the European Parliament as it was invisible 15 years ago and not emerging a lot five years ago.

Krizsán and Roggeband (2018a), as was mentioned in the theory chapter, emphasised the importance of female actors as they can be critical allies in framing norms. Here, actors are seen to matter in the sense that the gender of the actors has an impact on the role that the EU can play in combating gender violence as women can bring an individual perspective to the conversation. This also came up in the interviews: An interviewee, Trætholt (Accredited assistants, Denmark, Greens/EFA), argued that female representation is one of the key elements to implement the realm of policies against gender-based violence. This argument goes hand in hand with Krizsán and Roggeband's (2018a) argument. Without women in the committees, an important perspective is missing, and a blind spot appears.

In the interviews, Helena Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA) also refers to the debate about gender as it has changed during the last years due to the existence of women in the EP. This paved the way to a discussion about gender violence

which changed attitudes in the EP and resulted in influencing the political debate in the member states of the EU. To break stereotypes, female representation would be existential. The vice-chair of the committee, Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA), argued in favor of quotas in the member states of the EU. She expressed a view that representation is even more important than simple debates in the EP. Without representations, certain topics and views cannot be expressed as the ones who experience the inequality need to express their opinions about the matter. Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA) stated: "All of these women bring to the debate how gender violence exists.", which was representative of this point. Those statements are evidence of the points mentioned in the theory chapter about female MEPs in the discussions.

At this point, it is important to mention that not only the appearance of women in organisations is important. The way how and in what position they are represented is the key to combat stereotypes. In the interviews, it was brought up that in the EP, not all committees have the same number of women as horizontal representation is still a problem (e.g. interview with Argerich i Terradas). The representation of women in the EP can help create new norms in the member states, the households, and the EP. This thought finds support from an idea discussed in theory chapter according to which women who can enter work and well-paid positions gain power inside the family (Orloff, 1993).

Whilst there was no mentioning of the term 'agents' from the interviewees, the way in which they describe discussions, understand change, and the EU member state's influence, leads to evidence that MEPs as policy makers perceive of themselves as agents changing normative assumptions about gender violence. What was analysed here are the interviewees understandings of the role actors can play in the EU's policy making process. The empirical evidence supports the first assumption: Agents' (i.e. in this case, the interviewees') frames can reflect and change normative assumptions about gender violence in discourse with other actors, which can further influence domestic developments. The descriptive mission of the thesis leads to evidence of the agents as important parts in the role of the EU in combating gender violence.

5.2 Facilitating and limiting path dependency

The Gender Regime theory expects each welfare state regime of the EU to have different welfare policies concerning paid labour and the recognition of unpaid work. A social democratic welfare state should adopt policies from the EU and have a progressive role in female employment and norms concerning gender violence. The conservative trait expects a weak adaptation and the via media model a partial adaptation (Orloff, 1993;

Alsarve et al., 2016; Henninger & Von Wahl, 2018; Lombardo, 2017). The Gender Regime theory points out the family dynamics and power can have an effect on the assumptions about domestic violence. Those can be influenced by policies liberating the decisions of women in the labour market (Orloff, 1993).

It was interesting that in the interviews all interviewees referred to one of the categories of the Gender Regime concept. For example, in her interview, Charlotte Balavoine (political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) referred to the importance of the state as an institution which needs to address gender and the class issue. She reflected the stratification dimension and complained about the missing initiative of the state. Decommodification and the possibility to access paid labour was mentioned by Karen Melchior (MEP, Denmark, RE). She discussed the importance for women to "free themselves of those expectations". Welfare models can include affordable child or elderly care so women can enter paid labour. At the same time, they allow women to decommodify from all forms of work. By contrast, Pernille Weiss (MEP, Denmark, EPP) mentioned the possibility for families or small communities to decide what is best for them, which brings an interesting tension here in the views of the MEPs concerning the role of the state and state policies. For the analysis, it might be assumed that conditions such as the belonging to different parties causes different opinions about women and families as both interviewees are from the same EU member state.

The last category of the Gender Regime model, the state-, market-, and family relations, has been mentioned several times in the interviews. The interviewees differ in their views regarding the provision of welfare, which might also be caused by the interviewee's belongings to different political groups. Nevertheless, when discussing state-, market-, and family relations, nearly all the interviewees said that the family should be helped with by providing welfare by the state or third actors. Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA), who is also the vice-chair of the FEMM committee, continued by highlighting the importance of the welfare state for the combat against gender violence. She saw a clear connection between the role model of women and the possibly violent situation in the home sphere.

The statements made by the interviewees support the categories expressed by Orloff (1993) in the theory. This evidence supports the claims made by Orloff (1993) about the importance of Gender Regimes. Connecting the analysis to the research question, the interviewed actors inside the EP are aware of the varying situations inside the member states concerning female labour and unpaid reproduction work. Their

portrayal of the role of the EU in combating gender violence is influenced by their knowledge of welfare policies and gender equality at work.

5.2.1 The social democratic welfare states

According to the Gender Regime theory, the social democratic welfare state is the most advanced Gender Regimes type in Europe concerning independence. Women have a high level of full-time employment and day care possibilities are granted to families as the state takes over welfare provisions from families (Anxo et al., 2007). The mentioned critique concerned the double burden on women to work and to take over some parts of unpaid care work (Orloff, 1993).

During the interviews, the Nordic countries were referred to as advanced in the field of policies against gender violence. According to Balavoine (political advisor, France, GUE/NGL), for example, the Nordics consist of progressive countries with a high standard of women rights compared to the EU itself. Representative in the point: "[…] in the Nordic countries we have a legislation which is more progressive, […]". The Nordic countries have been described as EU member states with no banalisation of violence. Society sees violence as something that needs to be reported and acknowledges gender violence as a crime. This statement made by Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA) seems to support the view expressed by Anxo et al. (2007) in the theory. Anxo et al. (2007) described the support women receive in a social democratic welfare state. Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA) stated that "We are talking about a banalisation of violence. This is one aspect. You do not find it in a Nordic county or Germany. It is another root of the problem". The advanced treatment of gender violence cases supports the classification of the Gender Regimes, described by Orloff (1993).

In addition, it seemed rather interesting that interviewees who are from Nordic EU member states, for example, from Denmark, referred to individualism and the consideration of women as individuals as important. The way of emphasising individualism has been a part of the Scandinavian welfare state model described in the theory of Esping-Andersen (1990). In the interview, Weiss (MEP, Denmark, EPP) emphasised individuality as important. She referred to countries and their culture as individual approaches, but it seems interesting that she, as an agent from Denmark, gives individuality importance.

The same applies to interviewee Melchior (MEP, Denmark, RE), an agent from Denmark, claiming that the state needs to consider the individuum and not the entire family while establishing policies. This allows the assumption that the focus on

individuality does not only appear because of the party belonging and instead the socialisation into a specific welfare state regime is important.

Al-Sahlani (MEP, Sweden, RE), a MEP from Sweden, gave some insights on the Swedish welfare regime. She agreed that the Swedish welfare state can facilitate recommendations of the EU because of its national and local rules which are legitimising those recommendations. Al-Sahlani (MEP, Sweden, RE) said "Well, it depends on the content of the policy. I believe that national and local rules are important, so they can legitimise for example recommendations from the EU." At the same time, she reported about the problematic level of commodification of Swedish women. She described gender norms as problematic for women and a facilitator of gender violence in families.

The social democratic welfare state is a progressive Gender Regime type, which acknowledges internal problems in the society and law implementation. At the same time, the path dependency on individuality exceeds the current standards of EU recommendations. The analysis shows that the interviewees seem to think that the welfare and gender regimes of member states do play a role in the EU's combat against gender violence. The interviewees seem to allude to the role of a Gender Regime, which means that they recognize its role in facilitating the adaptation of policies against gender violence, improving existing norms, and a critical state concerning still existing gender inequalities.

5.2.2 The conservative welfare states

The Gender Regime theory classified Germany and France as conservative welfare regimes. One main argument for the classification was the consideration of women as the main welfare provider (Orloff, 1993). New literature classifies different conservative regimes on the track towards a social democratic welfare regime. Policy reforms, a modernisation, and a de-ideologisation of family policy, and changed norms of familiarism support the change in society concerning gender equality. Nevertheless, pre-existing laws such as the joined taxation for married couples in Germany have not changed and promote a male-breadwinner concept and a conservative attitude towards gender equality. Germany can be portrayed as a conservative welfare regime with a strong tendency of change (Henninger & Von Wahl, 2018, p. 474). France as a conservative welfare regime with new approaches towards family models (Beckmann, 2008). Conservative regimes were mentioned several times during the interviews. In the interviews, Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) and Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA), Germany was considered to be a powerful player in

Europe. Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA) stated that in order to establish new areas of competence or new policies in the realm of gender violence, the European Council needs to implement them. This can only happen if a powerful player acknowledges the necessity of the topic and drives for change. In order to change norms in the member states and to propose a topic on the European level, a member state needs emphasise the urgency of the topic. In this case, Germany would be one of the most influential member states of the EU. She described the process further:

> The member states have a lot to say and especially if the member states have a lot to say and are big and have a lot of weight in the European Council. It is not only the percentage or amount they have, but also the influence. For example, Spain is important because it is big. It can have an impact, but if Germany pushes for it, it is even better. It is not only big but also has influence because if this is initiated by Slovenia, like, let's be honest, it is not the same. So, my answer would be, yes, it can have an impact. Moving this debate to the European debate and the member states puts it on the table.

Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) had a clear opinion about the German welfare state and the German provision of welfare. Germany validates austerity measures and is responsible for funding cuts. Last year, Germany, as one of the big players in Europe, promoted a neo-liberal reform without the consideration of problems such as gender violence. For Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL), Germany could be a progressive change bringer in Europe and its own home country, but instead it increases the vulnerability of women. The same applies to France as she mentioned progress policy reforms concerning gender inequality have been cancelled by France on an EU level. The conservative societal norms do have an impact in the gender debate, which corelates to the argument of the existing path-dependency in the Gender Regime theory (Orloff, 1993). For her, the link between the conservative welfare state and the missing investments and trend against policies against gender violence is clear. For the role model of the mother, she expressed a clear concern about the independence and unpaid labour. She said that the conservative welfare state limits the independence by giving unpaid reproduction work a price. Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) stated:

> […] the conservative devotes and turn back the argument. In this way, we should pay them for being at home. This means no independency for women. They trick and stay as a wall for women and families. Mothers cannot escape after getting into violent situations.

The conservative welfare states seem to be an interesting case in the EU. Clearly, a couple of interviewees expressed that Germany is a powerful player and has the capacity to promote and implement Europeanisation not just in its own society but in whole Europe. France has been described as a state blocking a new reform. Conservative traits such as the family as the first welfare provider and the limited financial contributions do still apply, supporting the theory of conservative welfare regimes by Esping-Andersen (1990). For the analysis, this means that the interviewees described path dependency as a factor when it comes to the implementation of gender violence policies from the EU. As one of the big players, Germany is not showing a hard line of conservativism. Nevertheless, recommendations such as the increase of funding for programmes which tackle gender violence are not being taken into consideration. One expected data output was the clear definition of a conservative power construct side families as described in the theory of Gender Regimes (Orloff, 1993). Concerning the research question and the assumption: The social democratic, conservative and via-media welfare states will be described by the interviewees in a way expected from their category in the Gender Regimes theory, the conservative welfare states, France and Germany, were described by the interviewees as countries negatively influencing the role of the EU in combating gender violence due to their importance in the European Council.

5.2.3 Via-media welfare states

Via-media welfare regimes consist of states which are located between two regime types. Different circumstances can cause this ambivalence. One of the countries which fits the description of a via-media gender regime is Spain. The Spanish Gender Regime faced an array of change in the last years. Defining the Spanish welfare state as a conservative one would not give enough credit to the recent changes. Lombardo (2017) described new policies and norms in the country such as the dependency law or the approval of the gender violence law approving the existence of gender violence as a specific form of violence. The responsibility for care work shifted to a more public one and female representation in politics increased. Nevertheless, (Lombardo (2017) described a backlash into a conservative direction as budget cuts highly affect policy areas

protecting the status of women (Lombardo, 2017; Bustelo, 2016). The hypothesis expects the interviewees to describe a partial appetition of gender violence policies from the EU due to conservative traits and a movement to a progressive state during the recent years.

Nearly all interviewees referred to the Spanish welfare state as a good example for the women's movement, progressive legislations in the field of gender violence, and female representation. In the interviews with Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA), the progressive picture described new laws and recognition of gender inequality. This evidence supports these claims made by Lombardo (2017) and Bustelo (2016), describing progressive views inside the society. The interviewee referred further to changing norms concerning gender violence in the Spanish society. Analysing the historical perspective, Spain has been a clear conservative-family based welfare state with Catholic norms. As mentioned in a previous chapter, especially legislations helped to shift the responsibility of welfare to a more public concern in the year 2004. Women enter paid labour frequently and female representation is strong especially in governmental positions. The Spanish welfare state has changed into the direction of a more progressive Gender Regime in the last years (Bustelo, 2016). In my interview with her, Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA) described the progressive process in the last years as being representative of this point. Thus, Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA) mentioned law reforms 15 years ago and a changing attitude in the society. She could not recall what was more important, the changing laws or media reports of violent acts against women, but she added that media reports calling violent acts 'gender violence' had a huge impact on the society. At the same time, she expressed the view, that Spain shows its progressive stance in society by being responsive to recommendations of the EU and in some cases exceeds the required changes of the EU in order to combat gender violence.

The theory of Gender Regimes and the categorisation of the via-media welfare states described changed norms about gender violence in society and a movement which enabled women to speak up about inequality. The interviewees recognised the point about the importance of bottom-up processes in Europeanisation by mentioning the existing bottom-up process which has changed legislations of the Spanish government. Spain has a strong feminist movement and a vocal community in media reports (Lombardo, 2017). One of the cases in which a bottom-up process took place is the one of 'la manada'. Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA) described the case as an example which shows that Spain still needs to improve the recognition of gender violence as only partner violence is considered gender violence. The state enabled a progressive view in

society due to changed laws and regulations. This triggered a bottom-up movement in society leading to reconsiderations of the laws. Another interviewee, Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL), also suggested that changes in the society have been triggered by bottom up processes:

> You were referring to Spain with the huge women's rights movement. After the rape of a young woman the court of justice did not consider it as rape. They managed to have feminists block the country and came out victorious. A change happened and there will be legislative changes soon.

The case of Spain shows that the state can be considered as a 'via-media' model or a dynamic Gender Regime. Path dependency has an influence on the Spanish welfare state and the provision of unpaid labour. According to the interviewees, Spain still needs to change in different aspects such as the unpaid care provision. The interviewees seem to describe Spain as a progressive welfare state model, adapting EU recommendations in the fight against gender violence, and being a good example of implemented laws recognising gender violence.

The chapter concludes in some conclusions concerning how the interviewees view of the Spanish state and its role in the EU's combat against gender violence is a progressive one with conservative path dependency. Spain as a via-media model was expected to be situated in between the two poles (Esping-Andersen, 1990). According to the interviewees, an existing path dependency in the member state exists but for the question of a facilitating or limiting factor it appears to be irrelevant for the EU. The interviewees described cases in which Spain moves towards a progressive acknowledgement of inequality, laws, and norm adaptation from the EU despite the existing path dependency. This concludes in a dynamic assumption from the interviewees concerning Spain. The interviewees described a country exceeding its path dependency and moving towards a bottom-up movement.

5.3 EU power for change

Power can be defined by other theories using 'power' to describe the influence on something, normally in a political context. Realist's and liberal's definitions of power differ as realists see hard power such as force or military power as important. Liberals see economic power such as funding or monetary benefits as important and the normative power, the third power, or so-called soft power as the power to persuade. How each form

of power works and in what way they have been used by the EU to implement change was described in the theory. Hard power in the policy area of gender violence is not as important as the member state competence decides on policies on the issue (Forsberg, 2013). The perspective of the interviewees as the ones working with power to implement change gives valuable insights on the role of the EU in the combat. Hypothesis three expects the interviewees to refer to soft policies as the changing tool of a Europeanisation process concerning gender violence. Indeed, the interviewees might not refer to Europeanisation per se but to the power the EU has in order to implement change. The analysis does not include what kind of power the EU has in the field of gender equality as this is already described in the theory chapter. The analysis describes the perspective of the interviewees on the power the EU uses in combating gender violence. This portrayal includes doubts and wishes as the interviewees are defined as dynamic agents in the analysis chapter 5.1 driving for change in the structure. The dataset was coded using three notions of power: first hard power and the member states competence, second soft power, third economic power. To structure the notions of power, three sup-chapters have been created.

The first sub-chapter 'Economic power' analyses statements by the interviewees about funding programmes and the accession into the EU to implement change in domestic policies regarding gender violence. The next sub-chapter, 'Cultural power', describes the normative powers the EU has as soft policies and data acquisition can be a key factor in the role of the EU to combat gender violence in the member states. The following chapter, 'Hard power', analyses an area with member state competence and the different organs of the EU with different competence.

5.3.1 Economic Power

The theory of power in liberalism defined economic power as one way to enforce change in the member states. According to the theory of power defined by Forsberg (2013) a liberal standpoint emphasises "economic power, the power to produce and exchange" (Forsberg, 2013, p. 26) as one of the main tools for incentives. For example, member states agree to the conditions of the EU if they want to become a member and take advantage of the resources the EU has to offer (Forsberg, 2013). Two incentives have been mentioned by the interviewees: First, grants and funding and second, further resources granted for members. Libertarians defined by Forsberg (2013) would see grants such as the Daphne III Funding Programme as significant (European Commission, 2019a; Forsberg, 2013). Two interviewees argued otherwise. According to one of the

interviewees, Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA), the new Multiannual Financial Framework puts a focus on gender equality and gender balance in programmes which promote gender equality in the member states. The provision of resources is an economic way to set focus in the European debate. Member states of the EU can apply to funding programmes or third parties such as NGOs if they fulfil the requirement for the support. According to my literature review, the grants are indirect leverages on states aiming in awarding projects which are supporting and protecting females, especially against acts of violence (European Commission, 2019a). Nevertheless, famous grants, such as the Daphne III Funding Programme or the now called REC Programme are not enough to start a change process. Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA) gave evidence to the point:

> […] I think to be honest [the] Daphne programme is quite small. I mean I am familiar with the program and I support its existence plus in our group we have been really vocal to increase its funding, but if you compare it to policies on the national level, it is super small.

She also stated that financial support and grants are being reduced and the EC is aware of the fact that a reduction of the support will not bring positive change to the member states for victims of gender violence. Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) expressed that the reduction of financial support is noteworthy. Grants can have a negative impact on the member states as the signal the EU is sending out shows that those issues are not relevant enough to be dealt with in a financial aspect. Member states of the EU can follow an example and cut their own budgets for projects or grants in the same field. Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA) added later in the interview "[…] I mean we requested a second time from our group that finance dedicated to Daphne needs to be increased. Daphne budget is super small […] that even the commission is acknowledging that we have a big problem […]. The second way of using economic power is membership incentives. The EU offers members resources such as trade zones, financial support, and the guarantee of open borders. To become a member of the EU, the state needs to fulfil criteria. Those members need to change their norms and values to be in line with the ones of the EU when they want to become a member (European Parliament, 2020d). During the interviews, Al-Sahlani (MEP, Sweden, RE) described the importance of economic power with the example of former communist countries and their development to certain standards inside the society and democracy in

order to join the EU. The minimum requirement for those states is the first step of norm abduction and a forced phasing effect takes place. Al-Sahlani (MEP, Sweden, RE) expressed the development of a new member state as:

> Yes, becoming a member of the EU you need to fulfil some criteria. They call it the Copenhagen criteria. When you look at them, a lot of the plots there are norm given. The respect of rule of law, human rights, liberties, and anti-corrupt transparencies. These are norms and those are values that the EU is built around.

The interviewees do not see economic power as the main tool in the fight against gender violence. The interviewees as dynamic agents see a backlash in the economic power especially as new budget cuts have been established during the last years.

5.3.2 Normative power

According to the theory of power described by Forsberg (2013, pp. 26–28) cultural power or the so-called soft power/ normative power acknowledges the main power of the EU in attraction rather than monetary support or coercion, which would be a power resource of economic, and hard powers. The main power of the EU rests primarily on a normative power according to the theory as the ability to shape discussion and persuasion are main actions of the EU especially in the policy field of gender equality. To create shared understanding and perceptions is a main way for the EU to create discourse. The EU uses recommendations and dialogue to emphasise the one standpoint and norms on a certain issue (Forsberg, 2013). The interviewees supported the efficiency of soft powers partly, which gives an insight into their understanding of necessary power for change. The interviewees, such as Al-Sahlani (MEP, Sweden, RE) and Pietikäinen (MEP, Finland, EPP), referred to the importance of dialogue with national politicians, NGOs, and other stakeholders as an important way to shape discourse and norms in the EU member states. For example, Pietikäinen (MEP, Finland, EPP) stated in her interview:

> There is an impact. The more we talk about it and more proposal we make. […]. We are exchanging ideas and experiences in our home countries, trying to launch campaigns on member states level. I do have a pretty tight connection to Finnish NGOs and units which are dealing with gender issues. […]. It influences how they define the problem.

Another MEP described how she insists on combating norms about gender with discussions and discourse with other actors as this can be a changing tool. Al-Sahlani (MEP, Sweden, RE) expressed her role as actively trying to combat existing norms about gender using persuasion to tackle gender issues, which was representative of this point: "I mean it is typical for political processes that soft issues are the last thing which are approached and dealt with. Unfortunately. I am not giving up and surrendering to this reality we are facing."

One of the main soft policies some of the interviewees, Melchior (MEP, Denmark, RE) or Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA), referred to was the request for conducting data in the member state of the EU. Melchior (MEP, Denmark, RE) expressed the missing data as the main weakness of actions of the EU for combating gender violence. With data the actual cases of violence can be portrayed adequate and further steps can be planned. She stated that: "[…] I think we need more gender centric data and therefore we need to follow the violence against women much more specifically and we need to make it mandatory for member states to report about gender based violence." This goes hand in hand with the assumption that data can enforce change in the member states of the EU. Data can be a pressure medium to show agents in the member states of the EU that action needs to be taken. This would also apply to other stakeholders such as the economy or families who might feel the need to report violent acts if they see that the numbers are being reported and used to implement change. The acknowledgement of violence can be an important factor for victims to speak up. Melchior (MEP, Denmark, RE) expressed further "[…] if you have very low numbers it also means that people do not bother to report it because they do not think it will have an effect." The EU already has some data collection. One example would be the FRA's survey on violence against women from 2014 and other data which was for example used for the literature review in this thesis. Melchior (MEP, Denmark, RE) describes data as important as the EU requires member states to take part in surveys and to conduct own data on gender violence cases. Further, the EU can persuade member states of the EU with data and the EU can show good practice of keeping track of the amount of gender violence.

The EU is constructed of member states that can put certain policies forward. For the EU, this leaves space for soft policies and soft power and the role of 'good practice'. Soft power can establish perceptions and shared understandings. According to the theory of power, soft policies are the main tool of the EU to implement change in the member states (Forsberg, 2013). The EU often is not capable of enforcing laws or hard policies

onto the member states, which gives space to soft policies. They are a way to change norms in society.

Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA), the vice-chair of the FEMM committee, acknowledges that the EU is capable of change, especially in the past when soft power has been used. The EU can be a powerful player and that is visible in previous legislations. Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA) stated that "[…] It has a real influence and an effect for years. At one time, it was very effective. Coming from the EU was the good example, coming from gender in general and more specifically in gender violence." Nevertheless, she sees soft policies as not enough for a greater Europeanisation process nowadays. The appearance of soft policies is important as countries can go into a direction of a 'good example' if they wish, but she points out that soft policies are not enough to implement change. To further explain her point, she stated:

> It is important but not sufficient. It is our main tool because there are a lot of politics and legislative work we cannot do. […] The other thing is the member state competence, but not proactive as we would want in legislative matters. The soft policies are important but not sufficient.

The statement contradicts the hypothesis as it expected the interviewees to describe soft policies as an important tool to implement change. Nevertheless, the concern about the soft policies not being sufficient to implement change in the member states mostly appeared after the interviewees considered limiting factors of their power enforcement such as the rise of a right-wing movement in Europe contradicting progressive thoughts about gender violence. As a side issue, the interviewees were worried about the lacking initiative of the EU to change gender issues. They acknowledge that the EU is doing something, but the focus on combating gender violence and acknowledging it as a major crime is missing. Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA), the vice-chair of the FEMM committee, said: "The EU is doing a lot of at least advocacy and symbolic work. Publications and even some legislative work on some topics, yes, it is important […]", but she continued with the point that "Inside of the member states it should have a more legislative strong role."

This leads to the conclusion that the interviewees see soft policies as important tools to change perceptions and ideas about gender violence in the member states. As mentioned in the examples, one reason to stay in contact with national politicians, NGOs, and stakeholders is to change norms and attitudes in EU. Some of the interviewees

reported about problems concerning soft policies. They mostly referred to exogenous factors such as the rise of the right-wing movement, lack of the initiative of the EU concerning the combat of gender violence, and missing legislations as the problems influencing the output of soft policies. Nevertheless, the attitude towards soft policies was positive as they are needed to implement a general understanding in EU member states, especially as hard policies are not applicable. Assumption three, the interviewees will refer to soft policies as the main changing tool of a Europeanisation process concerning gender violence, can be partly rejected as interviewees did not refer to soft policies as the main changing tool in the combat. At the same time, soft policies can be classified as important for the interviewees, referring to them during the interviewees in a positive but doubtful way. For the research question, the way in which the interviewees described soft policies goes hand in hand with how the interviewees see the power of the EU in implementing change. It is the main resource of power they can refer to in the combat against gender violence.

5.3.3 Hard power

Realists describe hard power as the main form of power, associated with military force, the security of borders, and legislations. In the field of gender violence, hard policies cannot be applied as the matters lay on member state competence (Forsberg, 2013). Segments which have been coded during the analysis referred to mentioned laws and regulations enforced by the EU upon the member states. Those do not exist in the field of gender violence as the EU works with recommendations and soft policies. Nevertheless, the interviewees, Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) or Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA), described the importance of a reconsideration of possible hard policies as a way to implement laws in the member states. Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) expressed the need for EU wide legislations by using women trafficking and prostitution as examples. Trafficking of women occurs throughout Europe and can be considered gender violence. Within the EU, there are no general regulations supporting victims, even though the issue crosses all EU borders. Most of the interviewees wished for concrete actions and regulations tackling gender inequality. At the same time, they expressed the limitations that prevent the EU from implementing laws tackling gender violence. Hard policies would be possible if the EU interfered in the competence of the member states of the EU as the competence of the member states exists in the field of gender violence. Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) saw the reality of the EU as a shared competence and that problems emerge

out of the division. As an example, to the statement she expressed:

> In reality, what we can see is […]this area is on the competences of the member states which is not something bad, but it is complicated when you are a woman who tries to have some conventions or fights on the continent.

The reconsideration of member state competence and possible regulations on an EU level does not mean that the interviewees described hard power as the main tool to implement change. Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA) described the competence of the EU member states as something positive. The EU should not have the complete competence and allocation of power on different levels is appreciated even though it means that legislation processes might be limited or cancelled by the EU member states. Weiss (MEP, Denmark, EPP) expressed that regional culture and member state competences should be embraced even more. The member state culture concerning the matter of gender inequality would be of value to the debate and should be considered in more depth in the future. National competence should be best taken care of in the national states. She saw a lot of unity and friction in the continent, which leads to different strengths and weaknesses in each country.

Bringing the discussion back to the theory of power and the hypothesis, a supranational construct is not being described as necessary for the EU to have a functioning role in combating gender violence. The specific competences on a member state level are important. Nevertheless, Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) reevaluated why certain responsibilities are on member state level. If a matter needs to be addressed in all EU member states as it for example crosses borders, the competence of the EU member state needs to be questioned. It seems like the interviewees wish for more decision power, but at the same time do not want to open the debate about what makes sense as a member state competence or an EU competence. To take Weiss'(MEP, Denmark, EPP) position more into account, it would be necessary to point out what the national competences are and use those to combat gender violence. Another way to describe the argument would be that the EU can lead with norms, but each country should apply the norms and values in a way the national competence and culture are embedded.

Concerning hypothesis three, the interviewees do not see hard power as the main tool in the fight against gender violence, which supports the hypothesis. A reevaluation of hard power was questioned and the member state competence as well.

In conclusion for the research question, the interviewees describe the role of the EU as an institution using/not using– soft power to implement change in the member states, -economic power as a limited power due to budget cuts and –hard power as not applicable but wished to be reconsidered in some parts. For the interviewees, power can be limiting and facilitating during the fight against gender violence. It seems interesting that most of the interviewees, such as Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) or Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA), want to create a new power construct for the EU in the combat. A dynamic consideration of power can be depicted.

5.4 Future of EU's role in combating gender violence

The fourth hypothesis describes the development of the role of the EU in combating gender violence from the perspective of the interviewees. The literature review depicted the transformation in the EU gender policies. According to Sophie Jacquot (2015), the EU has been a progressive power in the field of gender equality and leads with 'good example'. Recently, the orientation in the field of gender equality has changed into a subordination to the market norms. Visible in funding rates and policy output, gender inequality has been referred to gender mainstreaming. Funding for EU wide projects tackling inequality have been cut and gender inequality was marginalised into another form of inequality in the EU (Jacquot, 2015). Research inside the EP, the European Parliamentary Research Service, emphasised that some research and policy areas are underdeveloped such as the treatment of victims of gender violence and their special protection in the EU (Shreeves & Prpic, 2019, pp. 7–8). Indeed, progress in the field of gender inequality can be reported and endeavour from the EU in their role to address issues. Nevertheless, the current EU legal framework combating gender violence is poor and the outcome of the policy transformation is rather disappointing (Shreeves & Jurviste, 2019, para.7). A continuation of the marginalisation and a disappointing vision for the future is expected. The decision to collate the codes into the theme 'Future of EU's role in combating gender violence' is based on the coded literature review. The appearance of the in chapter 4.4 mentioned codes; EU role prediction, Current/Past actions of the EU, Possible influence on the future role; were found in the interviews describing the future role of the EU in the combat. Even though one of the interview questions targeted this theme especially, a couple of interviewees, such as Al-Sahlani (MEP, Sweden, RE) or Balavoine (Political advisor, France, GUE/NGL), referred to it in other parts of the interview, which highlights the importance.

In our interview, Al-Sahlani (MEP, Sweden, RE) expressed that the EU is capable to hold norms and can enforce them on a new member at the accession process as they have to agree on certain laws and conditions. On the one hand, an active role of the EU in the combat especially in the future was denied by interviewee Argerich i Terradas (Advisor, Spain, Greens/EFA), emphasising problems such as budget cuts, no legislative work, new conservative governments in the EU. During the last years, a clear conservative ideology on themes such as gender violence can be deducted in the member states of the EU. The ideology contradicts any kind of attempt towards a combat of gender inequality and violence. This changed as the good practice of the EU, a norm giver to the member states, drained the last years. Melchior (MEP, Denmark, RE) said that there has been a focus on the matter previously. She stated: "I think they have changed. There has been more of a focus on it, but it has also become a more polarised subject especially in the last few years where there is a pushback against sexual reproductive health rights […]." The ideology of the member states of the EU can be described as a limiting factor for a progressive role of the EU in the combat against gender violence. The process in the field of gender has been successful in the past and norm giving took place. In our current state the attitude shifted to an ideological fight between some member states and the EU. Thus, the vice-chair of the FEMM committee, Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA), expressed this point as relevant as the pure mentioning of a gender ideology would give enough reason for member states to refrain from the EU recommendations:

> As often described, the member states have a lot of good examples, recommendation, good practice and also bad looks when they were not doing good and we didn't like it. Now at the moment, you have an ideological and normative way of thinking and doing things in some member states. At the contrary, they will effectively, and very specifically, want to be against all of that. Sometimes they are not against everything for example they will not be against violence against women, they would try to fight violence against women but this idea of a gender ideology, this idea of the gender aspects ideology they are against. They will refrain from doing things. At that point of view, it is not working. And it is not working nowadays.

Described by interviewee, Balavoine (political advisor, France, GUE/NGL), the changing attitudes in the member states of the EU and of the role of the EU as a 'good example' in gender questions to a polarised subject is related to recent developments on

the EU level. She described that signals such as reallocation of funds, marginalisation of gender, and the unclear definitions of gender problems contribute to the vanishing influence of the EU on the member states. On the other hand, a greater change process in Europe will happen if society starts to unify and mobilise. Problems of the institution and on national level can be balanced by a strong bottom-up movement influencing the EU and the national politicians in gender equality questions. Balavoine (political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) expressed the bottom-up approach as one of the leading tools for change of norms in the EU:

> What is happening inside society? In society there are big movements. When you are elected, you see the movements. You need to react and like this we can win something in the institutions. In society, we have the movement and the majority to push and change a thing. Even the person who could have been extremely conservative about it cannot be like this because they know they will not be elected. This is a bit sarcastic, but this is true. We have to build a majority inside society to win the institution. If we stay at the level of the institutions, change will not happen.

This means that the future role of the EU also depends on society and elections. Society can embrace, unify, and elect politicians who are supporting the battle against gender violence. Balavoine (political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) further continues in stating that soft policies are a way to implement change, but the problem is that for example financial grants can just be targeted the right way if politicians know about the urgency of the problem inside the member state.

As a conclusion for the analysis, with a strong bottom-up movement in the member states the EU can be influenced. At the same time, the EU has an influence on the member states and society. The 'logic of appropriateness', a concept describing the collective understanding inside society for the new given rule, and recommendations can be applied. The process of accepting can be led by a top-down approach and a bottom-up approach. If society accepts a certain norm, the acceptance can be forwarded to the EU level and change occurs. At the same time, the EU can facilitate the 'logic of appropriateness' with efforts, such as soft policies, tackling attitudes in society (Börzel & Risse, 2003, p. 62). A change process on both sides appears as evidence in the data. An example supporting this point is Delbos-Corfield (MEP, France, Greens/EFA) description on the process from two sides:

> It is a parallel process. There is Europeanisation, but the work of the activist on the ground of the society influences as well. It could never be only Europeanisation. You need to be at the very roots where people are changing their minds.

For the role of the EU in the combat against gender violence, the interviewees describe the necessity of taking society into account for future changes. It can be assumed that the actors working in the institution refer to themselves as they are a part of the society facilitating the EU role and they are a part of the top-down process. This appears to be true as Balavoine (political advisor, France, GUE/NGL) referred to herself as an activist, acting on the ground and inside the EP for policy change concerning gender violence in the member states.

For the theme, the importance of the bottom-up process is relevant as the rising right-wing movement and conservative norms about gender violence can influence the future role of the EU in the field. Thus, Pietikäinen (MEP, Finland, EPP) reported about the right-wing movement on the topic and actions blocking progressive work in the EU. A progressive bottom-up process can tackle the limiting factor and might influence the EU in the future. The misleading signals of the EU can be changed in the future with the described influence from the bottom-up and the top-down.

Interviewees described concerns about the future of the EU role in combating gender violence. Recent EU policies are a negative signal marginalising gender inequality. The rising right-wing movement, which is partly influenced by EU actions, contributes to the concerns. At the same time, the interviewees described a positive change of the EU's role as a bottom-up process can influence the EU. The EU can influence the bottom-up process at the same time which can lead to a dynamic, progressive future. The interviewees perspective was important as their position in the EP and member of the society gives us answers on both sides, describing the correlation of the bottom-up and top-down process.

5.5 Summary

The aim of the thesis was to describe the role of the EU in combating gender violence in the member states of the EU by taking a discursive-sociological approach to Europeanization, Gender Regimes, and power into account. On the basis of this, a picture of how the actors inside the EP describe and relate to the role of the EU emerges. On the

basis of the thematic analysis, four main descriptions of the role of the EU in combating gender violence can be expressed:

- EU actors, working inside the EP, are agents acting inside the structure, the EU institutions. The analysis has detailed the way in which they perceive of their role in the EU's fight against gender violence. The interviewees described communication as a tool to change normative assumptions concerning gender violence and to influence domestic developments. The interviewed agents are a part of the role of the EU in the combat facilitating change. At the same time, they can block change depending on their own attitudes about gender. The structures related to the EP can also lead to the agents emphasising the importance of conversations inside the institutions and structures of those.

- According to the interviewees, Gender Regimes are, but just partly, related to the EU's role in fighting gender violence in the member states. The path dependency of a member state has some an influence on the degree of adaptation; The social democratic welfare states are seen to adopt soft policies and react to recommendations from the EU. The interviewees suggested that conservative welfare regimes would be able to change stiff, existing role models. Nevertheless, conservative 'burdens' in laws and norms lead to a limited adaptation of EU norms. Spain as a member state with a conservative path dependency moves towards a progressive acknowledgement of inequality, laws, and norm adaptation from the EU, fitting to the via-media welfare state.

- On the basis of the interviews it seems that hard power and economic power are not perceived as the main tool in the fight against gender violence. Power can be a limiting and facilitating factor during the fight against gender violence. Soft power can change norms and assumption in the member states. Interviewees want a reconsideration of hard power to be able to enforce change. A new power construct for the EU in the combat is a dynamic consideration of power.

- Concerns about the future role of the EU in the combat against gender violence have been described. Recent EU policies, marginalisation, the right-wing movement, are part of the concerns. A progressive bottom-up process might influence the EU and the EU can influence the bottom-up process.

This study highlights the role of individual agents, such as MEPs. They can be dynamic and facilitating factors for change. Their endogenous approach to the topic reveals their own request to improve norms about gender violence in the member states within the system which facilitates the change process. As the analysis suggests, Gender Regimes might be facilitating or limiting depending on the welfare regime and processes such as changes in society during the last years, pushing from the bottom-up for change. Missing hard power, member states competence, a lack of economic power, and the sometimes described as weak soft power are limiting the impact the EU could have on member states. The current treatment of gender equality policies as side issues, marginalising inequality and budget cuts are concrete examples of a limited Europeanisation and disruption on the way to change in the field of gender equality. The parallel process of a bottom-up and top-down process might facilitate a phasing effect in the policies of the member states, but this is just a prediction.

6 Conclusion

The thesis started with the recognition of gender violence a "global pandemic" (Malgesini et al., 2019, p. 4) in our society. In the research carried out for the thesis, the EU role combating gender violence was described by actors inside the EP. Limiting or facilitating factors in the combat have been described, Europeanisation has been the base for the theoretical assumption of change, the Gender Regime theory was assumed to give insights on limiting and facilitating factors, and the different forms of power were described by the interviewees as useful or less useful tools to implement change. The future role of the EU in the combat has also been described out of the perspective of the actors working in the EP.

The focus in the theory of Europeanisation has been on the discursive-sociological approach, a part of the theory highlighting the importance of the actor or further defined agent, as the channel for a dynamic assumption about Europeanisation (Lombardo & Forest, 2015). Gender Regimes have been important to portray the lives of women and their role in the family. With Gender Regimes, path dependency became a part of the

research for an unintentional and intentional consideration of change, frame factors of culture, and norms. The last theoretical assumption described different forms of power the EU uses to implement change. A liberal approach to power has been chosen and especially soft power has been discussed as an important factor for change. Soft policies are not forcing change onto the member states of the EU. They are a normative power with the ability to shape discussion and persuade member states of the EU to act in a certain way. The last part of the literature review consists of the changed attitude of the EU on gender violence, leading to expectation of the future role of the EU in the combat.

The thematic analysis showed us different themes in the interview material. First, interviewees, agents, contained the role of the EU in the gender discursive-sociological approach. Especially conversations with other actors have been important for the examined Europeanisation process. Agents bring a dynamic component to the process of Europeanisation using discourse, changing their own norms, and the ones of other actors. Second, the path dependency has become clear with Gender Regimes partly facilitating and limiting the EU in influencing norms about gender violence. In the analysis, the existence and impact of Gender Regimes became clear. Third, the EU's power for change has been discussed. The use of hard power by the EU in the combat against gender violence was described not to be possible, economic power being limited due to, for example, budget cuts and soft power as a way to change norms in the member states. Fourth, the interviewees expressed concerns about the future role of the EU in combating gender violence. Concerns, such as the rise of a right-wing movement, the way the EU treats gender equality policies are part of the problem as the EU attitude can influence the member states negatively. In these conditions, a more bottom-up approach influencing the EU and a parallel top-down approach could offer a possible positive prospect of the EU role in combating gender violence.

6.1 Answering the research question

To recall the research question of the thesis, the overall aim of analysis was to answer: *In what way do actors inside the EP describe the role of the EU in combating gender violence?* And the research task was to relate this question back to the theories of Europeanization, Gender Regimes and power.

The descriptive mission of the thesis has been fulfilled. Empirical facts from the interviewees have been identified. The EU role in the combat against gender violence has been described mentioning facilitating and limiting factors for a phasing effect in EU member state policies. The actors inside the EP describe the role of the EU in combating

gender violence in several ways. First, as agents pushing for an even bigger and more influential role in the combat, changing norms with discourse, and an own mission. The conversation with other actors was described as immensely important in obtaining information and communicating norms to national politicians. During the last years, the agents experienced a change in the EP as the attitude towards gender and gender violence progressed. The change in the structure facilitated new norms in the EP and broadened the influence of the EU in combating gender violence in the member states. Second, as the interviewees all belong to an EU member state, insights about norms and welfare policies could be shared. The EU can exist in symbiosis with the path dependency and existing norms in the member states, depending on the regime type, may also lead to progressive reforms. For example, in conservative member states, old policy burdens limit the Europeanisation effect in the gender violence field. In some countries, the Gender Regime does not impact the EU capacity for change, which leads to the conclusion that each member state needs to be analysed individually. A generalisation of, for example, all social democratic welfare states acting in a progressive way cannot be done. Third, the EU holds various types power and thus has a capacity to immensely shape its role in the combat against gender violence. With hard power, there is the possibility to implement great change. Yet, currently, the EU uses soft power in influencing and persuading norms to other member states. The interviewees acknowledged soft power to be of value and important as the EU is the normative hegemon setting standard. Nevertheless, the agents asked for a revaluation of hard power. This can be caused due to the agents' perception of themselves as a dynamic element requiring the extension of the EU's progressive role in the combat. Fourth, the agents see a bottom-up process of Europeanisation as a parallel movement next to the top-down movement. Both sides can influence each other and overcome problems in the future. The interviewees are again situated on two sides, describing their role in the EP and as part to the society. For the research question, this means that a bottom-up movement can facilitate the EU ambitions in the fight against gender violence.

The justification of the thesis described the scientific relevance and the societal relevance. The research gap described the lack of answers concerning facilitating and limiting factors of the role of the EU in combating gender violence described by agents. Especially topics concerning gender are interesting to analyse using a descriptive mission. Gender is an abstract word, allowing for a vast amount of opinion and interpretations. Combining gender with path dependency, power and the agent position allowed to extract unique data. Moreover, the interviewees are in positions from where they have a unique

access to see and evaluate the actions the EU is taking in the combat against gender violence. Nearly all interviewees described the wish to improve the role of the EU in the combat. This could take the form of, for example, more communication, by overcoming some features of path dependency, use of hard power, and a reestablishment of the old 'good example' role of the EU as an unquestioned normative power in gender inequality questions. The belonging to an EP group did not limit the ambitions, it just shaped the request in a certain direction. Nearly all interviewees pictured themselves as dynamic, progressive actors able to shape the role of the EU so that it is able to win the fight against this social disease.

The research output of this master's thesis is of great societal importance. Next to answering the research question and the spotted research gap, the thesis concludes in a call of further action in the combat against gender violence. The research design of the thesis consists of different parts, which may seem to contradict one another. In some previous literature, researchers claimed that the theory of path dependency together with a dynamic discursive approach would not make sense. However, given the complexity of social and political life, the thesis highlights the importance of examining the path dependency (Gender Regimes), the power the EU holds, and the discursive-sociological approach on a same level. As we saw from the analysis, the different parts of the thesis are not contradicting each other. They facilitate aspects of analysis and allow for a wide analysis of the EU's role in fighting gender violence.

6.2 Limitations and further research

As in any research, there is a variety of limitations in this thesis. First, the thesis was focused on gender violence and a top-down Europeanisation theory. In future research, it would be necessary to broaden the scope of research to aspects such as new forms of gender violence as well as to a bottom-up Europeanisation. The selection of gender regimes seems plausible but at the same time a comparison of more member states of the same Gender Regime could have strengthened the statements about a certain regime type. In this research, the role of media as a change bringer inside a society has not been examined. Especially in the case of Spain, the bottom-up movement that has succeeded in bringing improvements to the situation is supported by the media. It would be interesting to conduct some future research on this. Second, national politicians as actors have been largely ignored. Yet, the interviewees mentioned national politicians as a key factor for a top-down Europeanisation. An extensive analysis of East European member states and their adoption on policies would be interesting as Eastern Europe is too often

referred to as a homogeneous mass, and this also applies to Esping-Andersen's (1990) theory. The selected method has some weaknesses that future research could strengthen. Indeed, the interviews allowed the agents describe the role of the EU in new and enriching ways yielding unique insights from within the EU, but an extensive qualitative policy analysis about the adoption of policies could have been valuable as well. However, the limits of a master's thesis such as the number of pages did not allow for an additional analysis. In the future, research in the same area with a different scope would be possible.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview guideline

Master's thesis topic: "Policies against gender violence in Sweden, Germany, and Spain: Exploring the explanatory potential of power and Gender Regimes in contrast to the theory of Europeanisation"

Type of the interview*:* Semi-structured expert interviews
Language of the interview**:** English or German
Number of interviewees: up to 10 interviewees
Estimated time for each interview: approx. 30/40 minutes

Interview structure**:**

- **Introduction:**
  - Introducing the interviewer, topic of the interview and the aim of the research;
  - Ethical considerations, confidentiality.

- **Questions:**
  - In my research, I am interested in what the EU is doing in the field of gender violence in society. Can you first tell me about your views on this? What is the EU doing, is it doing the right things and is it doing enough?

  - Do you see a connection between Europeanisation/Europeanisation effect and changing norms in member states of the European Union (EU)?
    - How do you see the relationship between the efforts of the EU and individual member states in this, in European efforts in the field of gender violence?
    - How would you characterize the role of different societal norms, and diverse attitudes about gender violence in societies here? To what extent do you think the EU specific

policies and differences are caused by different societal norms, and diverse attitudes about gender violence in society? And how does this impact the EU's efforts?

- How about the EP? How has the meaning of gender violence in the EP changed over the last years?
    - Do you think political debates and policy discourse influence the policy output tackling gender violence? In the EP, do you see a dynamic or static assumption about gender violence?

    - Can you describe to me what kind of communication of MEPs with national politicians, activist groups, and other actors is taking place in this field? Is it important in implementing laws or change?

- In my research, I am using the notion of 'Gender Regimes'. Do you think that such Gender Regimes or welfare policies prevent the adoption of European recommendations? Or can they facilitate it?
    - How does the XX welfare state take influence on families and a possible family model? What family policies are implemented to overcome gender violence?
    - Do you think that the XX welfare state enforces certain norms on women?

- <u>How does the use of power from the EU implement change in the member states?</u>
    - Do you think soft policies are adequate in changing norms of gender violence in the member states?
    - What measures by the EP would you recommend for tackling gender violence in the future?
    - Do you think Europeanisation will overcome regional differences?

- **End of interview:**

Thanks, additional points, queries, ethics

Appendix B

Informed Consent

This informed consent form is for participants in the master's thesis research of Alba María Vázquez López, a student at Tampere University.

Introduction

For research of Europeanization and Gender Violence the Tampere University student conducts interviews with XX. The interviews will be treated confidentially, and the interviewee will remain anonymous unless indicated otherwise.

The working title of the thesis is: "Policies against gender violence in Sweden, Germany, and Spain: Exploring the explanatory potential of power and Gender Regimes in contrast to the theory of Europeanisation".

Requirements

The interviewee agrees with the following:

- Participation is entirely voluntary.
- Participation can be stopped or revoked at any time.
- There are no direct risks related to this research.

If necessary, the interviewee can contact the thesis supervisor of the student: Dr. Anni Kangas (anni.kangas@tuni.fi).

The interviewee declares the following:

I have read the text above and agree with participation in this research. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and all have been answered satisfactory. I voluntarily participate in this research and allow the researcher to make an audio recording and take written notes.

Name participant _____

Signature Participant _____

Date _____

For any questions you can contact me via; albamaria.vazquezlopez@tuni.fi

Appendix C

Information about interviewees

Pos.	Name	Function	Politcal group	Member state	Date	Length
1	Helena Argerich i Terradas	Advisor on Constitutional Affairs- Women's Rights and Gender Equality (EFA Advisor)	Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance	Spanish	12th of June, 2020	46 min
2	Maria Sophia Træholt	Accredited assistants of MEP Kira Perter-Hansen- Working in the area of gender equality and the labour market	Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance	Danish	22nd of June, 2020	36 min
3	Karen Melchior	MEP	Renew Europe	Danish	25th of June, 2020	26 min
4	Charlotte Balavoine	Political advisor	Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left	French	29th of June, 2020	47 min
5	Sirpa Pietikäinen	MEP	Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)	Finnish	02nd of July, 2020	61 min
6	Abir Al-Sahlani	MEP	Renew Europe	Swedish	02nd of July, 2020	27 min
7	Nicolaus Fest	MEP	Identity and Democracy Group	German	09th of July, 2020	75 min
8	Rita	Accredited assistants of MEP Katrin Langensiepen	Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance	-	10th of July, 2020	36 min
9	Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield	MEP	Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance	French	14th of July, 2020	32 min
10	Pernille Weiss	MEP	Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats)	Danish	15th of July, 2020	42 min