Birgit Glorius
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Geographies of Asylum in Europe and the Role of European Localities

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Chapter 1
Introduction

Birgit Glorius and Jeroen Doomernik

Since at least the summer of 2015, refugee migration to Europe has been a topical issue in academic, political and public debates. While European meta-discourses often link to security issues, border security and problems with "burden sharing", which are reflected at the state level and expanded by questions of social policies and so forth, the local level is largely neglected.

Yet, it is at the local level where policies are implemented, often with varying practices which are intertwined with local specifics regarding political culture and the state of civil society. Taking on a cross-national comparative perspective, research on the local level can reveal influences of national framings on the development of reception processes, policy and discourses.

This volume aims to show the development of "the refugee crisis" and reception processes, and the repercussions of this "crisis" for policy development and public discourses at the level of European localities. It brings together a selection of fresh empirical research on reception processes and the development of structures, practices and discourses at the local level throughout Europe. The contributions are based on desktop research and document analysis as well as on a large variety of empirical fieldwork including media analysis, expert interviews, focus group discussions and ethnographic research. This fieldwork integrates perspectives from political and administration stakeholders, civil society and its institutions, grassroots organizations and asylum-seeking migrants throughout European countries which were touched by the "refugee crisis" in very diverse ways (Austria, Belgium,

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Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Italy, and the Netherlands). Hence, the volume shows the varieties of refugee reception and integration strategies and practices, taking into account the geographical, historical and political contexts of the specific case study regions (see for example Chaps. 2, 3, 6, 9 and 10). By also including perceptions of the local public and how these translate into policy development, it contributes to the nexus between migration/integration of refugees on the one hand and societal development and political culture on the other (see for example Chaps. 6, 8 and 11). Through highlighting examples of experimental governance and multi-sectoral approaches, we point to the role of localities in shaping innovative policies (see for example Chaps. 7 and 12), but we also highlight the effects of tightening national (or supra-national) policies on specific places and localities, and on the inhabitants of those places (see for example Chaps. 2, 3, 4 and 5).

This introductory chapter will first highlight approaches that were central for creating this volume and which appear as cross-cutting themes throughout the single contributions. Notably, these are the topics of local governance and the constitution of spaces and places of reception (Sect. 1.1.1), and the crisis narrative, its foundations and practical consequences (Sect. 1.1.2). In the last section (Sect. 1.2), we introduce the single contributions of this volume.

1.1   Rationale and Conceptual Framework

1.1.1   Local Governance and the Constitution of Spaces and Places of Reception

The admission and reception of asylum seekers is obviously a matter for multiple governance levels. While EU laws lay the ground for entry into the EU space, defining member states' responsibilities for the handling of asylum applications and giving guidelines for the asylum procedures, it is the local level where asylum seekers are allocated, and where practical questions regarding accommodation, health issues, education or social integration have to be tackled. Given the fact that asylum policies are shaped at the national and supra-national governance levels, there is an obvious mismatch between the role of localities as being the major places of reception and integration of asylum seekers on the one hand, and their limited role in the decision-making process around whether to take in asylum seekers or not, and how (and at which point of the asylum procedure) they can shape asylum seekers' paths to long-term integration. However, against the backdrop of the formal structure of governance, localities can carry out further functions beyond those set out by law, and can even undermine the reception system as designed by national or EU norms. The (counter-)active role of the local level is particularly evident in the case of networks of cities claiming a greater role in the asylum decision-making processes at the EU level by becoming 'cities of refuge' (Eurocities 2015; Doomernik and Ardon 2018).

In migration research, the new focus on the local was fuelled by the 'spatial turn' in social sciences, which called for a reintroduction of space as an analytical category for the research of social phenomena (see e.g. Bachmann-Medik 2016: 211 ff.; Warf and Arias 2009). The 'local turn' as part of the 'spatial turn' led to a more detailed conceptualization of the 'local' as a spatio-temporal setting which determines a specific opportunity structure in which migrants' integration trajectories can unfold (Glick-Schiller and Cağlar 2011: 63). For migration policy research, the 'local turn' implies a reconceptualisation of the local as a level of policymaking rather than merely focusing on national policies (Caponio et al. 2018; Stephenson 2013; Zapata-Barrero et al. 2017). Zapata-Barrero et al. (2017: 2) stress that within a multilevel governance research framework, the local perspective can "contribute to a more in-depth understanding of why and how cities and regions respond differently to similar challenges, and of why and how these different answers can affect state-based models of immigration management".

The new sensitivity towards the scale of observation is also appreciated in the context of growing critique against the essentialisation of the nation state in migration research, labelled as "methodological nationalism" (Wimmer and Glick-Schiller 2002). This also entails a closer look at local actor constellations, problem perceptions and civic cultures which determine how the task of migrant integration is approached within a specific municipality. Among the most convincing approaches for analyzing those local negotiation processes as crucial aspects of policy development, the migration regime approach has become quite prominent in recent years, even though it lacks a clear-cut explanatory structure due to the multitude of definitions and applications in research (for a review see: Bernt 2019). However, as Bernt (2019: 11) points out, the approach has its merits if used as "a perspective that tries to break free of state-centrism, to urge researchers to think about a multitude of actors and relationships, emphasizing relationality and openness in the field of migrations [sic] studies." And that's exactly what the contributions to this volume are doing.

A number of contributions also take a decidedly critical geographical perspective and apply concepts focusing on the spatiality of reception processes, resulting from a translation of hegemonic ideas and discourses into practices and material configurations of places of reception. The contributions of Göler (Chap. 4) and Kreichauf (Chap. 3), for example, present analyses of local geographies of asylum, applying Marc Augé's (2009) concept of non-places and Michel Foucault's ideas on heterotopias (Foucault 1984). Focusing on the micro-level of asylum seekers' accommodation facilities, both authors explore how spatial, material and institutional differences affect everyday relations between asylum seekers and local residents and can even affect asylum seekers' chances of being granted asylum. With a conceptualization along the dialectics of openness/closure, or inclusion/exclusion, Göler and Kreichauf both demonstrate how spatial and social categories are linked in terms of producing spaces of inclusion or exclusion, and thus non-places or heterotopias. Also the contribution of Semprebon and Pelacani (Chap. 2) relates to critical concepts of space by depicting new "spaces of transit" or "internal hotspots"

along the Italian Brenner route, which are not only defined by the geographical layout of the space but by social borders of inclusion.

1.1.2 The Notion of Crisis

As the initial idea for this volume developed in the context of increasing arrivals (and shipwrecking incidents) of asylum seekers at the European shores, which was visible at the local level at least since 2013 and later labelled under various 'crisis' narratives (among others: 'migration crisis', 'refugee crisis', 'reception crisis', 'governance crisis', and 'state crisis'), we deem it necessary to reflect on the notion of crisis and its meaning in the context of asylum in Europe. As Scholten and Van Ninsen (2015: 3) point out in their introduction to a special issue on the role of policy analysis in 'crisis' situations, "crisis is often defined in a broad sense, involving concerns about levels and types of immigration as well as concerns about the integration of migrant groups and categories." However, there is no clear definition of what the constituents of the crisis are, and who is deemed responsible for reacting to it.

In applied research in the context of migration and disaster management, the concept of crisis usually relates to humanitarian crises such as natural catastrophes or armed conflicts, combined with the inability of affected individuals, communities and states to cope with the outcomes of the critical event (Hendow et al. 2018: 13). In a historical perspective, the crisis definition gradually changed from a more "technical" understanding of crisis as a natural hazard to a more sociological definition of crisis as "a process of interaction between external forces, such as a natural hazard or armed conflict, and the socio-economic and political conditions in a society" (Hendow et al. 2018: 14).

In this relational understanding, the concept of "vulnerability" also appeared, taking into account varying abilities to cope with the impact of a hazard, due to personal or group characteristics (Wisner et al. 1994). The focus on human agency and coping strategies led to the adoption of *resilience* as a key concept of disaster management (Hendow et al. 2018: 17), which is commonly understood as "the shared social capacity to anticipate, resist, absorb and recover from an adverse or disturbing event or process through adaptive and innovative processes of change, entrepreneurship, learning and increased competence" (Frerks et al. 2011). We can conclude that the definition of a situation as a crisis is based on subjective perceptions and is in a relational sense, rather than on the basis of objectively measurable indicators (Lindley 2014).

Furthermore, as Hendow et al. (2018: 14) point out, the perception of a situation as critical is related to certain thresholds or tipping points, which highlight the processual character (rather than static situation) of a crisis and also stress "the relevance of rising tensions and the multiplicity of factors that shape a crisis as outcome" (ibid.). In the case of migration to and asylum in Europe, we can certainly see several thresholds, constituted by strongly increasing numbers of migrant arrivals in

particular spots (first of all along the Italian and Greek shores, mostly observable on the Greek island of Lesbos and the Italian island of Lampedusa), which were not adequately equipped for the reception. Later, these thresholds also emerged in countries of second reception, such as in Austria, Germany, or the Netherlands, where additional reception centres were provisionally erected in camp-like structures. In the course of the "migration crisis", so-called internal hotspots developed at places where migrants got stuck on their way through Europe, or after having been deported due to the Dublin Regulation. For a number of years, one of the most well-known places was the so-called "jungle" of Calais, a series of makeshift camps for migrants desperately trying to reach the UK via the Channel Tunnel or under the chassis of a lorry going on a cross-Channel ferry. But also the Italian border towns of Ventimiglia or Como, or certain cities along the Brenner route – as is shown by Semprebon and Pelacani in this volume – developed into internal hotspots.

Those localities serve as a showcase for the inadequacy of European asylum governance, highlighting the inability of political actors and regulating bodies to integrate those autonomously acting migrants into the logics of a Common European Asylum System (CEAS), with its fixed regulations regarding national responsibilities for the processing of the asylum claim, and strict regulations regarding the support provided to migrants and the eligibility for this support. Consequently, in this volume, for example Müller and Rosenberger (Chap. 5) speak of a "migrant reception crisis" rather than a 'migration' or 'refugee crisis', stressing the structural malequipment and practical policy failures in the challenge to adequately respond to the needs of asylum seekers (see also Chaps. 2 and 6 in this volume).

However, moving through the contributions of this volume, we can also observe that the 'crisis' – of whatever it may exactly consist – plays out in different ways: in many of our case studies, it results in a backlash regarding integration and diversity, constituted by processes of socio-spatial exclusion of asylum seekers (campization, in Kreichauf's words) as a measure to cope with increasing numbers of arrivals (such as in the cases of Denmark, Austria and Germany). In other cases, 'crisis governance' resulted in local innovations and experimental governance (such as in the case of Plan Einstein laid out in Chap. 12), or increasing engagement of non-state actors and civil society, who gradually turned from people "who just wanted to help" into individual stakeholders who learned to express political claims (see Chap. 11). In some cases, the sudden surplus of clients constituted by the refugees (for example in the area of social housing or education) highlighted the shortcomings of existing state structures, where neoliberal policies had already led to a serious reduction in quantity and quality before the 'refugee crisis'. Thus, the arrival of refugees could serve as a catalyst for processes of change.

Throughout Europe, the perceived 'refugee crisis' went in line with politicization processes, leading to the rise of Eurosceptic, nationalist and xenophobic parties and governance approaches, which is most notably seen in the case of Hungary (see Chap. 8). But also in other countries, and observable at the local level and in local discourses, public debates started on the legitimacy of asylum seekers' presence in European localities. On the one hand, those debates argued about the legal legitimacy of asylum seekers, identifying so-called "poverty migrants" as persons not

deserving asylum in Europe, and not deserving direct support in the localities, which might be given to the detriment of economically poor local inhabitants. On the other hand, debates on the presence of asylum seekers were structured around attributes such as culture, gender, religion or ethnicity, identifying especially young, male, single Muslim asylum seekers as a threat to the cultural hegemony of white, Christian, democratic Europe. Those "othering" processes have led to strong xenophobic and nationalistic movements and the concomitant evolution of nationalist right-wing parties throughout Europe, which are a major challenge for the European integration process.

1.2   Structure of This Volume

This volume is based on the assumption that regulatory structures and the development of policies in the field of asylum reception are reconfigured at the local level, depending on the discursive framing of the topic in general and in relation to other topical issues in the relevant local and national frames.

The volume contains three – argumentatively connected – parts: the first addressing the governance of asylum and the structures of reception systems and spaces and places of reception; the second analyzing perceptions and discourses on asylum and refugees, their evolution and the consequences for policy development; and the third examining practical challenges and local responses in the field of refugee reception and integration.

The first part of this volume explores the spatial and temporal dimension of refugee reception processes and its governance at the local level, presenting case studies from Italy (Chap. 2, Semprebon and Pelacani), Denmark (Chap. 3, Kreichauf), Germany (Chap. 4, Göler) and Austria (Chap. 5, Müller and Rosenberger). By taking a comparative perspective on the development of national and local reception structures and reception cultures, the contributions show the significance of local configurations for the development of spaces and places of asylum in Europe. A specific focus of all contributions in this part is the issue of how the governance of asylum has been adapted due to the stress situation since 2015.

Chapter 2 (Semprebon and Pelacani) looks at Italy, highlighting reception structures along the border between Austria and Italy, specifically in the cities of Bolzano, Verona and Trento. The region serves as a transit space for onward-moving migrants, but due to the border enforcements in Germany and Austria, many of them get stuck in the region and have to rely on the local welfare infrastructure to survive. Also migrants who were returned from Austria and Germany to Italy on the basis of the Dublin Regulation frequently stay in the region. However, the reception infrastructure is primarily designed for initial asylum applicants, excluding those mobile migrants[1] who decided to travel onwards. Thus, the access to social services based

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[1] In view of the fact that it is not always clear whether individuals who more or less spontaneously cross into Europe are intent on applying for asylum or would be granted protection if they did so,

on categorization processes of migrants effectively serves as a social boundary, which turns transit migrants into "second-class citizens". The case study shows that it is not only first reception policies that have undergone a rescaling process from the EU level via the national level to the local level, but also policies of deterring individual mobility, which transforms the three case study sites into "internal EU hotspots".

Chapter 3 (Kreichauf) discusses adaptations of the Danish reception infrastructure as a reaction to the increase of arrivals. Kreichauf examines how the state's further tightening of restrictive reception and accommodation policies significantly impacts the socio-spatial configurations of accommodation facilities, and refugees' access to housing and their well-being. He discusses the links between the tightening of laws, the deterioration of living conditions and the (re-)constitution of large accommodation facilities as means of socio-spatial exclusion. Introducing the concept of "campization", Kreichauf stresses the fact that the geographical location and the material configuration of asylum accommodation are crucial elements of Denmark's policy of deterrence and exclusion of refugees.

Chapter 4 (Göler) also takes a deep look into a camp-like reception infrastructure, this time in the German state of Bavaria. The initial reception centre at Bamberg is a model facility that manages all the steps of the asylum decision (until possible rejection, followed by deportation) on site. The reception centre is located in a former military compound and thus is exclusionary in terms of the location and material configuration. Drawing on Marc Augé's concept of 'non-spaces' as well as on findings from camp research, Göler introduces the notion of "geographicities" as a relational approach towards spatial and social order and relevant political, economic or historical framings. Implementing a variety of empirical methods, among others a mapping exercise with inhabitants of the reception centre, his research reveals an alienation of refugees in the local and urban contexts, in which (politically deliberate) approaches to integration are largely missing.

In Chap. 5, Müller and Rosenberger provide an overview of Austrian reception policies "before and after the reception crisis of 2015". They show how localities respond to the allocation of asylum seekers, differentiating between two groups of relevant actors: administrative authorities on the one hand, and civil society actors on the other. Their analysis of the developments since 2015 reveals ambivalent results concerning the local turn in migration governance. In terms of legal powers on admission, they find municipalities losing importance, while in terms of support and inclusion municipalities gain in importance, not least because of the exclusionary stance of the national government on asylum and reduced public funding for integration facilitators.

The second part of this volume focuses on public discourses on immigration and refugee reception in Europe and explores how they translate into reception practices and policy-making, and vice versa. Following the main rationale of this volume, the

we use the term "migrant" to cover all those instances and reserve "asylum seeker" and "refugee" for where these are more appropriate.

three chapters in this part highlight discourses and their outcomes for the local level, using case studies from Italy (Chap. 6), Belgium (Chap. 7) and Hungary (Chap. 8).

Chapter 6 (Pogliano and Ponzo) studies the development of two urban crises in Italy evolving in the context of refugee movements since 2013: the rapid increase of transit refugees at the Central Station of Milan, and refugees' illegal occupation of four buildings in Turin's former Olympic village. The chapter explores the framing of those events in the local media and policy discourse, identifying two specific and competing frames that evolve during the period of observation: the victim frame and the humanitarian frame. The authors highlight how policy networks and the local media were mutually involved in the process of narrative-making and how the cohesion of the policy networks strengthened their ability to affect the local media frames. They thus connect to social movement studies, which just recently have begun to consider the role of media and communication in the organisation of "contentious collective action" (McAdam et al. 2001), by raising the visibility of their political claims.

Chapter 7 (Ravn et al.), which is a case study of a European-funded local support programme for unaccompanied minor refugees in Antwerp, Belgium, explores the notion of *deservingness* which underpins this programme. Ravn et al. argue that deservingness is a central notion in European discourses on refugee reception (e.g. Holmes and Castañeda 2016), pointing not only to the legal and economic dimensions, but also to the moral dimension. They analyse how deservingness is reproduced by local actors of refugee assistance. One major finding is that stakeholders' different ideas on deservingness reflect their different aspirations about the kind of citizens young refugees should become. This chapter thus illustrates how refugee reception programmes may trigger reflections on the shape of society and the criteria for becoming a member of it.

Chapter 8 (Simonovits) focuses on yet another discursive line that developed in the context of refugee movements in Europe since 2015. Taking the example of Hungary, Simonovits explores the notions of *fear* and *xenophobia* in the context of refugee reception and specific local civil society responses which result from these perceptions. To provide a deeper understanding of those reciprocities, it is necessary to explore the connection between fear, risk perception, and the development of public opinion and public vote. Simonovits uses the Integrated Threat Theory (originally developed by Stephan and Stephan 1993), which incorporates several theoretical perspectives on stereotypes and prejudices, and thus arrives at a differentiated typology of real and perceived threats, their development with respect to individual and group characteristics, and their effects in terms of anti-immigrant attitudes and practices. The findings show how efficiently the anti-immigrant government narratives shaped public attitudes on immigration and integration.

The third part of the volume explores how discourses translate into practices. Following Bourdieu's "Theory of Practice" (1977), we assume that the development of practices and policies in the area of local asylum management is not only based on laws and regulations, but that it develops following implicit rules. The local level and specific features in it can thus be perceived as a *field* (in Bourdieu's words), where actors compete for power and influence, and develop specific strategies that

guide actions and actors. By analysing a field, we better understand manifold influences such as the configuration of actors, their room for manoeuvre, formations of knowledge, normative discourses and power resources. The four contributions in this section (three case studies on Germany, one on the Netherlands) shed light on local governance in the field of housing and education (Chaps. 9, 10 and 12) and on the motivations and interactions of private and public actors (Chaps. 11 and 12). The questions addressed in this section are: How are policies influenced by public perceptions and discourses, and vice versa? How do local policy responses in the context of asylum migration and political/managerial practices vary, and how can variations be explained? Which interactions between policy fields and between different policy levels have occurred, and what are the long-term consequences of these interactions?

Chapter 9 (Glorius and Schondelmayer) presents a regional case study from East Germany and examines how the integration process of adolescent refugees in the educational system was managed during the years of large-scale arrivals in 2015–2016. Glorius and Schondelmayer not only highlight the contextual specifics of the case study and thus point to the significance of the local level in understanding processes and outcomes of reception policies, but also address the notion of *integration* from various actors' perspectives. This helps to expand the view on the topic, which usually focuses solely on the "official" level of reception and integration governance.

Chapter 10 (Adam et al.), again a regional case study in Germany, addresses the field of refugee housing. Adam et al. conceptualize individual housing as a crucial step in integration and highlight the interconnections of governance sectors—refugee reception and social housing—in the field of housing. Affordable housing, in many of Germany's densely populated urban areas, is increasingly contested and politicized, and thus the competition for affordable housing could (further) evoke social tension in these regions. The authors explore different housing strategies for refugees in a large city and smaller towns, illustrating the variety of approaches and difficulties with their implementation.

In Chap. 11, the volume's final regional example from Germany, Hoppe-Seyler highlights the role of local voluntary organisations as important actors in the local governance of refugee reception, taking over basic tasks from municipalities such as language teaching and providing refugees with information and practical help. She specifically addresses the motivation for voluntary work, highlighting how the emotional and spatial dimensions are meaningful to the analysis of volunteer practices as well as their conflicts and ruptures. Furthermore, she shows the politicization of volunteers and the potential for conflicts resulting from politicization, not only for individual volunteers and refugee relief organisations, but also for local policy-making.

Chapter 12 (Geuijen, Oliver and Dekker) again turns to the housing sector and presents a local housing project in the Netherlands, which combines refugee reception policies with other sectors of policy-making (social work, neighbourhood development, social work with youth). In particular, Geuijen, Oliver and Dekker show how, through the development of multi-sector and multi-level alliances, the

project was made appealing to different constituents for different reasons. The chapter also illustrates how the experiment resulted in the initiators manoeuvring within different political contexts and constraints locally and nationally. In this way, it did not challenge the existing structures outright, through decoupling from the national level, but negotiated within these, to bring the concept into being. The chapter thus presents a refreshing example of how the so-called 'refugee crisis' could provide an opportunity for experimentation at the local level in European cities.

The concluding Chap. 13 (Doomernik and Glorius) wraps up the major findings of this volume. It highlights the conceptual challenges and knowledge gaps that were brought to the fore by the single contributions, and identifies interesting research questions for further research in this rapidly changing policy field.

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Part I
Governing Asylum and Reception Within an Asylum System Under Stress

Chapter 2
Dispersal and Reception in Northern Italy: Comparing Systems Along the Brenner Route

Michela Semprebon and Gracy Pelacani

2.1 Introduction

In the last decades, the European Union's migration policy has been increasingly criticized for its imbalance towards border control and the fight against what policy-makers define as "illegal migration" rather than the reception and the protection of seekers and holders of international protection. An increasing number of policy restrictions and practices have curtailed the rights of both groups of migrants (Morris 2002; Tyler 2010), thus impacting on their lives as well as on the territories they transit through.

Dispersal schemes are an element of this policy scenario. They feature in various EU member states, including Italy (Boswell 2001; Robinson et al. 2003), as part of an articulated multi-level policy framework. Within this framework, local authorities and the third sector play a crucial role in dealing with the arrival and reception of seekers and holders of international protection and with the difficulties due to inadequate EU and national reception systems.

In 2011, with the outbreak of the Arab Spring and the reprise of considerable migration flows towards EU member states, the political discourse on asylum and migration policy came to be dominated by an "emergency" frame again (Campesi 2011; Marchetti 2012; Dal Zotto 2014), often invoked to legitimise the unpreparedness of national governments to cope with migration. In 2013 and 2014, as the Syrian civil war escalated, a growing diversification and fragmentation of migration trajectories added to this (perceived) emergency due to the increasing numbers of

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Syrians and Eritreans arriving on southern Italian shores in order to reach Northern Europe, particularly Germany and Sweden.

In this context, temporary controls were re-introduced several times at Brenner, one of the Italian points of access to Austria, pursuant to Article 25 *et seq.* of the Schengen Borders Code, providing EU member states with the possibility of introducing temporal controls at internal borders in the event of serious threats to internal security. Regular random police inspections have been operated since by German, Austrian and Italian police forces on trains and in train stations along the Brenner route, from Verona to Brenner, and further north, in Rosenheim and Munich (Antenne Migranti and ASGI 2017).

In addition, several agreements have been signed between Italy and Austria in this regard.[1] Border enforcement was particularly strengthened in 2015 (for a good explanation on this, see Fontanari and Borri 2017); and, in the same year, Austria declared its intention to tighten controls on its border with Italy (European Commission 2015). It was a time when the cross-border mobility of seekers and holders of international protection was hardly evident to the wider public opinion. On their side, national institutions had been tolerating what were understood as marginal "secondary movements" (Scalettaris 2007). These resulted from a national strategy of "laissez-passer" (Ciabarri 2015), implemented, similarly to Greece, to cope with growing arrivals.[2]

Holders of humanitarian protection[3] were increasingly pushed to the margins of society. Some of them tried to travel to Northern Europe to look for better settlement opportunities, thus making the inadequacy of the Dublin system more evident (Morano-Foadi 2017). Other migrants included people performing autonomous journeys (Kasparek 2016) along the Balkan route, which was closed in summer 2015, and from Southern Italy, in the period that preceded the full operation of the

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[1] For further details see Antenne Migranti and ASGI (2017). In 2014, an agreement regulated controls on passenger trains, and in 2017 on freight trains. The former agreement was ratified by both the Italian government (Legge del 03/11/2016 nr. 209, G.U. 21/11/2016) and Austrian government (Bundesgesetzblatt Nr. BGBl. III Nr. 47/2017). For further details see Antenne Migranti and ASGI (2017) and Monika Weissensteiner "Da Lampedusa al Brennero", Una città. http://www.unacitta.it/flip/lampedusa-brennero/files/assets/basic-html/page39.html. Accessed 5 July 2018. As regards the latter agreement see Ansa "Austria, Controlli treni merci al Brennero", http://www.ansa.it/trentino/notizie/2017/11/15/austria-controlli-trilaterali-brennero_5266a464-914d-4930-a7cf-8bc5e7004224.html. Accesses 1 July 2018.

[2] Cf. Infringement procedure opened against Italy for the incorrect implementation of the Eurodac Regulation (n. 20152203) notified on 10/12/2015. European Commission – Press release, 10th Dec. 2015. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6276_EN.htm. Accessed 20 June 2018.

[3] The humanitarian protection is a national status granted by the Italian government to asylum seekers in situations not typified by LD. 286/1998 (arts. 5.6, 19.1), that is to say whenever there are serious reasons, of humanitarian nature, or resulting from constitutional or international obligations. It applies to applicants whose refugee status or right to subsidiary protection cannot be recognized, but who can also not be expelled in accordance with the principle of *non-refoulement*. However, the LD. 113/2018 (in force since October 2018, and converted into Law 132/2018) has partially modified the grounds on which humanitarian protection is given, by limiting the ground on which this status can be granted and adding three other "special" permits, two based on humanitarian grounds (medical reasons and natural disasters) and another for special civil merits.

hotspot system (Sciurba 2017), aimed at boosting compliance with the Eurodac (n. 603/2013) and the Dublin III Regulations (Casolari 2016). Many became stuck at Ventimiglia, a border crossing point with France, or Como-Chiasso, at the border with Switzerland, and were repeatedly transferred back to the hotspot areas (Tazzioli 2017). The same happened at Brenner, the main point of access to Austria.

This is how these locations transformed into *internal hotspots* (see also Denaro 2016 on Milan) characterised by more and more systematic border enforcement practices.[4] They have also become "spaces of transit" (Tazzioli 2017). Therefore, several local actors have been "forced" to activate accordingly, in order to deal with migrants being "stuck" while trying to transit through these spaces towards Northern Europe. In particular, we are referring to migrants arriving by land through the Balkan route, holders of humanitarian protection wanting to leave Italy, migrants re-admitted to Italy in application of the Dublin Regulation or entering Italy to re-apply for international protection, and asylum seekers leaving a reception centre in Italy (due to unsustainable living conditions) despite a pending asylum application in the country.

The fact that none of these migrants can easily access (or benefit from) the reception system points to some critical issues. Firstly, transit across Europe has affected the rights and conditions of seekers and holders of international protection. Secondly, it has put reception actors in some border locations under more strain. Growing interest has been paid to the crucial role of civil society in dealing with them, as well as with undocumented migrants (e.g. Ambrosini 2018). Less attention has been given to how and the extent to which the public sector has been activated to deal with their presence on their territory, for a more or less limited time. This is the focus of this chapter.

By drawing from the work of Caponio and Borkert (2010) on the multilevel governance of migration, and the work of Mezzadra and Neilson (2016) on the proliferation of heterogeneous forms of borders, we discuss the specific scenario along the Brenner route, and how and to what extent the respective local systems of reception have catered (or not) for migrants that policy-makers often define "in transit" and who (at a certain stage) have fallen out of the ordinary system of dispersal.

The chapter is structured as follows: first, an overview will be given of the current system of reception in Italy and of the critical issues that have emerged over the most recent years. Second, we will set our contribution into the context of the wider academic debate on reception systems and how and whether these have responded to migrants. Then, we will focus on three cities along the Brenner route—Verona,

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[4] Papers on these localities have been presented in the panels "Ethnographies of asylum seekers reception" coordinated by Semprebon and Marzorati http://www.etnografiaricercaqualitativa.it/GeneralProgramme at the Ethnography and Qualitative Research Conference in Bergamo 6th–9th Jun. 2018 and by *Fontanari, Gennari, Caprioglio, Ferri* http://users2.unimi.it/escapes/escapes2018/escapes2018-programma/#28p *at the Escapes Conference in Milan 28th–29th Jun. 2018.*

Trento and Bolzano—and will look at the similarities and differences characterising their respective reception systems. To conclude, we will make some final remarks and provide recommendations for policy-making.

2.2 The Current System of Reception in Italy

Italy is characterised by a double-track reception system: an ordinary and an extraordinary one. The origins of the ordinary system can be traced back to the "Piano Nazionale di Asilo" (National Asylum Plan) (1999–2001) when a first attempt was made to create a reception network with the involvement of local communities (Hein 2010).

In 2001, the Ministry of Interior, ANCI (the Associazione Nazionale Comuni Italiani – National Association of Italian Municipalities) and the UNHCR signed a memorandum of understanding establishing the first public reception network in Italy, which was institutionalized by Law 89/2002 under the name of "SPRAR" (Sistema di protezione per richiedenti asilo e rifugiati – Protection system for asylum seekers and refugees).

In 2011, a parallel emergency system of reception was set up in order to cope with the increasing number of arrivals by sea that followed the outbreak of the Arab Spring and a chaotic situation in Libya. In April 2011, the Italian Ministry of Interior launched the Emergency North Africa Program, which ended in December 2012. Extraordinary reception centres were opened to provide a temporary solution, aimed to complement the limited capacity of the ordinary system.

Over time, due to the persistent inability of the ordinary system to cope with arrivals, the extraordinary system was consolidated and was finally institutionalized in 2014, on the basis of an understanding among the State, the Regions and local entities.[5] This was meant to favour the coordination of all government levels involved in reception and to lead to the absorption of the extraordinary system into the ordinary one, by promoting a two-level system.

The current system is structured as follows: upon migrants' arrival, medical assistance is provided and identification procedures are carried out in hotspots or at the ports of arrival, although they partly still take place in the CPSAs (Centri di Primo Soccorso e Accoglienza – Centres of first medical aid and reception). Next, migrants who express the intention to apply for international protection are taken to collective governmental reception centres (CPAs, Centri di Prima Accoglienza – Centres of first reception). When places are insufficient, migrants are distributed across temporary centres, the so-called CASs (Centri di Accoglienza Straordinaria – Centres of Extraordinary Reception), located throughout the country. The distribu-

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[5] Conferenza Unificata Stato-Regioni, Intesa tra il Governo, le Regioni e gli Enti locali sul piano nazionale per fronteggiare il flusso straordinario di cittadini extracomunitari, adulti, famiglie e minori stranieri non accompagnati, 10.07.2014. http://www.statoregioni.it/Documenti/DOC_044430_77%20CU%20PUNTO%202%20ODG.pdf. Accessed 20 June 2018.

tion takes place according to a system of progressive quotas, taking into consideration regions' number of asylum seekers with respect to the total number of inhabitants and the percentage of access to funding from national funds for social policy.[6] Finally, asylum seekers are transferred to a SPRAR structure, if places are available.[7]

According to the most recent data available, on 31st December 2016, 73% of migrants were hosted in CAS structures, 7.8% in other structures of first reception (CPAS, CDA, CARA), 0.4% in hotspots and 18.7% in SPRAR structures. This makes it evident that although the SPRAR system is supposed to be the main element of the reception system, it is still far from being so, mainly due to insufficient places being available (SPRAR report 2017).

2.2.1   The SPRAR Network and the CAS

The SPRAR network consists of a network of reception projects, funded through resources made available by the National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services (funded in turn by the EU Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund). Local entities join the network on a voluntary basis, by applying for funding. Each reception project must be approved by the Central Service (Servizio Centrale), which is the SPRAR's coordinating body. Requirements include first and foremost the acceptance of a public authority to take responsibility as the main signatory. Projects last 3 years, are renewable, and the National Fund covers 95% of the total costs.[8]

The network operates on a multi-level logic, through the decentralisation of project management: the implementation of activities is delegated to private actors, encouraging the activation of synergies between the public and third sectors.

In 2016, 652 SPRAR projects were funded: 508 targeting ordinary beneficiaries, 99 unaccompanied minors and 45 migrants with physical and/or mental vulnerability or disability. Since its creation, the network has grown considerably from 1365 available places in 2003 to more than 26,000 in 2016.

As indicated in the 2017 SPRAR report, in 2016, the ordinary system started giving priority of access to migrants who had already obtained a form of international protection, in line with the idea that the SPRAR should become the primary infrastructure to facilitate the integration of migrants. The Law 132/2018 (in force since October 2018) established that only holders of refugee status or subsidiary protection, unaccompanied minors, holders of permits granted for medical reasons, victims of natural disasters, those with civil merits and other limited special cases can access a SPRAR project. The SPRAR was renamed SIPROIMI, (Protection System for holders of international protection and unaccompanied minors - Sistema

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[6] *Supra* note 6.

[7] For more details on reception structures see Accorinti (2015).

[8] See the SPRAR dedicated website. www.sprar.it. Accessed 5 January 2017.

di Protezione per titolari di protezione internazionale e per minori stranieri non accompagnati).

SPRAR and (and similarly for SIPROIMI - but implementation guidelines have not been published yet) initiatives offer "integrated" reception services, with the main goal of supporting beneficiaries on their path towards autonomy. Apart from room and board, services should include health assistance, language and cultural mediation, social assistance, multicultural activities, support for job orientation and job seeking, and legal assistance. The actual standard of these services across the country is inconsistent. Standards of CAS services are not defined in the relevant normative framework (Lgs.D. 142/2015), but can be defined in the conventions signed between a CAS and a local prefecture[9] or the prefecture and the local authority competent for the territory where the CAS is located.[10]

Reception facilities are of three types: 2873 small flats (83.3% of structures in 2016), 357 collective centres (10.3% in 2016) and 227 "comunità alloggio", which are community reception centres (6.6% in 2016). Some structures are targeted to specific types of beneficiaries, such as unaccompanied minors, single women with children, and families.

The length of beneficiaries' stay in the centres varies depending on their status and personal situation, but also across projects, in relation to discretionary decisions on the side of operators. As far as seekers of international protection are concerned, reception is granted until a decision on the application is made. In case of rejection, their stay can be prolonged until the term to appeal the decision expires and, in case of appeal, as long as they are authorized to remain in the national territory (art. 14, Legislative Decree - from now onwards LD. - 142/2015).

As a result of an effort to simplify and accelerate the legal procedure after a negative decision by the Territorial Commission, the possibility to appeal the decision to a second instance was eliminated (LD. 13/2017). Rejected applicants can now only appeal directly to the Court of Cassation within 30 days (art. 6, co. 1, lett. g, LD. 13/2017, 35 *bis*, co, 13). In practice, their length of stay depends on the time it takes for the competent Territorial Commission to decide on the application: currently more than 300 days on average (AA.VV. 2017). For applicants that have obtained a form of international protection, their stay in reception centres should not exceed 6 months, but it can be extended on an individual basis – for example, if applicants do not have their own means of subsistence or are particularly vulnerable.

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[9] The Prefecture is the headquarters of the Prefetto (Prefect) who represents the Ministry of Interior in each province.

[10] e.g. Prefecture of Rome http://www.prefettura.it/roma/allegati/Download:Cas_capitolato_tecnico_cig_695518503c-5854145.htm; Prefecture of Florence http://www.prefettura.it/FILES/allegatinews/1183/ALL_1_Convenzione_.pdf; Prefecture of Milan http://www.prefettura.it/milano/allegati/Download:Allegato_b_schema_di_convenzione-5732499.htm. Accessed 20 August 2018.

2.2.2   Critical Issues Relating to the Reception System in the CAS and SPRAR Network

Scholars have highlighted a range of critical issues connected to the reception systems in various EU countries. Some of these issues are (partly) relevant for the Italian system too.[11]

First, there has been a growing process of privatization of reception (Darling 2016), alongside limited accountability of the managing institutions. This concerns Italy too, particularly with reference to the CASs managed by private cooperatives.

Second, responsibility for reception has been increasingly delegated from the national to the local government, with scarce monitoring (Robinson et al. 2003). Similarly, repeated evidence by lasciateCIEntrare[12] suggests that the Italian Ministry of Interior does not regularly undertake monitoring visits to the CASs, thus leaving them to the discretion of prefectures. On its side, SPRAR's Central Services has been undertaking a regular monitoring of projects' financial reports but also visits.

Third, minimum standards of services are not always guaranteed (Robinson et al. 2003). In the case of Italy the lack of homogeneity is evident in particular when comparing SPRAR and CAS structures (Marchetti 2016). SPRAR identified precise standards for the provision of services, financial reporting and monitoring, contrary to CAS structures, where the vast majority of beneficiaries of reception are hosted. At the same time, critical issues relating to standards also apply to some SPRAR structures, due to the consistent growth of the network and the fact that some operators are not yet sufficiently trained (Ambrosini and Marchetti 2008; Semprebon 2017). From this point of view, a reflection is needed on the effectiveness of LD. 142/2015 in terms of granting minimum standards of reception to all seekers and holders of international protection (Marchetti 2016), considering the lack of homogeneous approaches to management and the provision of services.

Fourth, as anticipated, the approval of a SPRAR project is dependent on the voluntary decision of a public entity to take responsibility for the project. However, this does not always happen, as migration is a highly politicized issue and reception is often met by resistance from local residents (Marzorati and Semprebon 2018), also as a result of a diffused discriminatory discourse on immigration (Carta di Roma 2017). To date, the total number of public entities that have signed for a project amounts to 555, including 491 municipalities (out of a total of 8000 in Italy) – while 1000 authorities are involved in projects to a limited extent (SPRAR 2017). In this sense, the voluntary nature characterizing the activation of SPRAR projects has been strongly criticised (Penasa 2017).

Fifth, reception often seems to be geared towards the control of beneficiaries rather than their empowerment and integration, particularly in CAS structures (Griffiths et al. 2005). In Italy this has translated into rigid internal CAS regulations limiting individuals' personal autonomy, although they should be allowed to go out

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[11] e.g. Ambrosini and Marchetti (2008); Scannavini (2010); Marchetti (2016)

[12] See http://www.lasciatecientrare.it/. Accessed 8 February 2018.

during the day, as established for ordinary centres (art. 10.2, LD. 142/2015; Accardo and Guido 2016).

Sixth, and at a more macro level, critical issues of reception relate to the actual system of dispersal and the impact of beneficiaries' arrival in different contexts of reception. An overarching logic of "burden sharing" (Boswell 2001) still prevails and coexists with an approach that is still largely based on emergency management, despite the efforts to develop a system based on a constant and *ex ante* annual evaluation of reception needs. In fact, as expressly stipulated by LD. 142/2015 (art. 8), the national coordinating body is expected to adopt an annual reception plan based on a prediction of arrivals, which should define the number of places needed for reception. No other criteria are applied in the dispersal system. For example, no consideration is made to distribute beneficiaries where larger communities of co-nationals reside, in view of facilitating access to co-ethnic networks, contrary to what is suggested by evidence (for the UK: Bloch 2008).

Seventh, if we look at post-reception experiences, various reports by SPRAR highlight that only a few beneficiaries find employment and decent accommodation at the end of their stay in a reception project. Moreover, to date, even when beneficiaries are granted protection, they cannot benefit from any national integration programme; if they are rejected, they may return to (if ever having left) a state of marginality (Médecins Sans Frontières 2018; IntegrA/Azione 2012). Many of them may experience a sense of "institutional abandonment" (Agier 2005).

Finally, a more general critical aspect of the reception system in Italy relates to access. Some categories of migrants are de facto excluded or run a high risk of being excluded from it. These include migrants who are in transit, and who arrive by land and are not "dispersed" through the quotas defined by the Ministry of Interior (for migrants arriving by sea). The most recent amendment to the national legislation of international protection and reception (Cf. Law 132/2018) confirms this exclusionary trend.

2.3   Reception in Transit Places: The Academic Literature

As noted above, little attention has been paid to the public sector, and to how and to what extent it is activated to deal with migrants transiting through Europe. Particularly in the past decade, Italy has been understood and has considered itself as a gateway to Northern Europe. In this sense, it could seem paradoxical that the country has scarcely improved its capacity to deal with migrants that transit through border areas. However, as spelt out in LD. 142/2015, the right to reception is granted only to migrants who do not have any means of subsistence when they apply for international protection in Italy and for whom Italy is responsible according to the Dublin III Regulation.

What should be stressed is that access to reception, and connected rights, can be hindered even when these conditions are met: this is the case for migrants that arrive by land, typically through the Balkan route or who travel southwards through the Brenner Pass, following a rejected application for asylum in another EU member

state. While migrants arriving on southern Italian shores enter the reception system through the system of dispersal (unless they refuse to do so or flee), migrants arriving by land can face considerable obstacles in accessing any form of protection. Even if they manifest their willingness to apply for asylum, the formalization of the application can take 1 month or more (AAVV 2017) and the entry into the reception system can take much longer (e.g. NAGA 2018) or be denied altogether.

Migrants who are re-admitted to Italy following a take-back procedure (arts. 18, 23–25, Dublin III Regulation) face similar difficulties. In this context, Italy has recorded an increasing trend of incoming Dublin procedures, with a three-fold increase in 2016 with respect to 2015 (Eurostat 2018–13).[13] The evaluation is particularly lengthy, with the resulting protraction of migrants' precariousness (AAVV 2017). Adding to this, the time limits for the evaluation, as per art. 21.1 of the Dublin Regulation, often expire, with the result that migrants cannot be subject to a Dublin Procedure any longer. Attempts to overcome the deficiencies and imbalances of the Dublin Regulation have been made with the introduction of specific tools. The most well-known of these is perhaps the mechanism of relocation, which nevertheless has proved ineffective because EU member states have largely acted according to their "own interests" (see Stege 2018).

There are also migrants that are granted reception but that choose to flee. Where a voluntary and formally unjustified abandonment of reception applies, migrants are excluded from reception measures (cf. arts. 13 and 23 LD. 142/2015). This highlights the tension between the current logic underlying reception and asylum, that is, to stay in a country, and the actual condition and choice of many migrants to move across Europe.

A recent report by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF 2018) has addressed the conditions of migrants experiencing one (or more) of the situations described above. It has underlined the "invisibility" of migrants that are barely protected by institutions and at a high risk of being forced into informal settlements in public spaces (parks, squares, railway station platforms, etc.) or squatting in abandoned buildings (compare Pogliano and Ponzo, Chap. 6 in this volume). Many of the informal settlements are found in border cities close to the Balkan route, including North-western Italian cities such as Trieste, Gorizia, Udine, but also Trento and Bolzano, further up north, as well as in Foggia and Crotone, in Southern Italy, where centres of first reception are located. Squatting is mostly evident in larger metropolitan areas. Evidence of similar circumstances, most often in the absence of institutional interventions, has been found in border locations of other EU countries, such as Calais (Rigby and Schlembach 2013; King 2016).

Various scholars have provided informed accounts of civil society actors assisting destitute migrants (on Italy: Campomori 2008; Marzorati et al. 2017; on the US: De Graauw 2015) and undocumented migrants (Ambrosini 2018) who face precarious and vulnerable conditions, and likewise migrants transiting through border areas.

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[13] Data is available at: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_dubri&lang=en. Accessed 27 August 2018.

Scholars have identified the role of civil society actors as crucial in the wider framework of the European border regime. A general attitude has been observed among government agencies of "turning a blind eye" to the presence of migrants, while delegating responsibility to the third sector (Ambrosini and Van der Leun 2015; Bonizzoni 2017; Ambrosini 2018) as, in compliance with national (excluding) norms, the state does not have to meet their needs. Some scholars criticize similar forms of delegation (Ambrosini and Van der Leun 2015; Balbo 2015; Marzorati et al. 2017; Mayblin and James 2018) by suggesting their substitute function contributes to the disengagement of the public sector (Castañeda 2007).

Generally speaking, the growing assumption that (some) migrants are "in transit" has often overshadowed the relevance of evolving migration patterns, even in urban contexts located at the crossroads of internal and international borders. What can be defined as "transit migration framework" has not only contributed to the neglect of some migrants' experiences, but has somehow legitimised nonintervention by local governments with respect to wider integration issues (Marconi 2018). This is in line with a more general tendency to consider forced migrants as a temporary population with the resulting adoption of temporary policy solutions (Fabos and Kibreab 2007). Davies et al. (2017) argue that this form of institutional abandonment can be interpreted as a means of control perpetrated through inaction. However, with the rapid diffusion of the (often blurred) "transit terminology" (e.g. transit migration, transit countries, transit migrants) in the public and political discourse, transit countries and areas have been increasingly accused of being responsible for transit migration itself. At the same time, they have been asked and induced to cooperate in filtering unwanted "inflows" of people (Düvell 2012; Düvell et al. 2014).

While this can be described as an evident manifestation of a wider migration regime, it cannot be interpreted as a set of fixed dynamics, but needs to be looked at in relation to contextual specificities, including growing concerns and emotions associated with xenophobia and racism. This is particularly true for the field of migration that has been described as very contentious (Della Porta 2018).

Additionally, as many authors have stressed, migration policies can translate into practices that, even in contradictory ways, are "less efficient" and more tolerant. Policies can be more or less coherent with respect to national legislations, and more or less inclusive with respect to migrants. Some local authorities have refused to adhere to national (exclusionary) approaches, by choosing to support irregular migrants (Varsanyi 2006; Davies et al. 2017; Ambrosini 2018); while others have shown varying degrees of willingness to grant, and difficulty in dealing with, reception for (otherwise stranded) asylum seekers (e.g. Davis et al. 2016); others still have designed interventions that reinforce the exclusionary nature of national policies (Gilbert 2009; Chand and Schreckhise 2015; Gargiulo 2017).

National governments bear the primary responsibility for immigration policy (concerning the entry of migrants and citizenship regulation), while local governments are responsible for the provision of services. Research has shown that local authorities have been prone to adopt pragmatic approaches to migrants' incorporation (Caponio and Borkert 2010; Jørgensen 2012; Marzorati et al. 2017), as they are

faced with their needs most directly (Borkert and Bosswick 2007; Vermeulen and Stotijn 2010) and somehow are "forced" to address them in some ways (Ambrosini and Boccagni 2015). In Italy, this has been happening in a context characterised by weak regulation at the national level and strong fragmentation of institutional responsibilities (Caponio and Pavolini 2007; Balbo 2015) that has resulted in considerable local variations in the provision of services (Caponio and Campomori 2014). Furthermore, it has been adding to a welfare system that determines the eligibility of social rights depending on legal status (Sainsbury 2012), meaning access to it is most restricted to undocumented and forced migrants.

In this direction, we will look at dispersal and reception policies in Italy, and how and to what extent they have been implemented at a local level and in border localities that have been faced with the presence of migrants transiting through them. The focus will be specifically on three cities along the Brenner route: Verona, Trento and Bolzano.

2.4   The Methodological Approach

Our approach involves a triangulation of research techniques: legal analysis of policy documents, content analysis of nine interviews carried out with institutional and civil society actors in Verona and Trento between September 2017 and April 2018,[14] and a non-systematic content analysis of newspaper articles – particularly articles referred to by interviewees, and secondary research material. This research has also benefited from discussions with volunteers of the project "Antenne Migranti",[15] with whom one of the authors has been volunteering since May 2016. Discussions centred on policies implemented by institutional agents in Verona, Trento and Bolzano, as well as practices identified by volunteers by speaking to migrants and by accompanying them to helpdesks and public offices. Note that no interviews were carried out in Bolzano due to resource constraints.

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[14] CIR employee, 9/3/2018; Operator of dorms, 4/12/2017; Don Calabria supervisor, 8/3/2018; Executive Officer Polfer 17/12/2017; Reception Office Coordinator of the Social Service Department of the Municipality of Verona, 23/3/2018; Islamic centre Board Member, 19/12/2017; Director of Cinformi, 7/3/2018; Helpdesk Operator, 18/4/2018; Soup kitchen operator, 4/5/2018.

[15] Antenne Migranti is a project coordinated by the Alexander Langer Stiftung Foundation, in Bolzano, with partial funding from the Open Society Foundation to support a coordinator. The project is run by volunteers and has these objectives: to detect and prevent the violation of migrants' rights along the Brenner route; to support migrants by directing them to local services and helping them with asylum procedures; to assess migrants' needs and stimulate institutions to respond to them; to promote an informed debate on reception and free movement; and to promote the development of effective trans-local networks on reception and transit.

2.5 The Case Studies

2.5.1 Verona

The reception system in Verona comprises a SPRAR and a CAS system. The former comprises 97 places for beneficiaries in five projects—two for ordinary beneficiaries and three for unaccompanied minors—under the responsibility of the Municipality of Verona;[16] the latter accommodates 2705 beneficiaries under the responsibility of the prefecture[17] that has delegated implementation to 30 social cooperatives. Out of 98 municipalities in the wider provincial territory, only three, including the Municipality of Verona itself, have activated a SPRAR project so far.

Resistance to reception has been strong and it can be associated with political factors. The current governing coalition in Verona is led by the right-wing party Lega Nord, known in Italy for its xenophobic positions against migrants and its firm opposition to reception. Shortly after the beginning of his mandate, in May 2017, the current mayor forcefully declared his opposition to reception for migrants "who do not have the right to stay",[18] but he has been silent since. The previous mayor had developed a more open attitude towards migrants, after departing from an overtly racist attitude (Semprebon 2010). At the same time, his approach was in line with his successor in that he stressed the distinction between economic migrants and "deserving" asylum seekers.[19] He also called for police forces not to prevent migrants from getting on trains heading to Brenner, and for European member states to agree on the delivery of a European humanitarian permit, so that Italy was not left to deal with the phenomenon alone.[20] On their side, in the most recent years, some mayors in provincial localities have openly supported the extreme-right movement "Verona ai Veronesi" (Verona to the Veronese) and its protests against reception.[21]

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[16] Data (March 2018). http://www.sprar.it/progetti-territoriali?_sft_provincia=verona. Accessed 26 June 2018.

[17] Prefecture of Verona data, 30 November 2017.

[18] Verona Sera, 29 June 2017 "Profughi. Sboarina vuole cambiamenti. Ferrari: Aderisca allo Sprar". http://www.veronasera.it/cronaca/sboarina-profughi-ferrari-sprar-29-giugno-2017.html; L'Arena 27 June 2017, "Sboarina e i profughi 'Sì a chi ha diritto, no ai clandestini'". http://www.larena.it/territori/citt%C3%A0/sboarina-e-i-profughi-s%C3%AC-a-chi-ha-diritto-no-ai-clandestini-1.5797961. Accessed 20 June 2018.

[19] L'Arena, 2 February 2017 "Centro profughi Tosi perplesso: 'Meglio altrove'", http://www.larena.it/territori/citt%C3%A0/centro-profughi-tosi-perplesso-meglio-altrove-1.5463105; Verona Sera, 3 January 2017. Protesta dei profughi a Veronetta, Tosi: "Inaccettabile. Che siano allontanati". http://www.veronasera.it/cronaca/tosi-protesta-profughi-veronetta-3-gennaio-2017.html. Accessed 20 June 2018.

[20] Verona In, 29 September 2015 "Tosi alla Polfer: lasciate salire i profughi sui treni". http://www.verona-in.it/2015/09/29/tosi-alla-polfer-di-verona-lasciate-salire-i-profughi-sui-treni/. Accessed 20 June 2018.

[21] Verona Sera, 4 July 2017 "Anche a Roncolevà, Verona ai Veronesi contro il 'business dell'accoglienza'". http://www.veronasera.it/cronaca/verona-ai-veronesi-trevenzuolo-4-luglio-2017.html; Verona Sera, 24 June 2017 "Presidio a Buttapietra di "Verona ai Veronesi" contro il

Verona is located in the north-eastern Italian region of Veneto and is not a town of first arrival. Migrants mostly arrive here through the dispersal system operating in Italy, while some of them arrive autonomously, while transiting through the country. In fact, Verona is located at the intersection of several important transport routes: the main train station functions as an interchange for railway traffic from Bologna to Brenner, from Venice to Milan and west to Ventimiglia. It is also connected to Quadrante Europa, one of the largest freight terminals in Italy (in terms of volume).

According to the CIR employee interviewed, following the increasing enforcement of border controls at Brenner and the closure of the Balkan route towards the north, a growing number of migrants have been transiting through from the Balkans towards Italy since mid-2015. In September 2017, the local branch of CIR (Consiglio Italiano Rifugiati – Italian Council for Refugees, a national NGO specialised on asylum) estimated that a total of 50 migrants were on the waiting list to access reception (narrative evidence by a CIR employee).

CIR has been operating a legal support desk for reception beneficiaries, as a partner of the local SPRAR project. In recent years, the same desk has also been providing support to migrants that arrive autonomously in Verona. Because of increasing arrivals, funding was sought to provide them with temporary accommodation. In particular, a specific CAS was opened for this purpose, managed in collaboration with Caritas, although with a limited capacity of around 25 places – plus a few extra places in the ordinary SPRAR project, if needed (interview with CIR employee, 9 March 2018). In practice this CAS offers pre-reception accommodation for asylum seekers that arrive by land while they wait to access the reception system.

CIR is also the lead partner of a project, funded by the Ministry of Interior, for holders of subsidiary protection or refugees who are homeless and jobless. All these individuals may be potential candidates for secondary movements towards Northern Europe or France, although their legal status does not allow them to work in European countries other than that from which they have obtained international protection. Initially the helpdesk was open to holders of humanitarian protection too but it was later decided to target only migrants with a higher form of protection (no explanation for this was provided during the interview). The project involves support in the search for housing and employment (ibd.), which are often hard for reception beneficiaries to find once they have completed their reception project (see for example MSF 2017). For these migrants, if they are clearly vulnerable, some temporary accommodation (15 days) is provided by a helpdesk that manages access to the local dorms. Normally, access (or a short renewal) is requested by CIR after the migrants access their helpdesk (interview with operator of dorms, 4 December 2017). This also applies to migrants arriving autonomously on the territory, upon formalisation of their asylum application, and to migrants whose asylum application

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possibile arrivo di 40 profughi". http://www.veronasera.it/cronaca/presidio-corteo-magnano-profughi-verona-ai-veronesi-24-giugno-2017-.html. Accessed 10 July 2018.

has been rejected and who are still homeless 1 year after completion of their reception project.

A third (already finished) project managed by CIR was specifically targeted to unaccompanied minors and was funded by the AMIF (Asylum and Migration and Integration Fund). In this project, CIR was co-partner, together with NGOs based in Gorizia, Udine, Trieste, Roma and Puglia, with the main aim of providing legal assistance to unaccompanied minors and monitoring their transit from Southern to Northern Italy, northward through borders with Austria and westward through borders with Slovenia. According to a CIR employee (9 March 2018), 30% of the minors they assisted at their legal desk were seekers of international protection who intended to reach a relative residing in another EU country with whom they were in contact.

Verona was a transit town for most of them, which in the opinion of the CIR employee was largely due to their scarce (if any) awareness of the Dublin Regulation and their family reunion rights. This made it crucial to provide them with legal information (Koser 2010; Bloch et al. 2011), also in view of preventing potentially dangerous onward movements, for example on freight trains. Yet, lengthy procedures often meant that minors would be unwilling to wait and would decide to continue their travel on their own.

CIR has also been working in synergy with Don Calabria, a religious body that runs projects targeting vulnerable groups and individuals, including the management of a community centre for unaccompanied minors. This centre currently hosts around 30 beneficiaries, as part of one of the municipality's SPRAR projects (interview with Don Calabria Supervisor, 8 March 2018). Don Calabria has ten extra places of "pronta accoglienza" available: these are "last minute" accommodation places usually occupied by minors who are stopped by the police at the train station (or elsewhere in town) while trying to transit through the city.

Since 2014, minors have continued arriving, although an Executive Officer of Polfer, the railway police,[22] stated that the transit of migrants reached a peak in 2016[23] to then decrease to a few dozen after summer 2017—in line with the drop in arrivals on southern Italian shores (interview, 17 December 2017)—and that these movements have rarely involved unaccompanied minors. Possibly they have rather been less visible in Verona. We will come back to this later.

There is also an issue of misrepresentations by the media, as police forces themselves testified[24]: the news repeatedly referred to migrants transiting through stations on the Brenner route, but in fact such movements often involve migrants permanently settled in Italy who regularly commute to nearby cities for work or to

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[22] The Polfer in Verona is responsible for inspections along the Brenner railway line from Verona to Brenner.

[23] Around 100–150 migrants, mainly Eritreans and Syrians, between July and August.

[24] Corriere di Verona, 26th Jun. 2016 "Senza biglietto sul treno locale. Ma non sono profughi". https://www.pressreader.com/italy/corriere-di-verona/20160623/281711203946664. Accessed 20 June 2018.

beg – as well as seekers of international protection hosted in local reception centres that go to train stations to benefit from free Wi-Fi.

Ten places for "pronta accoglienza" for unaccompanied minors have proved to be insufficient, with the result that minors have been often accommodated in centres outside Verona or even outside the region. Additionally, movements have become more complex. In the first months of 2018, reception operators started experiencing two new specific typologies: on the one side, northward arrivals from Southern Italy, following minors' flight from a reception centre – often described as being of very poor standard – with the intention of reaching a family member in Northern Europe; on the other side, southward arrivals from Germany and Sweden, following the rejection of an asylum application or the non-recognition of minors' age and the pending possibility of being deported back to their country of origin (ibd.).

In relation to the latter, the Reception Office Coordinator of the Social Service Department of the Municipality of Verona (interview, 23 March 2018), that holds the main (institutional) responsibility for unaccompanied minors, reported considerable frustration: in the face of consistent investments in time and resources (including not only accommodation but also individualised educational and employment programmes), many minors choose to leave the territory, even before completing their project. Frequently this is the consequence of a long and tiresome waiting period for the reunification procedure to be implemented.

Apart from institutional actions, some support to migrants in transit has been provided by Antenne Migranti volunteers, volunteers of the "Ronda della Carità", a mobile food service targeting homeless people that has long been active, as well as various volunteers and activists of local associations working in the field of migration and/or discrimination on an individual basis.

The local Islamic centre has been active too. As reported by a representative (interview Board Member, 19 December 2017), through word of mouth they were visited by a growing number of migrants in transit in 2015 and 2016. In particular, there were Syrians and Afghans who asked for food and money to buy a train ticket to reach Northern Europe, while more recently, the number of visitors has decreased and shifted to Senegalese and Moroccan nationals. Some migrants have asked for accommodation too, but the board decided not to provide it due to the pressure they have experienced since 2015: following the terrorist attacks in Paris, the prayer hall and the adjoined cultural centre have been under regular surveillance by police forces, with the declared purpose of protecting the Islamic community.

2.5.2   Trento and Bolzano

The autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano/Bozen (henceforth APT and APB respectively) are both situated in the autonomous region of Trentino-Alto Adige. Although the main responsibility for migration policy in Italy (i.e. control of entries, stays and returns) is in the hands of the national government, the APT and APB enjoy considerable discretionary powers in the field of migration, compared to

ordinary provinces such as Verona, and ordinary regions such as Veneto. As a result, both autonomous provinces have adopted their own specific provincial law on migration, leading to disparities in the respective reception systems.

As early as 1990, the APT adopted provincial Law 13/1990, "Interventi nel settore dell'immigrazione straniera extracomunitaria" (Interventions in the field of non-EU migration), stating that asylum seekers and refugees are granted access to public services in the provincial territory on an equal basis with non-EU migrants. In 2002, the provincial authority adopted guidelines regulating the material conditions of reception. In the following years, subsequent protocols spelt out further specific guidelines on seekers of international protection (2003), victims of human trafficking (2003) and unaccompanied minors (2011) (interview with Director of Cinformi, 7 March 2018).

Within the same framework, the provincial authority delegated to Cinformi (Centro Informativo per l'Immigrazione – Information Centre for Immigration), an operative unit of the Dipartimento Salute e Solidarietà Sociale (Department of Health and Social Solidarity), the following activities: monitoring the presence of asylum seekers within the provincial territory; coordinating the activities of local authorities and associations in relation to immigration; providing economic assistance to asylum seekers; drafting and signing conventions with private actors providing accommodation facilities; and providing information to migrants on asylum procedures and on provincial services.[25]

Two decades after the approval of APT Law 13/1990, Provincial Law 12/2011 was similarly approved by the APB to regulate the integration of migrants, and seekers and holders of international protection. Additionally, as indicated by the Director of Cinformi (7 March 2018), both provinces signed a protocol[26] with their respective commissaries,[27] which increased their margin of manoeuvre over the management of reception policies: differently from ordinary provinces, both the APT and the APB can decide where reception centres should be located and how to distribute reception applicants accordingly.

The reception system in Trento comprises a SPRAR and a CAS system, both coordinated by the Provincial Authority. The former comprises 149 places in two projects (June 2018), one for ordinary beneficiaries and one for unaccompanied minors, under the responsibility of the Provincial Authority of Trento;[28] the latter accommodates 1494 beneficiaries (August 2018), mostly of Nigerian, Pakistani, Malian, Gambian and Senegalese nationality, in 229 structures in 70 out of 72 municipalities of the provincial territory (Cinformi, May 2018).[29]

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[25] For further details see http://www.cinformi.it/

[26] The protocol of the APT is available at: http://www.prefettura.it/FILES/AllegatiPag/1229/1_Protocollo_d-intesa_2_aprile_2014.pdf Last accessed: 27th Jul. 2018; the protocol of the APB could not be retrieved.

[27] These have an equivalent function to the prefectures in ordinary provinces.

[28] Data (March 2018). http://www.sprar.it/progetti-territoriali?_sft_provincia=trento. Accessed 26 June 2018.

[29] Data (March 2018). http://www.cinformi.it/index.php/it/news_ed_eventi/archivio_news/anno_2017/cruscotto_statistico_accoglienza/(offset)/0/(limit)/4/(sb)/312. Accessed 27 July 2018.

In the APB, discussions on joining the SPRAR have been ongoing since 2017, but municipalities have only recently started activating the first projects. At the moment, beneficiaries are accommodated in six ordinary SPRAR projects, with a total of 223 places, all located outside Bolzano,[30] and in various CAS structures with a total of 636 places. Narratives by Antenne Migranti volunteers reported on declarations by the mayor of Bolzano, stating he refused to join the network unless the number of asylum seekers in Bolzano diminished and reached the quota set by the Ministry of Interior (fieldwork note, 30 November 2017).

An increasing number of municipalities in the provincial territory have been providing places. This is unsurprising as, according to the 2018 Agreement on local finance,[31] the Provincial Authority will not consider any request for public funds for municipalities that fail to accomplish their reception obligations set by the Provincial Authority itself.[32]

Similarly to Verona, considerable resistance to reception has grown in Trento and Bolzano. Various protests have been repeatedly organised by extreme-right movements and violent attacks have also taken place (although not always claimed by a specific movement).[33] In the wider political context, the increasing success of the Lega Nord (now Lega), for example in municipal elections in Trento and Bolzano, must also be acknowledged. According to some political commentators, drawing from the trend in local elections, this is a sign that the autonomous Region of Trentino Alto-Adige is experiencing political dynamics that are closer and closer to those of the rest of the country and most specifically to those of the neighbouring Veneto and Lombardia regions, in spite of a decade of centre-left government.[34]

The APT can be described as a transit area, since it is located along the Brenner route, although its relevance in this sense seems to be less evident than for Bolzano, as we shall explain. According to estimates, approximately 20 to 30 migrants arrive autonomously in the territory every month (interview with Director of Cinformi, 7 March 2018).

A helpdesk is operated by the non-profit association Centro Astalli, which has been delegated by Cinformi to manage SPRAR projects. The helpdesk provides all asylum seekers with basic information on the asylum procedure and reception, thus

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[30] Data (March 2018). http://www.sprar.it/progetti-territoriali?_sft_provincia=bolzano. Accessed 26 June 2018.

[31] Cf. Accordo sulla finanza locale per l'anno 2018, 22.12.2017. http://www.provincia.bz.it/enti-locali/download/2018_Accordo_finanza_locale.pdf. Accessed 4 July 2018.

[32] Both provinces should accommodate no more than 0.9% of asylum seekers (in relation to the total resident population).

[33] Il Dolomiti, 10 April 2018 "Attentato incendiario contro il B&B che ospiterà i profughi" Available at: http://www.ildolomiti.it/cronaca/2018/attentato-incendiario-contro-il-bb-che-ospi-tero-i-profughi-i-sindacati-accogliere-chi; Il Giornale dell'Alto Adige, 13 July 2017 "Centinaia di nuovi profughi in Trentino Alto Adige: CasaPound protesta con 50 striscioni sull'A22". http://www.ilgiornoaltoadige.it/?p=76264. Accessed 7 July 2018.

[34] Trentino, 7th Mar. 2018 "Il voto dice che l'anomalia trentina è finita. E l'Alto Adige si allontana" Available at: http://www.giornaletrentino.it/blog/il-voto-dice-che-l-anomalia-trentina-%C3%A8-finita-e-l-alto-adige-si-allontana-1.1536736 Last accessed: 8th Jul. 2018

also assisting migrants arriving autonomously. In 2017, approximately 400 migrants approached the desk autonomously to apply for asylum and to enter reception (interview with helpdesk operator, 18 April 2018). It was also stated that the Provincial Authority intended to improve the support, in terms of providing information and assistance, to migrants arriving autonomously, thanks to a specific economic contribution delivered by the national government to the Municipality of Trento and other municipalities in the provincial territory.[35] A first contribution was given in 2017. In this second round, the Provincial Authority has expressed willingness to sign a protocol with all the municipalities that have received this contribution, in order to define a strategic plan for the most effective use of resources[36] (ibd.).

Out of 400 applicants indicated above, approximately 150 eventually entered a reception project in 2017–18, after a waiting period of 2 or 3 months. According to an estimate by volunteers of Antenne Migranti, who collaborate with local volunteers engaged in a support service for homeless people, approximately 50 migrants are currently stranded on the streets (fieldwork note, 7 May 2018). While data has not been collected systematically, it can be hypothesized that half of the applicants actually leave the territory, while the other half decide to remain, possibly because of a higher scarcity of resources.

Since the increase of police controls at the Brenner border in 2016 (following declarations by the Austrian Ministry of Interior on a "clampdown" on migration), the operators of Cinformi have repeatedly collected narratives by applicants describing Milan as the actual transit spot where, in agreement with compatriots (probably acting as *passeurs),* migrants can be driven out of Italy across the border with Austria. Trento, as a transit spot, did not emerge clearly in this picture.

At the same time, the operator interviewed reported a peculiarity of the Brenner border. Since 2015, some "fluidity" has become evident: migrants are not always subject to police controls on the Austrian side of the border and are often left free to cross southward to reach Italy, while controls in the opposite direction have been much more systematic and have mostly resulted in migrants being stopped and asked to take the train back southward. A similar attitude was reported by police forces in Bolzano with the hypothetical result that migrants eventually arrive in Trento, the first large town south of Bolzano, but according to volunteers of Antenne Migranti this has not been happening since November 2017 (fieldwork note, 20 August 2018).

The typologies of migrants' journeys have considerably evolved over time to become more and more complex. At present, the majority of migrants who arrive autonomously in Trento had their application previously rejected in one or two

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[35] This contribution corresponds to 500 euros for each reception beneficiary and is given to municipalities in Italy to compensate for the burden of reception, whenever they host a given percentage of asylum seekers.

[36] Giornale Trentino, 25 January 2018 "Arriva il bonus ai comuni: per ogni profugo 500 euro". http://www.giornaletrentino.it/cronaca/trento/arriva-il-bonus-ai-comuni-per-ogni-profugo-500-euro-1.1502151. Accessed 4 July 2018.

European Union countries—mainly Germany, Austria or France (interview with helpdesk operator, 18 April 2018)—and then applied for protection in Italy. Although in these cases a take-back request should be lodged as per art. 18.1(d) of the Dublin Regulation, Italy has often ended up becoming the Member State responsible, due to lengthy bureaucratic procedures.[37] Furthermore, other categories of migrants approach the helpdesk,[38] although not all are granted access to reception, based on rules defined in LD. 142/2015 but also by the Commissary.

Helpdesk operators help to fill in applications for reception and for asylum application appointments at the Commissary (interview with helpdesk operator, 18 April 2018). However, as Antenne Migranti volunteers have testified (fieldwork note, 6 July 2018), there are no clear, transparent rules on who is admitted to reception. The decision is up to the Commissary, with a level of discretion that seems to go beyond interpretation of the asylum norm. An example of non-transparent and unclear rules, as reported by volunteers themselves, are those that apply to migrants who have already applied for asylum in another Italian city. In this case the underlying assumption is that each locality has the capacity to host applicants, hence they all have a chance to enter the system. This is actually consistent with LD. 142/2015. However, consistency is less obvious in the case of vulnerable applicants, and yet this decree still does not ensure their access to reception. Antenne Migranti volunteers reported that access had been recently denied to migrants re-admitted to Italy regardless of obligations set by the Dublin Regulation (art. 18), or of any form of vulnerability suffered by the applicants (fieldwork note, 4 May 2018).

It is questionable whether this recent filter has been applied to address the local administrators' fear of a "pull effect", possibly associated with a word-of-mouth narrative among migrants suggesting that Trento is more welcoming than nearby cities, in particular Bolzano, which has severely restricted access to the reception system with the introduction of the *Circolare Critelli* (circular letter) as will be explained below. It is legitimate to wonder whether the Provincial Authority in Trento may have somehow "emulated" the approach adopted in Bolzano to avoid an extra "burden" of reception resulting from the restrictions introduced by the *Circolare*.

Concern about an extra "burden" has also been stated explicitly, in a recent press release,[39] whereby the President of the Provincial Authority of Trento (together with that of the Provincial Authority of Bolzano) has taken a strong stance with the Ministry of Interior, calling for indications on how to include migrants that arrive autonomously in the national system of dispersal, and on whether resources for

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[37] Cf. art. 23.3 and 29.2, Regulation 604/2013

[38] These include: migrants arriving from southern Italy who have abandoned or have been expelled from a reception centre in another Italian city, where they have a pending appeal; holders of international protection that are stranded without a house and job; migrants who upon arrival on southern Italian shores get into contact with smugglers to be driven up north; but also migrants from Colombia and Ukraine who arrive on a tourist visa and then apply for asylum.

[39] Press Release 1546, Autonomous Province of Trento, 21 June 2018 "Richiedenti asilo, dalla Conferenza Regioni ok alla proposta del Trentino e dell'Alto Adige."

homeless people should also be used for them (and for migrants that terminate their reception project or for whom reception measures are withdrawn, thus making them homeless).

Resources for homeless people are a thorny issue. Access to food distribution is open to everyone but operators insist on the need to improve collaboration with social services and operators dealing with reception. They have lamented the fact that they have had to use homelessness resources for asylum seekers, while they should be dealt with by Cinformi, Astalli and municipal social services, not least given their specific skills in addressing the needs and vulnerabilities of asylum seekers (Soup kitchen operator, 4 May 2018).

Access to dorms is regulated thorough a helpdesk operated by five local associations. While they used to be fully accessible to everyone, increasingly restrictive rules have been introduced, emulating the approach of Verona, and then revised again. Currently, people that have a residency status in Trento can stay in the dorms for 30 plus 30 days, while those with no residency status can only stay for 30 days (both with a possible renewal of 30 days).[40] The most crucial issue around permanence has concerned the limited time allowed, with the result that many people, including asylum seekers that arrive autonomously, fall into homelessness for up to four or 5 months even after they have formalized their application for asylum – which is why temporary accommodation solutions were found in winter 2017. It also concerns the fact that, similar to Verona (fieldwork note, 9 March 2018), it often takes more than a month for asylum seekers to formalize their asylum application and that formalization requires, among other things, a letter stating their domicile. This can only be provided by dorms during the time they host people. In turn, this has contributed to creating a "black market" for asylum seekers that need to buy a letter from friends or compatriots (Soup kitchen operator, 4 May 2018; and for Verona fieldwork note, 9 March 2018).

As explained by the helpdesk operator interviewed, whenever a homeless vulnerable migrant approaches the helpdesk (or a migrant completes his/her reception project and becomes homeless), an application for reception is forwarded to the SPRAR. As set out by LD. 142/2015, the specific situation and needs of vulnerable persons must be taken into account (including minors, disabled people, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with children who are minors, victims of human trafficking, people with serious illnesses, people with mental disorders and people who have been subjected to torture, rape or serious forms of psychological, physical or sexual violence). Yet, available places in SPRAR are very limited and most often it is local associations that provide for them, with temporary accommodation paid by the Provincial Authority.

Similarly to the APT, in the APB the Provincial government coordinates the reception system and since mid-2017 has delegated implementation to the following

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[40] Regolamento e criteri di gestione dello sportello unico per l'accoglienza delle persone senza fissa dimora (Rules and criteria for the management of the helpdesk for the reception of homeless people), provided by soup kitchen operator (updated 4 December 2017).

actors: the NGO Associazione Volontarius Onlus, together with the social cooperative River Equipe, Caritas, the Red Cross, and SPES srl Social Enterprise.

Considering its geographical and strategic position – it is along the Brenner railway route and de facto the last large city before the Brenner Pass – Bolzano (and its provincial area) can also be considered a transit area for migrants. It has become a transit zone, a sort of internal hotspot, following the increasing controls carried out at Brenner and in Bolzano, as a result of the agreements cited in the introduction (see notes 2, 3, 4) that have de facto forced migrants stopped at Brenner to return to Bolzano.

As in Trento and Verona, some migrants arrive autonomously in the town, particularly from Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Mali, Senegal, Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan. At the end of June 2017, a total of 146 male migrants were recorded as being present (Antenne Migranti and ASGI 2017).

For such migrants, access to reception has been limited since the approval of the aforementioned *Circolare Critelli* from the Provincial Authority, dated 27 September 2016, although even earlier it was very much restricted. This circular spells out the categories of migrants who cannot access reception, in particular: migrants who have right to relocation, male parents of minors of less than 14 years old (at the beginning of October 2016 the age was raised to 18), and migrants who have stayed in a European or non-European country or in an Italian region (and did not just transit through). What is more is that as far as vulnerable individuals are concerned, there is no specific provision for access even if they fall under any of these categories. Their needs are taken into consideration only in exceptional circumstances (e.g. certified severe health problems) and if they are clearly in transit (i.e. if they are stopped by the police at the border). In any of these cases, access is only considered for a maximum of 3 days. Contrary to what happens in Trento, no application is made for entrance into SPRAR projects, as these individuals are de facto considered as "fuori quota" (that is to say, arriving asylum seekers who take the numbers above the quota assigned to the Province of Bolzano by the Ministry of Interior). As a result of this, at the end of June 2018, around 260 people were homeless on the streets (160 in families and 100 single people), according to estimates collected by Antenne Migranti volunteers through Caritas (fieldwork note, 27 June 2018).

Migrants that cannot enter the reception system are basically left homeless and they only have access to two free meals per day—following insistence on the side of Antenne Migranti for a minimum of two meals to be given to them in the local soup kitchen operated by Caritas for homeless people—and one free shower per week. This scenario hit the headlines in 2017, when the news reported about Adan, a 13 year old who in spite of having muscular dystrophy was still left out on the streets with his family and eventually died a few days later.[41]

It should be noted that in order to meet migrants' basic needs during their stay in Bolzano, or at the actual Brenner border, two support centres were opened in 2015 at the respective train stations, which are operated by local humanitarian volunteers.

[41] Alto Adige, 12th October 2017 "Circolare Critelli, raccolta firme per abolirla". http://www.alto-adige.it/cronaca/bolzano/circolare-critelli-raccolta-firme-per-abolirla-1.1343670. Accessed 3 May 2018.

The local association Volontarius Onlus operates two support centres—one at the train station in Bolzano (since April 2015) and one at Brenner (since December 2014)—to provide basic information, food and clothing, using volunteers from a range of local third sector organisations (including local cooperatives, Caritas, the Italian Red Cross and the Alexander Langer Foundation).[42] At Brenner they also coordinate an accommodation structure. Furthermore, some local parishes give shelter—although they have limited capacity and resources—and Antenne Migranti volunteers provide basic information on local services and on the asylum procedure[43].

2.6   Discussion and Final Remarks

What actors provide what services for migrants transiting along the Brenner route? In each of the cities analysed services are limited and access restricted. Migrants that transit through cities and border areas are treated as "second-class citizens", compared to migrants arriving by sea on southern Italian shores and dispersed through the quota system. Yet, the number of autonomous arrivals has been quite stable in recent years, and it has been most problematic in Bolzano where the reception system is still under construction.

Against this scenario, our contribution has looked at the Brenner route area in order to dig out any specific elements, in terms of governance approach and configurations, that could be associated with the cities selected for the analysis and their (geographical) closeness to the border. Indeed, some common elements, as well as differences, have emerged.

First, in all three cities there are hardly any dedicated services for migrants transiting through cities and border areas. The few services available to them are relatively recent and (tend to) overlap with services for homeless people. Accordingly, criticism has been voiced by various actors about an improper use of (targeted) resources and a lack of specific professional skills to deal with this complex category of users.

Additionally, no form of collaboration exists across the three cities in dealing with migrants transiting through cities and border areas, but examples of "policy emulation" are manifest in Trento, with respect to Bolzano, and also to Verona, although only in the replication of exclusionary rather than inclusionary solutions. This could sound surprising when recalling that Trento has for a long time been considered as a "positive example" of reception, first and foremost given the prominent coordinating role of the Provincial Authority.

Second, services in Bolzano are provided mostly by third sector organisations, thus confirming their substitution function with respect to the public sector. In

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[42] See   https://www.volontarius.it/assistenza-umanitaria-alla-stazione-di-bolzano/.   Accessed   20 June 2018.

[43] See *supra* note 17.

Trento and Verona institutional arrangements have also emerged, in more recent times, in line with the pragmatic stance, according to which local institutions cannot avoid dealing with, or at least addressing, migrants' presence. Nevertheless, particularly in Verona, services are strongly connected to actors' fundraising skills. These have taken the shape of inclusionary but also exclusionary initiatives, with an opaque tendency towards a "laissez-passer" approach. Paradoxically, in contexts such as Bolzano, it is precisely this tendency that result in forms of containment for migrants getting stuck in the city when sent back from Brenner.

Third, this chapter shows that restricted access to reception is not always justified on the basis of the asylum policy. Restriction criteria are spelt out by policy-makers in Bolzano and in the *Circolare Critelli*, in line with what has been happening elsewhere in Italy, where the majority of migration policy acts have taken the form of administrative acts; while in Trento and Verona, volunteers have reported cases of exclusion that are harder to compare with elsewhere, because they are the result of non-written decisions.

In terms of governance, this points to the fact the traditional distinction between migration policy (focused on entry and citizenship) and immigrant (integration) policy (focused on local inclusion) is somehow becoming inadequate (see Barberis and Violante 2013, and for examples in this sense, particularly with reference to residency status: Gilbert 2009; Lebuhn 2013; Gargiulo 2017). This suggests the necessity of exploring the dynamics associated with the rescaling of responsibilities across government levels in more detail (Brenner 2004), as responsibility for reception seems to be more and more rescaled down to local authorities. In turn, this will inform scholars about the evolution of the European border regime.

Fourth, restrictions for access to reception are even more problematic for migrants that are especially vulnerable, although the national and European normative frameworks stress their specific needs should be addressed. Actions and protests have been organised by activists in all three cities, and migrants themselves, to put forward their claim for protection.

The overall aim behind policies and practices addressing migrants in transit in the three cities is clearly to limit access as much as possible to "repel any extra burden" while preventing any potential "pull effect", linked to restrictive policies of neighbouring cities.

That being said, what are the factors that explain the specificities of the reception systems of Verona, Trento and Bolzano, as illustrated above?

The geographical positioning is partly predictive of the categories of migrants that can arrive on the territory. All three cities are quite far from Brenner and yet they are situated in the wider railway route area and have been affected by increasing internal border controls, which have transformed them into *internal hotspots*, as mostly evident in Bolzano. Hence, these localities have had to respond somehow to the presence of migrants that are transiting through cities and border areas.

Another factor is political in nature. Municipal and provincial authorities have been under pressure not to welcome migrants arriving outside of the ordinary

dispersal system. In this regard, European asylum policies certainly play a crucial role, particularly in terms of the following issues: the increasing closure of some internal borders; the more and more evident inadequacy of the Dublin Regulation; the flights of unaccompanied minors from centres in Verona; and the (still) timid cooperation on relocation among EU member states, as recently emerged at the EU summit on migration[44], which is one of the main causes of the failure of the relocation mechanism.

Reflections on migrants that are transiting through cities and border areas and more generally on effective access to reception and protection for forced migrants are particularly crucial, with reform of the whole EU common asylum system still under discussion. The call for a solid European policy is manifest in the positions expressed by various institutional actors on a number of occasions. Nevertheless, their positions appear to be rather instrumental to prove to their voters the supposed unwillingness and inability of the EU to manage migration. In fact, this desired reform has periodically hit the headlines but, de facto, has remained no more than talk for a long time. Irrespective of the outcome(s) of the reform process, any change promoting the inclusion and protection of migrants that transit through cities and border areas remains unlikely. This is all the more evident for Italy, following the recent coming into force of what is known as the Salvini Decree in December 2018.

While this Law is coherent with a more general long-term policy approach based on emergency and the marginalisation of forced migrants (see Marchetti 2012), it has introduced elements that are likely to contribute to an increase of their marginality. The humanitarian protection status has been almost abolished, being partly "substituted" by the so-called permits for "special cases". Limits have been introduced for access to residency status (the permit to stay for asylum application is no longer considered as a valid document for residency application) that de facto legitimize on-going practices of exclusion on the side of local authorities.[45] SPRAR is only accessible to refugees and holders of subsidiary protection, which again legitimizes an ongoing practice.[46]

Another important consideration must be made in terms of policy and governance more generally. It is evident that the category "migrants in transit" includes migrants with different legal statuses, migration journeys and projects. It is equally evident that it is a category that has been constructed through policies and the devel-

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[44] Espresso, 29 June 2018 "Vertice UE sui migranti, ecco il testo dell'accordo: parola chiave è "base volontaria". http://espresso.repubblica.it/palazzo/2018/06/29/news/ue-e-migranti-ecco-il-testo-dell-accordo-la-parola-chiave-e-base-volontaria-1.324457 . Accessed 29 June 2018.

[45] Consoli D. and Zorzella N. "L'iscrizione anagrafica e l'accesso ai servizi territoriali dei richiedenti asilo ai tempi del salvinismo", 8 January 2019. https://www.asgi.it/asilo-e-protezione-internazionale/liscrizione-anagrafica-e-laccesso-ai-servizi-territoriali-dei-richiedenti-asilo-ai-tempi-del-salvinismo/ Accessed 3 March 2019.

[46] Pepino L. "Le nuove norme su immigrazione e sicurezza: punire i poveri", 20 December 2018. https://www.asgi.it/asilo-e-protezione-internazionale/le-nuove-norme-su-immigrazione-e-sicurezza-punire-i-poveri/ Accessed 3 March 2019.

opment of a specific and yet blurred terminology of "transit migration". Focusing the analysis further on the actual experience of this category of migrants carries the risk of re-instating it, while also moving attention away from the fact that such categorization has been produced with the aim of "fixing" positions and entitlements (Zetter 2007).

Dispersal locations, in particular those in border areas, have become veritable internal borders (Fontanari and Borri 2017) where local processes of bordering take place (Lebuhn 2013). Such processes have de facto reinforced entry regulations associated with immigration policy, resulting in new borders at the local level. Interestingly, many forced migrants are not calling for the right to enter and stay but rather for the "right to come and go" (Fernandez and Olson 2011: 415). This calls for more attention not only to issues of presence, but also of mobility, as underlined by critical migration and border scholars (see for example Mezzadra and Neilson 2016).

Such an approach promises to inform the wider literature on migration and forced migration governance and to put under discussion systems based on the principle of universal residence-based welfare, a principle that is more and more evidently excluding (Könönen 2018). It promises to provide insights into the re-elaboration of a welfare model capable of addressing the right to mobility for all and the need to overcome the tendency to implement "sedentary" policy solutions to address policy fields, such as that of migration, that are by definition fluid.

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Chapter 3
Legal Paradigm Shifts and Their Impacts on the Socio-Spatial Exclusion of Asylum Seekers in Denmark

René Kreichauf

3.1 Introduction

The case of Denmark illustrates a changing story of a country that once was the first nation to ratify the 1951 Refugee Convention to a country where its Prime Minister called for an end to the convention in 2016 (Kingsley 2016). Especially during and in the aftermath of the so-called "European Refugee Crisis", Denmark's "harsh new immigration law" (Boserup 2016), its "inhumane family reunification" regulations (Dearden 2016) and "deterrence tactics" (Simpson 2016) have caused international attention. This shift did not take place over night. Since the early 1990s, Danish asylum legislations have been revised and toughened several times, often because of increasing arrivals as well as rising neo-nationalism and anti-immigrant sentiments.

Denmark's relation with the EU in the fields of immigration and asylum reflects this development. It holds opt outs on EU Justice and Home Affairs and stands outside of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). Its asylum and immigration legislations thus differ from the rest of the EU, which makes Denmark a special and, as I will discuss in this chapter, an extreme case regarding the arrival and integration of asylum seekers and refugees.

There is a broad scholarship on the development of immigration and asylum legislations in Denmark and the transformation of its asylum system from humanitarianism to nationalism (see i.e. Jaffe-Walter 2016; Hedetoft 2006). However, scholars have paid little attention to the impacts of asylum and immigration laws on

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reception practices, the development of Denmark's centre system as well as to the living conditions of forced migrants.

In this chapter, I analyse the development of the Danish asylum legislations and their influence on the country's reception practices and on the well-being of forced migrants. I argue that their reception and initial settlement in Denmark is, first, the domain of the state, whereas municipalities have little power to decide. Second, I contend that accommodation has increasingly been transformed into large, camp-like structures with lowered living standards and a closed character because of the tightening of asylum laws. I finally argue that Denmark's centre system reflects the materialisation and socio-spatial consequences of changes in legislations. I reveal how the state's restrictive laws are put into practice and are translated into space reinforcing Denmark's policy on the strategic isolation of forced migrants.

To understand the development of the Danish asylum legislations and their influence on the country's reception and settlement practices as well as on the well-being of forced migrants, I contextualise the Danish case in the literature and present my theoretical and methodological approaches (Sect. 3.2). I continue with explaining Denmark's traditions in handling asylum seekers and refugees since WWII with a focus on current developments (Sect. 3.3). This is followed by a precise outline of refugee laws, Denmark's special position in the European asylum regime as well as explanations of current political and legal practices (Sect. 3.4). Then I present and discuss empirical findings on the socio-spatial exclusion of forced migrants through accommodation and placing in remote camps in Denmark's Hovedstaden Region (Sect. 3.5). Within this part, I elucidate the structures, objectives and spatial configurations of the Danish camp system. In my conclusion (Sect. 3.6), I discuss the translation of policies into spatial dimensions and highlight avenues for further research.

3.2   Studying Refugee Reception and Accommodation Practices in Denmark

In most European countries, refugees are usually allocated to states and municipalities according to allocation quotas, which are often calculated based on economic activity and the number of inhabitants in a region. The political motivation often lies in spatially constructing and arresting refugees "through bureaucratic labelling and assignment to heterotopias" – processes, which "freeze the forced migrant in a place" (Witteborn 2011: 1142). Dispersal, first reception and resettlement are policy areas and processes that are linked with each other in the trajectories of arriving forced migrants. They make up a large part of research on refugees in the global north. Even though, dispersal and resettlement policies are not per se local policies, they result in the arrival of refugees in and close to cities and municipalities, which – depending on national asylum laws – are responsible for accommodation and support. Dispersal and reception practices are governmental processes, which localize

and transfer issues of maintenance, welfare support and the management of forced migrants to the level of cities and municipalities (Darling 2016). Because of dispersal policies some regions and municipalities become destinations for migrants in the first place. This "forced arrival" (Kreichauf 2018) confronts some cities to react and develop reception approaches and accommodation schemes, which otherwise would have barely experienced immigration.

In the European context, studies on dispersal and reception focus on the role of municipalities and communities in organizing and accommodating arrivals, institutional challenges, civil society engagements, and shifts in local policies (Aumüller et al. 2015; Ikizoglu Erensu and Kasli 2016; Lidén and Nyhlén 2016; Steen 2016). Breckner (2015: 1) finds a "new sensibility" regarding the "localization of provisionary housing, institutional practices and in the acceptance of civil engagement" studying the local living conditions of forced migrants in Hamburg. Studies on reception experiences often investigate the first phase of arrival and the reactions of administrative bodies dealing with the management of forced migrants. They include health care, material and welfare provisions as well as the implementation of the EU reception directive (see for example Rosenberger and König 2011). Particularly UK geographers such as Phillimore and Goodson (2006), Spicer (2008), O'Mahony and Sweeny (2010), but also Kreichauf (2019) illustrate the local distribution of refugees within a city, mostly in disadvantaged neighbourhoods or socio-spatially excluded in refugee camps outside of settlements.

Referring to the Danish case, Wren (2003) shows that, in contradiction to the state's objective to prevent the concentration of migrants, dispersal policies have resulted in processes of socio-spatial ethnic segregation in deprived areas reinforcing exclusion and anti-refugee hostility. Larsen's (2011) ethnographic field research expounds that dispersal policies and the placing of migrants hinder the establishment of relationships to co-ethnics and relatives and ultimately the incorporation in the Danish welfare society.

A strong body of research studies the reception and accommodation of refugees in European states, which is usually managed by the development of mass accommodation, asylum centres and refugee camps (EMN 2014). Many theoretical concepts have been developed based on camps in African countries and the Middle East, most prominently by Ramadan (2013), Sanyal (2014), and Malkki (1995). In the camp literature, the camp is conceptualised as a space of exception and biopolitics (Diken and Laustsen 2005; Edkins 2000; Hyndman 2000) or as sites in which new identities, acts of agency, political life, and resistance are formed and practiced (Ramadan 2013; Salih 2017; Redclift 2013). In the North, studies analyse the 'asylum centre' and the living conditions of forced migrants in those accommodations. The research stress the genesis of mass accommodation systems in EU member states and the exclusion of asylum seekers through these large accommodations (see for example Darling 2009; Dwyer and Brown 2008; Hirschler 2013; Kublitz 2016; Szczepanikova 2013; Witteborn 2011). Most of the studies describe them as places of states of exceptions and as border areas, where the state has unlimited power to decide on the inclusion or exclusion of immigrants.

Regarding the Danish case, Syppli Kohl (2016) explains the development and shifts of the centre system, its main characteristics and trends of socio-spatial exclusion and exploitation due to labour programs in the camps. Kublitz (2016) illustrates the living conditions of Palestinian refugees in Danish centres. She argues that accommodations are "characterized by minor mundane catastrophes, infinite unbecomings that slowly erode the lives" (Kublitz 2016: 246). Research on the arrival accommodation in Denmark lacks analyses on the specific socio-political and socio-spatial functions of centres as well as on their socio-spatial settings. For that reason, this chapter links the tensioning of laws with the emergence and changes of the Danish centre system. I expound how restrictive laws not only impact the socio-spatial configurations and characteristics of refugee shelters, but how they reinforce and legitimize Denmark's harsh dealings.

I conceptualise the camp as a site of bordering (Darling 2016) that denies refugees' movement and mobility and that is a part of a camp-border urban development (Diken and Laustsen 2005). In another work (Kreichauf 2018), I have established the concept of "campization" to describe the development of camp-like accommodations in Europe and to capture that changes in asylum laws have stimulated a transformation of refugee accommodations. Campization is a process that explains two tendencies of accommodating refugees in the context of increasing numbers arriving in EU member states and the tightening of laws on asylum, and explicitly on reception:

> First, the legal stabilization of permanent, enlarged, remotely located, and spatially isolated camps with lowered living standards, increased capacities, and a closed character; and second, the changing notions and forms of containment, exclusion, and temporality of these infrastructures. These tendencies are reflected architectonically, functionally, and socio-spatially. (Kreichauf 2018, 4).

I apply this concept in this chapter to explain the emergence and deepening of camp-like characteristics of Danish refugee accommodation and to reveal reception and accommodation practices as Denmark's central instruments to strategically isolate and deter forced migrants.

The following empirical findings are based on qualitative research conducted from 2013 to 2016. It contains multi-level policy analyses of major law and policy changes as well as of the development of political and societal discourses on (forced) migration in Denmark. I also included socio-spatial analyses of following asylum centres in or close to Hovedstaden: Centre Sandholm, Centre Kongelunden and Centre Avnstrup. Thirteen semi-structured interviews on the accommodation, living conditions of forced migrants and the impact of law changes on local receptions were conducted on following levels between 2013 and 2016: 1) decision makers and administrative bodies (2), 2) civil society actors, local refugee organisations and initiatives (6) and 3) asylum seekers and refugees (5). The aim of the three-level-division was to develop a broad context of findings on perception of social structures, power relations and effects in and of accommodations from various actors. Many more informal interviews with forced migrants have been carried out. Those

were used as observations written down in a research diary as part of the "Go along" method (Kusenbach 2003).

Within this chapter, I cite interviews I conducted with the Danish Immigration Service and the Danish Red Cross as the major administrative and operative bodies regarding accommodation, Asylret, Danish Refugee Council, Refugees Welcome and the Trampoline House as the leading refugee organizations as well as interviews with forced migrants in the Hovedstaden Region.

3.3 Post-WWII and Recent Refugee Reception Experiences in Denmark

Denmark was one of the first countries to become a party of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the first state to ratify the treaty in 1952 entering force in 1954. It acceded to the 1967 Protocol in 1968 and it further ratified the 1954 Convention relating to the status of Stateless Persons in 1956 and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness in 1977. Denmark's international performance as an active supporter of the development of an international protection regime characterised its welcoming attitude towards refugees in the first decades after WWII (Jønson and Peterson 2012).

In 1983, the Aliens Act was implemented. It was described as "one of the world's most humane" ones (Brochmann and Hagelund 2012, 113) with rather liberal admission criteria for refugees and accesses to permanent residency and citizenship. At the same time, forced migrants began to arrive in larger numbers, 30,000 in the 1980s. A discussion on the structure of the Danish welfare system and the number of arriving refugees and immigrants emerged. This debate resulted in a political attitude that argued so-called "refugees of convenience" would abuse the welfare system (Hedetoft 2006; Brochmann and Hagelund 2012). As a result, the Aliens Act was tightened in 1986 particularly regarding family reunification and benefits aiming to make it less 'attractive' to apply for and obtain asylum or citizenship.

The End of the Cold War as well as conflicts and wars in the Middle East led to the increasing arrival of several new groups throughout the 1990s. Particularly refugees from the former Soviet Union, Bosnians, Iranians, Iraqis, Lebanese and stateless Palestinians characterised arrivals between 1990 and 1999. In 1992, the law regulating family reunification was further tightened, completely removing the automatic right to reunification. The controversial public debates on refugees as "welfare scroungers", who would unfairly take advantage of the Danish welfare system, have been further intensified and heavily politicized throughout the 1990s (Brochmann and Hagelund 2012). The establishment of the Danish People's Party (DPP) in 1995 and its success is a result of immigrant issues dominating the electoral campaigns since then and an atmosphere of deterrence and minimizing 'pull-factors' for immigration (Hedetoft 2006). Denmark's further developments regarding its asylum regime, such as the implementation of the Integration Act of
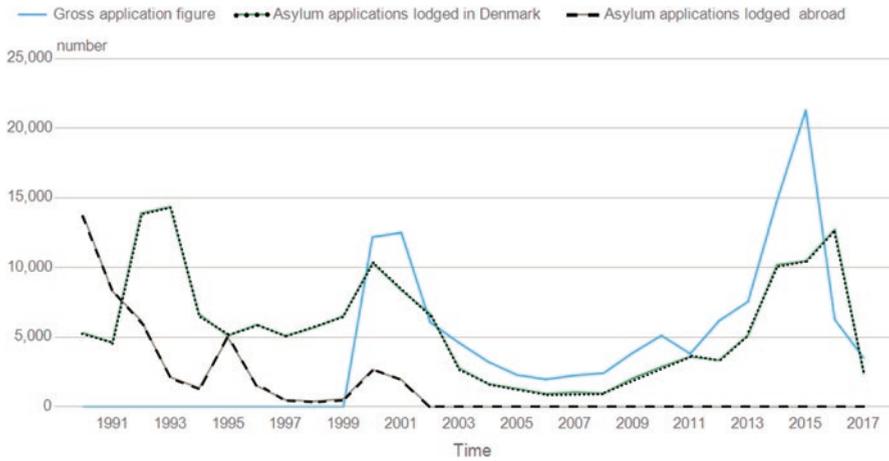
Fig. 3.1 Asylum seekers by type of asylum between 1990 and 2017 (total numbers)

1999, which guaranteed some integration means but which also reduced welfare benefits, are outcomes of these debates (Brochmann and Hagelund 2012).

Understanding the composition of the data on refugee arrivals since 1990 appears to be complex at first glance (see Fig. 3.1). Danish statistics divide the numbers into following variables: application lodged in Denmark by *spontaneous refugees*[1], asylum applications that have been lodged abroad and the gross number of applications.[2] This division is a result of changes in the Danish asylum law throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Until June 2002, the Danish legislation (§ 7(4) Alien Act) enabled asylum seekers to apply for asylum abroad, where Denmark's diplomatic representations had operated a protected entry procedure (Al-Shahi and Lawless 2005). As seen in figure one, applications lodged abroad had a huge impact in the 1990s. Especially in 1990 (72%), 1991 (64%) and 1995 (50%), more asylum applications have been submitted abroad then on Danish soil.

When only focusing on applications lodged in Denmark, the numbers show that around 8000 applications have been submitted each year with climaxes in 1993 (14,347) and 2000 (10,347). From 2008 on, asylum applications were slowly increasing until 2012, but since 2012 they have been growing heavily mainly due to on-going tense situations in Iran, Afghanistan and the war in Syria. Consequently, the numbers tripled from 3336 in 2012 to 10,192 in 2014 (see Fig. 3.1). Figure one further shows occurrence of gross application numbers since 2000. This is because this value covers all people who have applied for asylum in Denmark, including

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[1] Danish authorities call persons that apply asylum on the soil of Denmark and that have been travelling independently (without institutional help) spontaneous asylum seekers. Compared to quota refugees, who have been settled to Denmark through the UNHCR's resettlement program, they claim asylum when they arrive at the border of the Danish territory.

[2] Danish official statistics do not include quota refugees of which around 500 arrive every year.

people, who were returned to a safe third country, transferred or re-transferred to another EU Member State under the Dublin Regulation as well as disappearances and withdrawals etc. during the asylum procedure.

As seen in figure one, there is an increasing discrepancy between gross application figures and figures for applications that are being proceeded in Denmark. This is an indication for Denmark's strict accomplishments of the Dublin- and Safe-Third-County-Regulations throughout the 2015 "refugee crisis", which resulted in lower numbers of registrations and asylum cases that have been processed in Denmark. Compared to other EU member states, particularly Germany and Sweden, asylum applications lodged in Denmark stared dropping by the beginning of 2015 and they remained relatively steady throughout that year. In total, 21,315 applications have been filed in 2015, an increase of 43% compared to 2014. The number of cases that are being effectively processed in Denmark remains almost the same though (10,921 in 2014; 10,472 in 2015) and clearly lower than in 1992 and 1993. Since 2016, arrivals started falling significantly. In 2017, around 2500 forced migrants applied for asylum, the lowest number in Denmark for 8 years. Twenty six per cent of asylum applications were successful in 2017, whereas the rate was around 85% in 2015 and 2016. The main refugee groups since 2014 are Syrians, Iranians, Afghans, Eritreans, Stateless people and Iraqis.

3.4 The Development of Denmark's Asylum Legislations

One major characteristic defines the Danish asylum system compared to other EU member states: Denmark abstains from membership in CEAS. It can withdraw EU decisions made about foreigners in Denmark. The following sections analyse the genesis and changes of the legislations in detail. They focus particularly on Denmark's exceptional approaches and on recent law changes.

3.4.1 Abstaining CEAS and Implemented EU Regulations

Denmark holds opt-outs from EU policies in the fields of security and defence, citizenship, police and justice, home affairs and the adoption of the Euro. They are set down in the Edinburgh Agreement. The core directives of CEAS, which characterise the EU asylum policy and include Council Directive 2003/9/EC on the reception of asylum seekers, the Council Directive 2004/84/EC on the qualification and status of asylum seekers and the Council Directive 2005/85/EC on the asylum procedure, are not implemented. Triggered by EU's moves in the field of asylum, Denmark, however, has introduced similar laws to its domestic legislations by practicing its right as an international sovereign to enter parallel agreements with other entities (Adler-Nissen 2013, 68). Major agreements are the application of the Schengen

acquis, the Dublin Regulation and the EURODAC. They allow Denmark to participate in certain means to the EU asylum framework (Tonsberg 2011). In following areas, Denmark has applied different policies:

First, Danish law does not adopt Article 15 of the EU Qualification directive, which enables subsidiary protection in case of a person's fear of death penalty or execution, torture and threat to a civilian's life "by reason of indiscriminate violence in situations of international or internal armed conflict". As a result, many asylum seekers, for example from Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia, which get often granted subsidiary protection in other EU states, are rejected in Denmark. Compared to the EU directive, Danish asylum law does also not recognise sexual orientation as a social group eligible for refugee status. Second, the Danish asylum policy is characterised by a special definition of refugees: A person must be individually persecuted and prove s/he is personally in a specific danger (Article 19(1)(i)). The Refugee Convention, however, finds it sufficient to belong to a persecuted group or come from a very insecure area. Third, the application for family reunification for refugees with temporary protection is highly restricted: Spouses must be above the age of 24; the spouse in Denmark must finance the move to Denmark, give a financial guarantee of around 7000 Euro and s/he should have not received state benefits for the past 3 years. The waiting period before a refugee can apply for reunification is 3 years. Fourth, regarding the reception, there is an increasing use of detention. This will be outlined in the following sections more specifically.

Denmark's special role is strongly rooted in the fear of losing its national identity in a unified Europe and that the EU would undermine its social-welfare system and standard of living (Brochmann and Hagelund 2012). Because Denmark signed the 1951 Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights, the significance of Denmark abstaining CEAS is reduced. Nevertheless, Denmark's dealing with family reunification, cuts of benefits and detention practices have caused tensions with the EU and the UN (Dearden 2016).

3.4.2   Denmark's Reception and Integration Conditions

There are two core acts that define Denmark's reception and integration conditions: The Aliens Act, initially introduced in 1983, and the Integration Act, established in 1999. Both acts have been repeatedly revised; the Aliens Act alone experienced more than 100 amendments. The revisions have been focussing on reforming the asylum policy and institutional responsibilities, but they also show a clear pattern of restrictive measures, particularly since the early 1990s (Jensen 2012).

The changes to the Aliens Act in the 2000s have been quite fundamental. The right-wing alliance of the Liberal Party Venstre and the Conservative People's Party with support of the right-wing populist DDP created the Ministry for Refugees, Immigrants and Integration of Denmark in 2001. Its objective was to prevent Denmark from becoming a multicultural country, to limit the number of arrivals and the number of people being granted asylum as well as to promote a cultural assimi-

lation of admitted immigrants (Hedetoft 2006). Assimilation in the Danish context means that the existence of cultures other than the Danish understanding of culture is restricted and seen as problematic (Wren 2001). In 2002, amendments to the Aliens Act involved, among other things, the abolishment of the de facto refugee concept and the possibility to apply for asylum at a Danish mission abroad. Stricter conditions for family reunifications were introduced (L 152). These changes resulted in a significant drop of asylum applications between 2001 and 2008 (see Fig. 3.1).

In 2011, a new government coalition between the Social Democrats, the Danish Social Liberty Party and the Socialist People's Party removed the Immigration Ministry, with a redistribution of duties under the Justice and Social Affairs departments. The Danish Ministry of Justice and its subordinated authority of the Danish Immigration Service are administrable in charge for the reception and integration of forced migrants. Despite promises to improve the conditions for forced immigrants (Asylret 2014), amendments to the Aliens Act included the further expansion of a parallel welfare system, providing significantly lower state support for forced migrants applying for asylum.

The amendments include possibilities to work (Article 14a(1)(ii)) and to live outside of asylum centres (Article 42k. (1)(i)) after staying 6 months in Denmark and living in an asylum accommodation. These require a cooperation contract between the Immigration Office and the asylum seeker, which declares that "the alien cooperates in obtaining information for the assessment of his application for a residence permit (…) and, upon refusal or waiver of the application for a residence permit, cooperates in his departure without undue delay (…)" (42k.(vi)(5)). Signing the contract can engender an immediate departure after the first rejection of the case and thus circumvent the possibility to appeal the decision in front of the Refugee Board. Thus, most asylum seekers decide not to sign the contract.

Upon arrival, asylum seekers are taken to registration at the Sandholm Centre, Denmark's official reception centre, where they are accommodated up to 6 months. Denmark's centre system is characterised by three different types. Sandholm, which houses approximately 600 asylum seekers, a detention centre close to Sandholm run by Danish Prison and Probation Service, and 32 accommodation centres in 2016. The Danish Red Cross operates most accommodations. It manages all humanitarian aspects of the accommodation including Sandholm (Article 42(5) Alien Act). The Danish Ministry of Justice and the Danish Immigration Service decide on the legal regulations, locations of centres and living standards.

The reception as laid down in the Aliens Act serves to exclude asylum seekers from relevant social institutions and integration means (housing, labour market, education, welfare) until the "applicant" proves to be eligible for state protection. Once forced migrants are granted asylum, they are confronted with several assimilationist responsibilities to acquire access to the Danish society. These rights and obligations were established in the Act on Integration in 1999. The Danish Refugee Council (2015) summarizes this logic in an interview as follows:

> As long as you are an asylum seeker, we will try to keep you out as hard as we can, you will be placed as far away as we can and you will not learn Danish, you will not be able to get a job. By the minute you get your residence permit, you are forced to integrate as fast as you

can. […] You must become a part of the society, which you have been kept away from it for often some years.

The Danish Integration Act was one of the first of its kind in Europe, developed to regulate and control integration. It includes requirements for accessing permanent residency and citizenship. The Integration Act contains a 3-year introduction and integration program, courses on culture and society as well as job related activities during which refugees over age 18 are expected to learn Danish (based on provided courses) (§21(1)) and to familiarize themselves with Danish history. All refugees and reunified family-members are obliged to follow the programs to be able to access social benefits called "start allowance", which, however, are substantially lower than corresponding benefits.

Fundamental parts of the Integration Act are a compulsory *Contract of Integration* and a *Declaration on Integration and Active Citizenship*, which refugees must sign. In these documents, refugees must ensure their loyalty to 'Danish values' (Hedetoft 2006). Refugees and reunified families "are further asked to confirm their willingness to obey Danish law, to respect democratic principles, to learn the Danish language, to acknowledge principles of gender equality, to respect liberty of conscience and freedom of speech, to refrain from carrying out terrorism etc." (Mouritsen and Hovmark Jensen 2014, 11). It describes also "occupational or educational goals and determine the contents of the activities necessary to ensure fulfilment of the goals set out in the contract" (§19). The contract specifies the sanctions applicable according to legislation to the refugee if s/he fails to appear at or rejects one or more of the activities agreed in the individual contract.

The Integration Act changed the distribution and integration conditions and trajectories of refugees. On the one hand, it assigns the main responsibility for integration of refugees to the municipality once a residence status is granted (§16). The municipalities are in charge to ensure that refugees meet the requirements of the act and the contracts. On the other hand, the state "has absolute control over refugee settlement policies" and their housing patterns (Myrberg 2017, 329). The Immigration Service decides where in Denmark the refugee must live without her/him participating in the decision-making process. This is realized by quota systems, which I explain in the analyses of the Hovedstaden region more precisely.

3.4.3   The "Refugee Crisis" and Its Consequences

In 2016, the Ministry for Migration and Integration was re-established under the new right-wing government. It is responsible for all issues related to asylum. In 2015 and 2016, the Danish Parliament adopted several changes, such as L 87 and L 62, to the Aliens legislation, which aim at conveying a message to make it "less attractive" to seek asylum in Denmark and to protect Denmark's social cohesion and identity (Udlændinge-, Integrations- og Boligministeriet 2016). The amendments have raised "serious concerns of conformity with human rights standards" by

refugee organisations, the EU and the United Nations (Council of Europe 2016), because they reduce welfare support, enhance detention practices and complicate means such as family reunification and residence permits tremendously. The law includes major shifts in following fields:

1. *Qualification and status conditions*: The new law reduces the period of asylum as follows; convention status holders: two years (instead of five); individual protection status holders: one year (instead of two); subsidiary protection status holders: one year (instead of five) and temporary subsidiary protection holders: one year (instead of two).[3] The right to family reunification for refugees with temporary protection (subsidiary forms of protection under Article 7 (3) of the Aliens Act) changes from one to three years. The possibility to obtain legal residence changes from five to six years. Applicants must pass a test for Danish level two (instead of one) and they must provide full-time employment for two and a half years out of the last three years at the time of application compared to three out of five years.

2. *Detention:* L 62 concerns immigration-related detention introducing circumstances such as massive arrivals for detaining asylum seekers (Aliens Act, article 36, L 62). Article 36 further states that police are entitled to detain an asylum seeker in the context of her/his arrival to Denmark, for the purpose of verifying her/his identity, conduct registration and establish the basis for her/his application. Article 59(1) provides the possibility of imprisonment for up to six months for non-citizens who enter or leave Denmark at a non-designated passport checkpoint or stay in Denmark without the requisite permit. The new laws are related to the introduction of new detention facilities such the Vridsløselille Prison, a former prison now used exclusively for immigration related reasons. Rejected asylum seekers can be detained for up to 18 months without committing crime.

3. *Reception conditions and extension of asylum austerity*: Various measures that reduce benefits to asylum seekers and at the same time include asylum seekers and refugees in covering the costs related their reception characterise the new Aliens Act. "User charges" have been introduced, which include to pay fees to access application to: family reunification (for subsidiary protection holders, ≈940 Euro), extension of residence permit (≈242 Euro), appeal of rejection of applications (≈108 Euro) (Article 5.7.2). The new law (Article 40 (9)) further allows police to seize asylum seekers' assets to cover the costs of institutional assistance (accommodation, food and health service). It enables officials to force asylum seekers to cede resources such as cash, valuables, including gold and jewellery, exceeding 1340 Euro upon their arrival in Denmark. If the asylum seeker is in possession of adequate funds, the Danish Immigration Service will not provide subsistence allowances and/or state-financed accommodation. Ironically, the amendments abolished the possibility to live outside of centres after six months upon; living in a centre is obligatory. Asylum seekers are thus

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[3] For a detailed overview on the changes of periods (and possibilities of extension) of different forms of asylum see UNHCR Regional Representation for Northern Europe (2016).

forced to pay for their place in a state-financed centre. The changes further focus on increasing the capacity for accommodation and the role of municipalities and private companies in operating centres to reduce costs for accommodation due to competition of a diverse set of operators. Social benefits for arrivals after 2015 are cut down by around 50%. A single asylum seeker in the phase of the asylum procedure, who is served with canteen services, receives approx. 1.10 Euro per day and approx. 33.20 Euro per month. Asylum seekers with access to self-catering receive 8.20 Euro per day and approx. 243 Euro per month in total cash allowance (section 7). Section 6.2.2 even lists that, "it is reasonable to foreigners to pay for their stay in detention centres as long as they have the means to do so" (translated into English).

Despite recent changes and falling numbers, Denmark discusses further steps to ultimately stop arrivals. Since 2015, Denmark has published ads in newspapers in countries of the Middle East to promote its strict laws and demotivate migrants. In December 2017, the Danish parliament decided to opt out of the UN refugee resettlement programme, through which Denmark accepted around 500 refugees each year since 1989. In February 2018, the Social Democrats, the Danish parliament's biggest opposition party, pushed forward a discussion on the establishment of Danish-run reception centres in North African countries, which would determine decisions on asylum and protection statuses. This approach includes the abolishment to claim asylum on Danish soil (The Local DK 2018) and ultimately the right to asylum.

3.5   The Socio-Spatial Exclusion of Forced Migrants in the Hovedstaden Region

Denmark's Hovedstaden Region covers a great part of northeast Zealand including the greater Copenhagen area and Bornholm island. It is the most densely populated region in Denmark comprising around 1,753,000 inhabitants on 2546.3 sq. km. Copenhagen is the largest city of Hovedstaden; its administrative seat is in Hellerød, a middle-sized town 30 km north of Copenhagen. Compared to other Danish regions, Hovedstaden has a long tradition in accommodating asylum seekers.

In this section, I explain how Denmark's legislations and policies affect the living conditions and processes of socio-spatial exclusion of forced migrants. First, I elaborate Denmark's agenda to concentrate asylum seekers in remote centres and to prevent newcomers from living in areas with higher percentages of immigrants. Second, I analyse the process of campization and asylum austerity as results of recent law changes.

3.5.1   The Danish Policy of Siting Centres and the Territorialisation of Refugees

Denmark's Integration Act (§8) follows the logic to place asylum seekers in remote areas outside of urban settlements and to disperse accepted refugees to municipalities with low immigrant populations to guarantee a "better integration". The instruments for this policy are quota systems of the Immigration Service that regulate the allocation of accepted refugees to regions (Regionskvoter) and municipalities within the regions (Kommunekvoter). The quota is calculated based on the number of residents of a municipality in relation to Denmark's total population, the number of immigrants in a municipality as well as the number of family reunifications in municipalities. Municipalities that already have a high percentage of individuals with foreign origin, with Copenhagen, Arhus and Aalborg leading the way, are so-called "0-Municipalities" meaning that no refugee can move or be distributed to these cities. The explicit intention is to "share the burden of immigration" and create an equal distribution across all municipalities, so that integration can be improved (Danish Immigration Service 2017).

This distribution system has significant effects on the integration trajectories of asylum seekers: first, gives absolute control to the state regarding refugee settlement. Second, it has a long-term effect on the mobility of refugees, who must live for 3 years in the assigned municipality. Third, the municipality is responsible to ensure that refugees participate in the 3-year integration program as well as to sanction refugees if they do not follow the requirements. And fourth, the policy is assimilationist and anti-urban. It argues that the concentration of immigrants in larger cities would circumvent integration. It does not consider the role of ethnic communities and urban ethnic infrastructures as part of integration processes. Instead, it follows the logic to integrate the individual *into* the Danish society detached from ethnic communities and cultural practices.

This quota also impacts the distribution of asylum centres to less populated areas with low shares of immigrants. It is applied to justify the remote location of centres: Since accepted refugees do not have access to bigger cities, it would not be feasible to open centres in 0-municipalities. In Hovedstaden, all 0-municipalities (Albertslund, Brøndby, Høje-Taastrup, Ishøj and Copenhagen) are in Greater Copenhagen. As a result, there is no asylum centre in or in the neighbouring municipalities and suburbs of Denmark's capital city. The closest centres to Copenhagen are Centre Kongelunden (10 km to the city centre) and Centre Sandholm (30 km to the city centre) (see Fig. 3.2). Neither asylum seekers nor refugees have the legal opportunity to live in bigger cities. In Hovedstaden, centres are predominantly located in former military bases and hospitals in forests 10–50 km away from larger urban settlements. Particularly the location of centres in Bornholm is striking: Three shelters are located on the remote and sparsely populated isle of 39,756 inhabitants. One ferry connects Bornholm with the Danish mainland taking approx. 5 h.[4]

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[4] The centres and living conditions of asylum seekers on Bornholm have not been further investi-
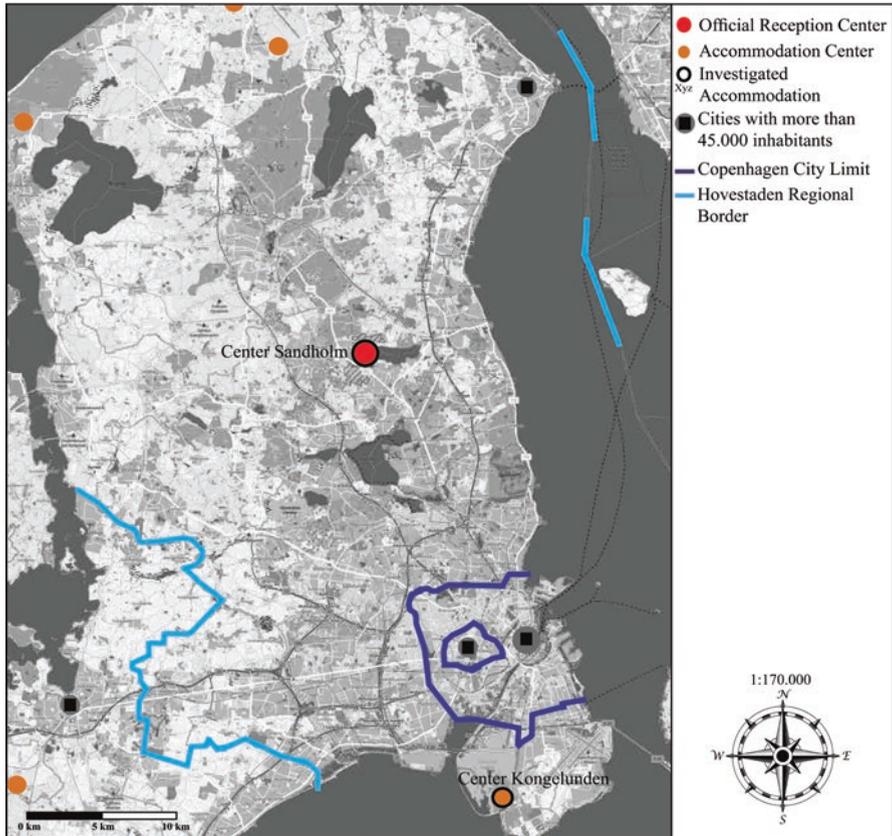
Fig. 3.2 Schematic map of accommodation forms and their distribution in Hovedstaden (without Bornholm) in 2016. (Map modified by including data and information on accommodation, which are based on conducted interviews, own mappings and socio-spatial analyses, as well as on data provided by Røde Kors (2016). Røde Kors Asylcentre. https://www.rodekors.dk/det-goer-vi/roede-kors-asyl/asylcentre. Accessed 9 December 2017. This map was published in a previous publication: Kreichauf (2018))

There are five accommodations in Hovedstaden's mainland and Centre Avnstrup, which situated close to the region. Sandholm is a central landmark in the Danish system and in Hovedstaden. The old, yellow military barracks were built in 1909 and opened in 1986 as an accommodation site. The centre is located some 30 km north of Copenhagen. It houses the immigration section of the Danish National Police, the Immigration Service, and Ellebækhus, Denmark's institution for detained asylum seekers operated by the Danish Prison and Probation Service. Sandholm

gated within the presented research material.

accommodates up to 600 individuals, who are either newly registered, awaiting a decision on their application, or have had their application rejected and are awaiting departure from Denmark.

The Centres Kongelunden, Auderød, Gribskov and Esbonderup are run by the Danish Red Cross. They house 200 to 500 asylum seekers. The Danish Immigration Service (2014) argues in an interview that "smaller units are not very well and expensive to have." [5] The location in rural areas as well as processes of dispersion and concentration characterise the accommodation of forced migrants in Denmark.

3.5.2 Campization and Asylum Austerity

In Denmark, the establishment of mass accommodation is strongly connected to the discourse on the abuse of asylum, the 'protection' of the Danish society as well as the introduction of restrictive policies. These conditions unfold in the spatial form of the centre aiming to discourage refugees to migrate to Denmark by strategically reducing the living conditions and accesses to the Danish society. A representative of the Danish Refugee Council (2015) argues that this strategy is the inherent logic of Denmark's reception system:

> They do not want to make them feel too comfortable, because they are afraid that more refugees would come. This is very persistent in the society of Denmark. It is a very nationalistic discussion on how to protect the Danish society.

Recent changes in asylum laws and accommodation practices have introduced or enlarged centres, higher capacities and a longer detention time with the purpose of securing the containment and territorialisation of refugees.

Regarding accommodations in the Hovedstaden region, this process of campization is revealed by five major characteristics. First, the isolating location and the socio-spatial structures of the accommodation are defined by the establishment of consolidated and secluded spaces separated from urban settlements. Those camp spaces illustrate a parcel-like organisation of land and buildings, means of centrality within these camp-like settlements, border and surveillance infrastructures, a concentration of the functions reception, accommodation and deportation at one place and own infrastructures within the camps (schools, clinics, canteens, job centres, washhouses). Further, there is a social differentiation and segregation of the residents depending on their status, the legal characteristics as well as characteristics regarding race/ethnicity, gender, age and family status.

Second, control is a central element. There are direct and indirect means of control in centres in Hovedstaden. For example, identity and entry controls of residents and visitors and physical boundaries like fences and walls guarantee direct control.

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[5]A place for one asylum seeker in a centre costs around 750 Euro at average. To accommodate a family of four family members thus costs around 3.000 Euro every month. These high expenses for centre housing circumvent the Immigration Service's statement (Refugees Welcome 2015).

Intrusions in the privacy, the control by the staff of the centres on the actions conducted in the centre and outside of it, the control by other asylum seekers and the development of a specific form of self-control characterise indirect forms. These mechanisms are highly interlinked with the asylum process. They have been established not only to organise and manage asylum seekers, but also to sanction them if necessary.

Third, the accommodation system, but also the asylum regime as such, is established around a state of heteronomy. By heteronomy I mean the condition in which state agencies and officials rule to a large extent forced migrants and their lives. It begins with the distribution after arrival. After initial reception at Sandholm, asylum seekers have no influence on their further distribution to accommodation centres or, once asylum is granted, to municipalities. All interviewed asylum seekers in Hovedstaden had to move multiple times without receiving an explanation. This practice results in feelings of fear, the destruction of social relations among residents and the lack of belonging, as a former resident of Sandholm argues:

> They can send you all over the country, if they want to. I lived in many centres here in Denmark. And every time, when you have to leave one, you think that they will deport you. You cannot understand the decision of them sending you to a new place.

The heteronomy opens a set of rules, restrictions and dependencies. It detains asylum seekers from having an autonomous life and being perceived as incapable of conducting their own lives. The principle of allowance, the activation program and the organisation of the centre life has huge impacts on the life and the privacy of asylum seekers.

Fourth, stigmatization and racial markings are a crucial and intentional element of campization in Hovedstaden. The accommodation centre plays a crucial role in the formation of resentments towards 'strangers', because of its architecture and structural organisation, its location as well as its symbolism. Because of the allocation of refugees to a negatively connoted space, they are excluded, but noticed and they become visible – this is the starting point for processes of racialisation and "territorial stigmatisation" (Wacquant 2007). Housing in an accommodation produces attention due to the material and inner structures of the camp space (low standards, concentration of people on a very limited space, intrusion into privacy, dependency on social workers, ban from work). To the outside, the centre conveys an image of its residents who are not in accordance with societal norms. These conditions are highlighted in following excerpt of an interview with a representative of Refugees Welcome (2015):

> Especially because often asylum centres are old military barracks, you easily get the impression of centres being concentration camps for people that do not belong and are unwanted in the society. The whole constitution of the centre space like barriers, the entrance control, the fact that people live jammed together on a very small space helps to downgrade asylum seekers in the perception of society and thus they are stigmatised as sub-human beings. […] The location of the asylum centre helps to establish an image on asylum seekers as being criminal and that they are scary. And of course, this is a political will.

Sandholm is the most obvious socio-spatial expression of the centre representing a place of stigmatization and intimidation. Not only that it is a former military basis with a history still present in the architecture and in the arrangement of buildings, but also a shooting range of the Danish military surrounds the centre. Gunnery exercise starts every day at 6 a.m. Major sport facilities (the biggest playground, soccer field etc.) are located towards the borders of the centre to the neighbouring detention section. A refugee and member of Asylret remembers: "In Sandholm, in the kindergarden, you can look to the prison for the people that have to leave the country" (Asylret 2014). These conditions further add to the traumatization of asylum seekers.

Finally, Denmark's emerging asylum austerity politics and the mantras of cuts of social benefits and the refugees' contribution to financing the reception system cement campization processes and the position of refugees in society. Since 2003, the government introduced an activation program in the centres overseen and conducted by the Danish Red Cross. The program is mandatory and asylum seekers above the age of 18 must participate otherwise their financial means are cut. It contains daily activities at the centre such as cleaning shared facilities, doing laundry, recycling and bicycle repair (Hobers 2006). These activities are negotiated and distributed by a Job Centre located in the camp. To finance the activation programme, the cash allowances for asylum seekers were lowered, but they regain it by participating at the program (Syppli Kohl 2016). A former employee of the Danish Red Cross (2015) describes the programme in an interview as follows:

> There is a thing called "Cleaning". Used to control the behaviour, I would say. Because you have to do it, and if you are not doing it, your money will be cut […]. And then you have activation within the centre, which […] could be opening and closing the room of the washing machines – completely silly, you don't learn anything. The whole idea is that people […] get "qualifications" that enables them either to have a good time here or to return. This is the formula in the Red Cross. People are prepared to leave Denmark.

The program is related to means and functions of (non-punitive) prison labour consequently aiming to discipline, control and exploit asylum seekers with little paid and manual labour activities. It aims to economise the asylum seekers' maintenance, to save expenses on the reception and it introduces ways to penalise those who do not participate (Syppli Kohl 2016). Consequently, it follows the neoliberal logic of promoting and demanding with asylum seekers being exploited and forced to participate in the preservation of this system.

Denmark has carried asylum austerity measures to extremes. Indeed, cuts in social benefits, integration programs, administrative staff and generally the objective to minimize the expenses for the maintenance of asylum seekers and refugees have some tradition in Danish legislations and political discourses. But Denmark's new approach of appropriation of property and financial means as well as the contribution of asylum seekers' finances and labour power to cover expenses related to their stay is another step towards the disfranchisement and degradation of persons seeking protection.

The poor financial situation and the spatial isolation in the centres result in asylum seekers trying to find other ways to become a part of the society and to liberate themselves from the exclusionary mechanisms. Due to the cuts of benefits, the long periods asylum seekers are forced to live in the centres, and due to the constitution and location of the centres they find informal ways to conduct their lives (small offences, black market, illegal work with no employment rights, riding trains without tickets etc.). In the end, this situation reinforces the development of the mentioned stigmas on this group.

3.6 The Role of the Local in Denmark's War on Asylum

Forced migrants are excluded in extraterritorial and exceptional places, but included in the structures of government, power and national laws and objectives. The accommodation marks the refugees and portrays their position in society. It is an "Urban Non-Class" (Kreichauf 2016, 194), which cannot be described by typical definitions and structures of classes, but which exists parallel to existing social structures of society. There are laws, institutions and spaces exclusively designed for refugees, which structurally, economically, socially and spatially exclude them from established institutions for citizens of a nation state.

What is most apparent when empirically investigating the quintessence of Denmark's reception practices and accommodation structures is their translation into spatial dimensions. During the application process, the asylum system is designed to give control to the state to isolate forced migrants in camp-like accommodation, to provide as little means as possible, and to ultimately deter forced migrants. The state applies the accommodation to separate the 'own' and the '(ethnic) other', citizens and non-citizens (Turner 2016). It represents the material realisations of asylum laws and it is the physical space of administrative and political acts of power. Law changes during and since the "refugee crisis" have intensified these objectives, even though the case of Denmark illustrates a clear path dependency in the establishment of exclusionary reception practices since the 1990s.

Regarding this book's topic and its focus on the local level and local integration conditions, Denmark's reception and settlement approaches are significant and require further studies for the following reasons. First, municipalities have practically no saying regarding the location and development of accommodations and the distribution of accepted refugees. After receiving asylum, the state decides the location and settlement of refugees based on the Regionekvoter and the Kommunekvoter.

Second, only after the dispersal and settlement in a municipality, local policies become relevant, but they are still embedded in powerful state regulations and the assimilationist 3-year-long integration program. Research on the trajectories of accepted refugees during and after this 3-year residential obligation are necessary to give insights into local integration processes, the role of the municipality and their

impact on the living conditions of refugees. This will also show if refugees in the end stay in allocated regions or if they finally migrate to urban areas.

Third, the hardening of integration policies, the introduction of the quota system and residential obligations for accepted refugees were influenced by Social Democratic majors of Copenhagen and Aarhus in the 1990s (Myrberg 2017). They saw an unfair distribution of costs and problematic concentrations of immigrants, since refugees would migrate to larger cities and settle in ethnic neighbourhoods. The Danish case refutes – or at least diversifies – the assumption in urban and migration studies that big cities would be a hotbed for progressive and pro-immigration policies.

Fourth, Denmark's 'geographies of asylum' are consequently rather rural because of the anti-urban and anti-multicultural integration policies. Accommodation centres for asylum seekers and accepted refugees are distributed to rural areas and small towns with low immigrant populations. However, major refugee organizations, initiatives and places of protest are in Copenhagen. The Trampoline House, for example, is a cultural and social project, which aims to "deisolate asylum seekers and include them in the urban society" (Trampoline House 2015). Further analyses should investigate to what extent refugees develop tactics and strategies to participate in urban life and ethnic cultural activities in urban localities.

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Chapter 4
Places and Spaces of the Others. A German Reception Centre in Public Discourse and Individual Perception

Daniel Göler

4.1 An Outline of the Problem and Its Theoretical Embeddedness

The refugee migration to Europe in 2015 and the political management of the so-called "refugee crisis", which is more and more perceived as a "European refugee reception crisis" (Knipper 2016: 993), have dominated daily public discourse since then. From a scholarly point of view, refugee mobility has produced both spatially and personally alienated human beings, as discussed by Rosa (2014: 122ff). Among the manifest outcomes are refugee camps as places without any history and identity, thus "non-places" (Augé 1992). According to anthropologist Marc Augé, non-places are one of the characteristics of "super-modernity" (1995: 30): "Something we perceive, but only in a partial and incoherent manner". These basic assumptions are fundamental to the subsequent analysis of refuge and asylum procedures at the local level in a receiving country. Therefore, a German reception and accommodation centre serves as an example. The main concern of analysis is exploring the geographical logic of social practices there (Werlen 2013: 84). Hence, this study focuses on the phenomenon's "geographicities" (Göler and Krišjāne 2017) and thereby on the wide range of the refugees' migration spatialities. The concept takes into account in particular that the (spatial) order of individuals, social groups, economies, relevant institutions and their interrelation is highly influenced by specific framing, settings and developments. This means that the notion of place and space is interpreted as a relational one. Against this background it is obvious that this study has to use a broad empirical approach in order to cover two relevant research interests. One is the spatial context of and the local discourse on such a reception centre, and the question of how these are produced in an arena of tensions between

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policies at the European, national and local levels. The other is the manner in which these processes of permanent negotiations constitute the camp's logic as a non-place and what variations it is subject to.

The rationale of the analysis concentrates in particular on the spatial perception of migrants and asylum seekers. From this perspective, refugee camps and reception centres are transitory places where the residents as individuals are temporarily reduced to the functionality of the institution. Thus, such centres correspond strongly with Foucault's figure of heterotopia (1967): They are the spatial product of political will and governance, reflecting the constituting society and yet functioning according to their own rules. In this respect, a refugee reception centre (and every other kind of camp) represents an impersonal, ahistoric and identity-poor transit area in its given local context. Elements of "Liquid Surveillance" as described by Bauman and Lyon (2013) such as restricted access and entrance rituals underline the scrappy, fragmentary and incoherent perception of such a place in a local neighbourhood. Generally, little information about the site and the residents leaks to the outside. In this chapter, fresh material from three empirical studies on media discourse, individual perceptions and corresponding reflections will be presented.[1]

After a description of the methodology, concept and research questions and a concise discussion on refugee migration, asylum and encampment, interest will be turned to the "Reception and Accommodation Centre of Upper Franconia" in Bamberg, a medium-sized town in Northern Bavaria, Germany. In what follows, this institution is considered as a non-place and thus serves as a distinct example for the topic of places and spaces of the other. The main goal of the chapter is a further reflection on the "geographicities" of refuge in a local context.

4.2   Methodology and Concept

Unravelling such a complex institution like a refugee reception centre and related aspects requires a multidimensional approach. Consequently, the social-geographic study on the institution and its residents is based on a methodological triangulation. The main findings on the centre's geographicities are gathered from discrete empirical studies. Each one covered specific research questions and used separate survey methods adapted to the individual set of research problems.

The analysis of the media discourse related to the reception centre (Sect. 4.5) is a longitudinal approach from the very beginning to the stage of consolidation. It provides insights into public attitudes as well as local policies towards the reception

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centre. Related research questions focus mainly on relevant changes over time: are there any decisive incidents to identify what information is reported on the location and the residents, and how this communication is done? How is the functionality of the centre assessed? Therefore, media coverage was scrutinized in detail for the period 2015–2016. The source of information was the online archive "inFranken", where articles from leading Northern Bavarian newspapers published by the Media Group Upper Franconia (especially "Fränkischer Tag") are available. Text analysis concentrated on 312 articles, of which 189 were directly related to the camp.

As Sect. 4.5 represents the perspective from outside, these findings are contrasted in Sect. 4.6 by the views of the centre's residents. Insights were gathered through a total of 20 qualitative biographical interviews with occasionally, but not systematically selected residents ("snowball sample"). At the time of the survey in mid-2016, the vast majority of the residents (and hence the interviewees) were from Western Balkan countries, mostly Albania and Kosovo. The interviewees were between 17 and 56 years old. Interviews lasted up to an hour and were conducted on site in their native language. The main research questions and guidelines for the interviews and the talks about individual migration biographies were the motivations and circumstances of the migration "into asylum", the current personal situation in the centre and their perspectives if and when they were returned to their own countries. Guiding questions were: Did the migrants have any opportunity to gain resources in Germany for restarting their lives after deportation? What are their individual experiences of failed immigration to Germany or the Schengen area, respectively?

Then, attention is drawn to refugees' perception of the locality and surroundings (Sect. 4.7). The spatial representations of selected residents were surveyed by using the method of mental maps, because "human spatial behaviour is dependent on the individual's cognitive map of the spatial environment" (Downs and Stea 1973: 9). During narrative interviews, residents were asked to make a drawing of the spatial environment where people live and stay ("sketch map")[2]. In the second half of 2017, a total of 15 tested persons documented their spatial perception, which is determined by spaces and places relevant to them. The interest was in how the residents at their stage of transit deal with this status from a spatial perspective. How do they cope with their specific situation and which spatial patterns exist, or do they tend to be randomized?

As the empirical findings give broad information on the geographicities of refugee mobility, detailed synthesis and generalization is necessary. Thus, the discussion at the end concentrates on dichotomies, variabilities and limitations inside and outside the examined non-place.

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[2] The method, its application in geography, and relevant studies go back to the 1960s and 1970s. In the context of a cognitive turn in geography, individual behaviour and spatial perception became the focus of interest (see Lynch 1960; Horton and Reynolds 1971; Downs and Stea 1973).

4.3 A New Analytical Perspective

The "refugee crisis" of 2015 soon found its expression in academic literature. Analysis of the challenge that Europe faced in those days focused on the admission of some hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers. Another issue was the valuation of cultures of welcome and assistance; an example is Schiffauer et al. (2017), including a contribution on Bamberg (Rauber 2017: 232). Sometimes fundamentalist and ideology-driven political criticism, partially charged by emotions (see contributions in Hess et al. 2017), draws attention away from the scarce analysis of spatialities of refugee migration, asylum and reception (such as Ramadan 2012). Literature beyond a couple of studies on the Western European receiving countries in general and Germany in particular often deals with specifics such as the airport asylum procedure (Nieswand 2018) or the role of borders or boundary drawings ("b/ordering"; Hartmann 2017: 239). Only a few emphasize refugees' everyday life and the local practice of housing (e.g. Kublitz 2016).

This may distract scholars from the fact that immigration, refuge and asylum are not new, but periodically recurring topics. Without going too far back into German history, there are parallels to the situation in the 1990s with regard to asylum migration at that time and to the admission of refugees from Yugoslav secession wars. As a result, the entire complex of asylum procedures or paradigms of integration have been thoroughly questioned (cf. Isaakyan 2016: 169ff).

This leads directly to the challenge of securitization of refugees and the fields of encampment and self-settlement. Self-settlement means that "the refugees make their own choice about where they reside and the state's role can vary enormously", whereas encampment "refers to a policy which requires refugees to live in a designated area set aside for the exclusive use of refugees "(Bakewell 2014: 129). The first variant is seen as being more efficient, but in a humanitarian sense hardly justifiable if we take into account the critical situation of an increasing number of migrants in the Global South. It is the large number of refugees that legitimizes the variant of organized encampment in the regions of origin or neighbouring countries there.

Encampment is still mostly thought of from the perspective of the Global South. Collyer (2014: 118ff), for example, implicitly locates the "Geographies of Forced Migration" there. Indeed, the vast majority of studies on refugee camps analyze the situation in and around contexts of refuge and scrutinize the situation in camps in Jordan, Lebanon or Darfur (see for example: Ramadan 2012; Minca 2015; Oesch 2017). Thus, scholars have recently expressed regret that "the focus of research is geographically divided between South and North" (Rechitsky 2016: 172). However, an explicit transfer of analysis on encampment or camp settings to the Global North is rather an exception.

That is somewhat surprising given that refugee reception is anything but new in Germany, for example going back to the post-Second World War period when so called "border crossing camps" were established (Oltmer 2016: 50). Until today, institutions like that exist in quite similar forms, though renamed as a "collective

camp for foreigners" ("*Sammellager für Ausländer*") and, more recently, as a "reception centre for asylum seekers" ("*Zentrale Aufnahmeeinrichtung für Asylbewerber*"). The concept of centralized accommodation of asylum seekers is, as part of the ongoing political debate on asylum, recently celebrating a re-birth (more on which later on). This seems to be tricky because in a historically sensitized country such as Germany, encampment is highly contentious politically, socially, morally and academically (Pieper 2010). Nevertheless, "hotspots" and "transfer zones" for asylum seekers who are trying to reach Fortress Europe are again part of serious considerations; that is, extra-territorialization of the problem in the form of "offshore processing" (Papagianni 2016: 326) accompanied by accelerated discussions on efficient and, at the same time, humanitarian practice according to international law.

A central part of these discussions was the implementation of arrival and deportation facilities as they were being set up in Bavaria in 2015, at least as another "way of grounding geopolitics in the everyday" (Ramadan 2012: 65). On the top of the "refugee crisis", this raised the question of the adequate form of accommodation for asylum seekers in Germany. To sum up, all these focal points are further indicators for broadening the perspective and "to look at the relationship of migration [from] within the Global South to power dynamics within the Global North" (Rechitsky 2016: 173).

However, the centralization of reception procedures and decision-making are becoming the general rule of admission practice in Germany, since so-called "AnKER-Zentren" were an integral part of the national government's Coalition Agreement in February 2018.[3] Since then, eight such centres have been established nationwide. The blueprint for this form of onshore processing has existed in Germany for 3 years: the reception and accommodation centre AEO (*A*ufnahme*e*inrichtung *O*berfranken) that opened in Bamberg in 2015 (known as *A*NKER-*E*inrichtung *O*berfranken since August 2018). A consideration of the local effects, hence geographicities, of migration, refuge and asylum is worthwhile in this example, since the Bamberg institution represents the future standard of admission and asylum practice in Germany and possibly throughout Europe.

4.4 Non-place AEO?

4.4.1 Facts About the Centre

According to the above – the (academic) interpretation of reception and accommodation centres as non-places and future (political) models for asylum processing – Bamberg's AEO may even be considered as a laboratory for finding efficient ways

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[3] "Arrival, decision, and resettlement or deportation should take place in AnKER centres" (Koalitionsvertrag 2018, 107). The acronym AnKER – which is reminiscent of "anchor" – comes from the German spelling: *Ank*unft, *E*ntscheidung, kommunale Verteilung bzw. *R*ückführung.
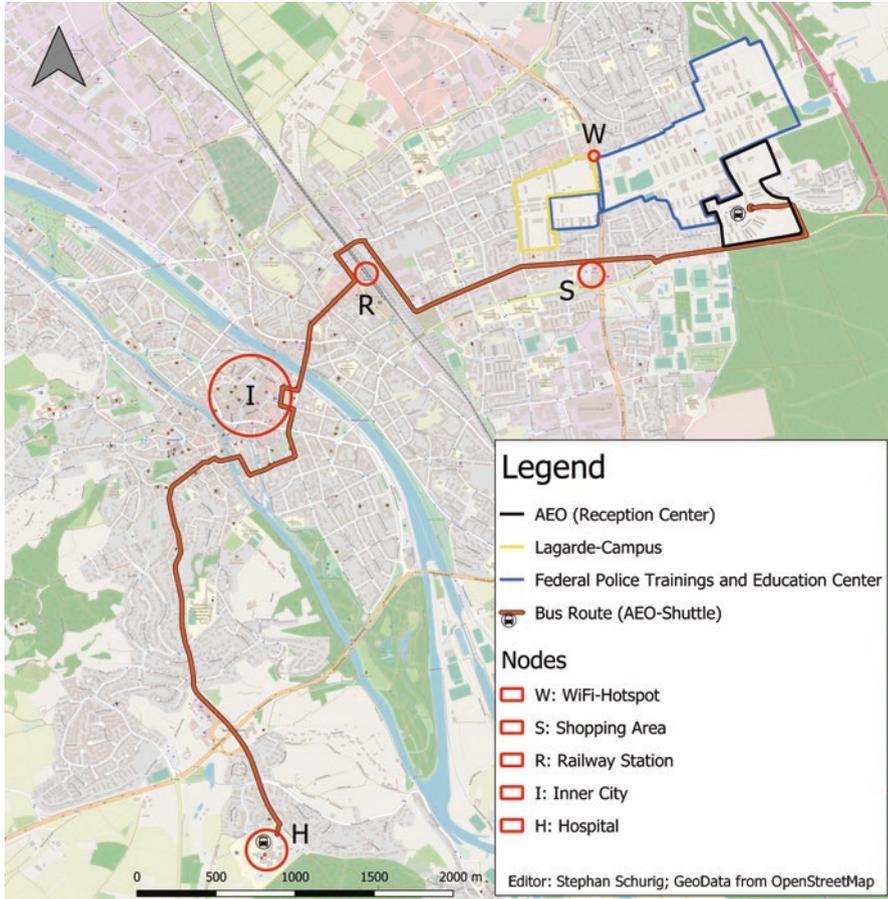
Fig. 4.1 Plan overview of AEO and its location in Bamberg

to implement asylum legislation. The facility opened on 14 September 2015 as one of two "admission and deportation centres" (ARE) in the Federal State of Bavaria.[4] There was a very short lead time as former military sites were available. In Bamberg, this was a 190-hectare housing area inside the former US barracks (Fig. 4.1). After the final withdrawal of the US forces in 2014, a long-term urban conversion process should have started. Given the dramatic situation in mid-2015 and the urgent question of housing for a large number of migrants, the transformation into accommodation for asylum seekers was obvious. As the premises were owned by the Federal Republic of Germany and not the municipality of Bamberg, national authorities could easily leave this area in a top-down decision by contract to the Federal State

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[4] "*A*nkunfts- und *R*ückführungs*e*inrichtung", abbreviated to ARE II. The other one, ARE I, is in Manching/Upper Bavaria.

of Bavaria to install a reception centre there, essentially without the consent of the Bamberg municipality.

ARE II opened exclusively as a special reception centre for asylum seekers from safe countries of origin such as the Western Balkan countries. Since July 2016 a regular reception centre for asylum seekers has been integrated into the complex, and a third pillar came in September 2017 in the form of an arrival centre. Since then the camp has been renamed AEO. All relevant authorities such as the federal agency for migration and refugees (BAMF), state immigration authority, youth welfare office and an application office of the administrative court are present on site. This guarantees that the procedure for granting the right of asylum according to the law is conducted accurately, but in an accelerated manner. Asylum seekers should receive information on whether they are allowed to stay in Germany or whether they must return to their country of origin as soon as possible. The average length of stay is 2 months, according to the Government of Upper Franconia who operates the centre.[5]

The initial capacity of 1500 residents steadily expanded. In July 2017, the (current) final expansion to 3400 beds was reached. It has been reported that there is now capacity for 4500 residents, but such a level of occupancy has never been reached. Usually, the number of residents varies between 1200 and 1600. In early March 2018, for example, almost 1300 people were living there, including 223 in the special reception centre and 1073 in the regular reception centre. At the beginning (2015–2016), most of the centre's residents came from Western Balkan countries. Hence, the centre is popularly known as the "Balkan Centre" ("*Balkanzentrum*"), although nowadays the origins of the residents is much more diverse and includes migrants from north Africa, Syria or former Soviet republics such as Russia, Ukraine and Georgia.

The life span of the reception centre is a crucial question. According to contracts between the Bamberg municipality and Bavaria, it is limited to 10 years. However, after the recent developments in refugee politics in Germany, this seems to be wishful thinking in Bamberg: Why should a well-functioning and highly efficient prototype, built up with enormous efforts, be shut down and then be substituted by capacity constructed elsewhere? Therefore, at the latest in 2025, Bamberg will prove the litmus test regarding political commitments by the federal and state governments towards local politics.

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[5] As of 2 March 2018. Information about the centre and details concerning current occupancy can be found on the government's website: https://www.regierung.oberfranken.bayern.de/buerger_und_staat/migranten/ae_oberfranken/index.php

4.4.2   Asylum Policy and the Camp's Political Framing

After the reform of the German asylum legislation in the 1990s, asylum seekers were usually accommodated decentrally. Housing was provided in apartments or small collective units on the social or private housing market. This was common practice in Bavaria and thus in Bamberg. Three factors determined the need for a reaction and policy response in 2014–2015: the increase in refugee immigration, a massive shortage on the housing market, and the need to enhance efficiency in operating asylum procedures. As a consequence, gradual adjustments to immigration laws and the extensive constriction of asylum regulations and their application have been implemented on the basis of two acts: The Asylum Packages I and II (*Asylpaket I und II*) of October 2015 and February 2016, respectively. Among the concrete measures therein are the special reception and accommodation centres. Beside the more or less informal suspension of Dublin regulations, the identification of "safe countries of origin" is a focal point regarding the new regulation. The latter include (in addition to the member states of the EU) the Western Balkan countries (since 2014–2015) and Senegal and Ghana (since 1993). The extension of the policy to the Maghreb countries is planned. Asylum seekers from these countries are directed to reception centres immediately after arrival and application, similar to the procedures in Bamberg. Thus, a group of migrants with a low probability of gaining asylum is constructed ex ante; in the case of asylum seekers from Albania and Kosovo for example, the quota for successful application in 2015 was 0.2% and 0.4%, respectively (BAMF 2016, p. 50). Applicants are then obliged to live in the reception centres, which provide accommodation and further subsistence until the federal office's decision is made. During this period of time, they are not allowed to work or to leave the county where they have been allocated to. If their application for asylum is rejected as "manifestly unfounded" or even "inadmissible", these regulations apply until they leave Germany.

   Another basic element of the new regulations on asylum is the changeover from the monetary to the in-kind principle, which means that beside accommodation, food and all other basic needs are provided by the state. Monetary benefits are thus reduced to a minimum and even drop completely if the application is rejected. So-called "misguided incentives" should be avoided. This seems to be the case – or at least is implied – for a certain number of migrants from Southeast and East European countries, who generate, by immigration into the German asylum system, an income above the average in their home countries.

   The accelerated asylum procedures apply analogously to migrants from countries with a "high probability of approval". These are countries with a protection rate of at least 50% (currently Eritrea, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Somalia). In fact, the reforms outlined were crucial for administrative coping with the rapid rise in the number of asylum seekers, including registration, application and processing in such a short period of time. Thus, the intended increase in efficiency in operational terms is achieved, as long as the rejected asylum seekers do not make appeals. The

same applies to the goal of clarifying the residence status as a prerequisite for subsequent integration measures or access to the labour market.

Regarding that interrelation, Etzold (2017: 82) argues "that the two fields – the 'field of asylum' and the 'field of labour' – were purposely kept separate from another. This interrelation was recently reconfigured in complex ways and is still dominated by restrictive regulations concerning the asylum procedures". Vice versa, with this approach any kind of integration during the asylum procedure should be kept to a minimum, not least in order to simplify measures of deportation if the application is rejected.

4.4.3   Criticisms of the AEO

The Bamberg reception and accommodation centre earned much recognition, especially from conservative government policy in Bavaria and beyond. But there was and still is a lot of criticism concerning the reception procedures in detail or making asylum regulations stricter in general. The latter concerns in particular the weakening of the fundamental right of asylum by constructing groups of refugees with a low vs. high probability of remaining and the related categorization in advance, solely on the basis of origin. However, this point is not specific to AEOs and does not need to be further elaborated upon in this chapter.

Directly related to the location is criticism of its martial form. Not at least with the massive fencing dating from the days of the US Army, the physiognomy of the site actually conveys the impression of imprisoning and thus interning refugees. In fact, residents are allowed to leave and enter the area at any time; the operator points out safety reasons for the residents regarding fencing. However, unauthorized access, i.e. non-residents without a permit, is denied. Corresponding entrance controls and checkpoints underline permanent surveillance and the character of a non-place (Fig. 4.2). Although it is in the direct vicinity of bourgeois residential areas, it is, due to limited accessibility, at the same time far away. It comes as an anachronism that the situation today evokes the era of the US barracks.

Other criticism is directed to questions of individual housing, integration of residents and schooling of children. All these points are subject to individual as well as ideological evaluations, as will be elaborated upon in the analysis of public media discourse.

Fig. 4.2 Checkpoint and entrance control at Bamberg's AEO; in the background one of the residential buildings. (Photo by author, 21 Oct. 2018)

4.5 The AEO in Public Media Discourse

4.5.1 The Location

In 2015 and 2016, the media coverage of Bamberg's AEO focused on three topics: the location and its relation to the housing market, the residents of the centre, and the functionality of the (non-)place.

The decision of the former military area as a suitable location was initially judged as an advantage. At the time, there was even talk of a "tailwind for conversion" (Thelen 2017: 42ff.). However, no one is talking about this any more, especially since a Federal Police training centre was also opened on the conversion area in 2016, and only a small crumb remains of the original idea of urban development. Moreover, in the meantime the process of urban conversion has started in the smaller area of the historic Lagarde barracks (see Fig. 4.1), not least because of compensations from the Federal State of Bavaria. The release of the area occupied by the AEO in 2025 is, as already indicated, at least questionable.

Another persistent strand of discourse is around the demand for affordable housing. This is the main concern of a citizens' initiative called "Army site in citizen hands", established in 2014. They want to provide moderate-priced housing in the

former garrison.[6] In fact, the situation on the regional housing market has worsened considerably with the opening of the AEO and the police camp. Thereby, the real estate market has received much less space through the conversion process than expected. At the same time demand has increased considerably, not least due to several 100 employees in both institutions. The price level for housing in Bamberg—a medium-sized town in a rural area—is already comparable with metropolitan areas. But it is not only the competing institutional use that makes the demand for a rapid conversion of the residential buildings in the former barracks irrelevant. The "uniform functional buildings" with attributes like "compact and heated" (Thelen 2017: 44) may be appropriate for short-term use and temporary accommodation, but without extensive and lengthy renovation and modernization they would have little attraction for the real estate market. Incidentally, critics overlook the question of ownership in this regard: The acquisition of the site from the federal state at regular market conditions and the subsequent project development of the whole area would hardly be affordable for the municipality of Bamberg in the foreseeable future anyway. In this respect, the topic of location implicitly leads back to the focal question of ownership of the former military area and the resulting discourse about the acceptable capacity of the camp.

4.5.2 The Residents

The discourse concerning the residents was initially indeed determined by questions of scale. In particular after the incidents on New Year's Eve 2015 in Cologne, when hundreds of women were sexually assaulted by (mostly) male, young North African and Arab migrants and numerous thefts were recorded, a critical atmosphere developed with regard to origin, "otherness" and masculinities of migration. At the end of 2015, it seemed that the ARE and its residents – a limited (and declining) number of migrants from Western Balkan countries – were more or less accepted among Bamberg's citizens, but then came media reports of a conversion to a regular reception centre, where migrants from (North) African sending countries would be accommodated. After initial problems the "*Balkanzentrum*" seemed to be broadly accepted, not least because it was occupied by "white Europeans". But now, the centre would turn into a facility with people from culturally much more distant origins. This strongly evoked the arguments of the thesis of hierarchical otherness of immigrants, which would – with the UK as an example – ultimately lead to the suppression of the autochthonous (or as such perceived) majority population of "white Britains" (Coleman 2006). The claim that the character of the centre as a "place of lack of perspective" (Thelen 2017: 48) would pass, since asylum seekers with better perspectives would live there, remained largely unheard. Rumours and reports of rising crime in the form of shoplifting, car break-ins, damage of property

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[6] Details on the initiative can be found on their Facebook account [www.facebook.com/BIArmyGelaende/, last visit 13 March 2018].

and bodily injury in and around the reception centre did not make things better. Again and again, media reported on certain groups of nationalities for different reasons and far too often these were criminal acts. However, it becomes evident that the image of the centre's residents, produced by the media, is exposed to constant change (Thelen 2017: 59).

4.5.3   The Functionality

The functionality of the (non-)place is defined by the concentrated presence of the relevant authorities, the proximity to the applicants and the aim of accelerating the procedures, including redistribution or repatriation, depending on the decision. This was pointed out in surprising openness with the initial naming as ARE (an abbreviation for *arrival* and *deportation*). AEO, in contrast, sounds at least more open-ended, even though the dominance of the function as a "special reception centre" indicates deportation as the most likely outcome. Moreover, new terms such as "turbo deportation centre", "deportation camp", "Bamberg deportation facility" or "deportation camp without integration" mushroomed in the course of 2016 (Thelen 2017: 61ff.).

The organization and execution of deportations, which usually take place in the early morning and apparently give residents not much more than 10 min to prepare, is highly controversial. Even the role of the non-lockable doors to and inside the apartments is discussed distinctively in this regard. On the one hand, they facilitate a deportation if residents oppose. On the other hand, the government points out safety reasons for the residents in case of fire or any other incident and their responsibility as operator. Other controversies are about the medical service, schooling or a bus shuttle set up in March 2016. The latter connects the AEO with the main railway station, the central bus station and the hospital. On the one hand, the incremental improvements regarding the functionality of the institution are appreciated. On the other, a discussion simultaneously emerged in the public discourse, because all of these improvements for refugees are always evaluated in competition with public services offered to Bamberg's citizens. Thus, the shuttle bus was immediately classified as a luxury for free, although the regional government of Upper Franconia had already withheld a small part of the residents' "pocket money" in advance.

Concerning the functionality of the whole facility, the discourse always spins around two opposing perspectives: One emphasizes the efficiency of the centre, mainly with regard to the previously constructed group of asylum applicants with a "low probability" of their claim being accepted. The other declares the institution as completely inhuman, despising basic human rights and subordinated to the political desire to temporarily isolate the residents.

4.6 The Reception Centre as a Place of Transit? The Residents' Perspective

The ever-changing occupancy, and hence the character of the AEO as a place of transit, makes it difficult to generate coherent findings on the perspective of the residents. In fact, given the heterogeneity of individual cases and the biographies of asylum seekers, there can be no such coherence. At the time of our survey (July–August 2016), the sample implicitly focused on a slightly more homogenous group, as during the centre's first year, the residents were predominantly migrants from Western Balkan countries. The majority of the interviewees had already lived in (decentralized) accommodation all over Northern Bavaria, sometimes for a longer period of time. They saw themselves on a good path of integration through school attendance and regular work. Then they had to move to the ARE in Bamberg, in order to accelerate further processing. Almost all of them had had a negative decision on their application before, but had not yet been deported due to various issues such as missing documents or ongoing medical problems. This explains in a certain number of cases the disproportionately long stay in the reception centre. Those asylum seekers whose applications had been unproblematic in the bureaucratic sense, or those who recognized the futility of an asylum application in their case and stopped the procedure on their own, had already left the ARE by the time of the survey. As a consequence the sample predominantly represented a group of people whose asylum procedures had been problematic (in terms of asylum procedures). This also explains that all of our interviewees stayed much longer in the camp than the average duration of 2 months mentioned above.

For these migrants, the stay in Bamberg was often just another stage in a multi-faceted migration trajectory. They are bound in an "elusive migration system" (Göler and Krisjane 2016: 2017), like those migrants from Kosovo and Albania, who act in a highly flexible, spontaneous and unpredictable way. Two biographies underline this. Firstly there was a 38-year-old Albanian citizen (I12)[7], born in Tepelena, who had lived and worked in Greece for 11 years. Due to the economic crisis there he returned to Albania in 2011. In 2015, he decided to leave to Germany "into asylum" with his family (a wife and three children). Secondly there was a 31-year-old Kosovan from Prishtina (I6) who came to Germany in 2011 and experienced slightly different conditions with liberal regulations at that time. He worked in a restaurant, then in horticulture and attended a language course. His work permit was no longer renewed from the end of 2015, and so since April 2016 he had been living in Bamberg's reception centre after living in three intermediate decentralized accommodation facilities in Northern Bavaria.

In other cases, too, the impression emerges that for migrants from Western Balkan countries who came to Germany before 2015, the prospects of staying were not bad at first (at least in the form of an exceptional leave to remain, i.e. the imposition of a ban on deportation according to §60 of the Residence Act). I hypothesize

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[7] The interviews are rendered using anonymized codes based on the survey order (I1–I20).

that those migrants were indirectly affected by the "refugee crisis". This seemed to be the case for a 28-year-old Kosovan from Gjakova (I19), who – after having spent parts of his childhood in Saarbrücken – had lived with his family in several small towns in Upper Franconia since 2014. He had worked in a fast-food restaurant for 9 months, where he was recently offered vocational training. The notice of rejection had been received 3 months previously. He had had to stop working and to cancel his apprenticeship. Since his family is obliged to leave the country, but cannot cover the travel expenses to do so, they will be deported. That will mean a ban on entry and residence in the Schengen area for the next years.

For all of our interviewees, return is not a realistic option to solve individual problems and will not be a permanent solution (see also Göler and Doka 2015; Göler 2015). All statements given by the interviewees on their plans after return point to repeated emigration – to other countries or even back to Germany, but then not in the migration channel of asylum. The tragic misunderstanding of that time, i.e. the rumours that political asylum also applied to migrants from Western Balkan countries, seems to be dispelled. Most migrants admit in a remarkably open way that wrong information, given by family members, a far too blue-eyed migration decision, or, especially in the case of Kosovans, false promises from human smugglers led to a misguided migration project.

Some of the statements indicate that there are still deficits of information. The view that "if you work here, if you are informed and integrated, then you have the right to live here" (I6) may be understandable from an individual perspective, but it does not lead to a residence permit being granted. I5 constructs a completely bizarre definition of political asylum: "I applied for political asylum because I am disappointed with the politics in Kosovo." Similarly, the expectation "I was sure that I would get asylum, because France is now dominated by the non-white race and I read that Germany wants to avoid that through the immigration of white, Albanian migrants" (I18) is wholly misguided. This indicates again that evidently wrong expectations have arisen and that erroneous knowledge or crude interpretations are still circulating.

Coming back to the situation of residents in the AEO, their separation from the surrounding environment, the lack of any kind of social embeddedness and restricted access to the labour market are manifest problems. Conscious of the limitations to their stay, migrants seek to aggregate resources and capital for the period after their expected deportation, but have only very few opportunities to do so. When transferred to Bamberg, some migrants were deprived of the networks needed for such (possibly informal) employment. This, in turn, limits the scope for action in the case of return, due to a lack of social and financial resources. A few admit that they earned some money from illegal employment which is reported to be worth 50 EUR a day (I1). In addition, at best, it is possible to earn something through (approved) ancillary activities in the camp. Due to changes in social assistance provision – from direct allowances to benefits in kind – generating savings in that way is very difficult. Only I18, who lived outside his home country for the first time 20 years ago and looked back on a remarkable migration biography, stated that he had saved enough from emigration to live in Kosovo in the future, if necessary.

A study on ensuring children's rights in reception and accommodation centres (Alexandropoulou et al. 2016) assesses the situation of the residents and in particular the Roma population as critical. First, the authors refer to deficits in schooling (ibd.: 19ff.)[8]. A place in the regular schools in Bamberg is indeed not provided, but rather a substitute in the form of a special educational institution is offered on site. School attendance is barely controlled and absence is not sanctioned. Second, with regard to fears of already traumatized children, having non-lockable doors in apartments is considered highly problematic. Third, discrimination and antiziganism, which is common all over the Balkans, is prevalent in the AEO as well. All in all, respondents to the study's survey consider the living conditions of families there to be "consistently negative" (ibd.: 27).

Conversely, in our survey on accommodation in the centre, beside a couple of unsurprising negative facts, some positive ones were mentioned as well. These include the good healthcare system in Germany in general, notably the medical care offered on site, and the respectful handling by the authorities. Residents seem not to be used to this when it comes to authorities in their country of origin: "I have more rights here than in Kosovo, even though I am an asylum seeker" (I1). Nevertheless, the situation of Roma, an ethnic group that is undoubtedly threatened all over Southeastern Europe and whose situation is precarious in the AEO, too, seems dramatic. On the one hand, deportation is not an option due to a bundle of uncertainties "at home". As a consequence, Roma families try to resist their return by all means. However, as they are obliged to leave, they have no access to bare subsistence. Beyond mere accommodation, they have no means of livelihood even in the reception centre. For this reason, I2 openly states that he is more or less forced to steal goods for his family's survival.

Beyond all assessments of the situation in the centre – which, as shown, strongly depends on the perspective – living there is a life in permanent limbo with manifold uncertainties, no matter if somebody has a high or low probability of staying. Regardless of the length of the asylum procedure and the related stay in the centre, or even the perspective of staying or leaving the country, the AEO is – in the words of Augé (1992) – a footloose, anonymous (non-)place of transit. In this respect, the following sequence analyzes to what extent daily life in such a parallel world – a heterotopia – is reflected in the perception and use of space by the residents.

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[8] This study was funded by the Hildegard Lagrenne Foundation and focuses exclusively, in accordance with the foundation's mission, on the education, inclusion and participation of Sinti and Roma.

4.7 Coping with Locality: The Resident's Spatial Perception of the Local Area

Spatial perception, knowledge and behaviour of the centre's residents are determined by the marginality and isolation of the location on the one hand and by individual, biographically conditioned capabilities on the other. The corresponding survey by means of "mental maps" was calculated with the heterogeneity of the sample in advance. The 15 participants in the experiment had mixed nationalities (Syria, Eritrea, Iran and Morocco)[9], and they differed in gender (ten males and five females), length of stay (2 weeks to 8 months) and level of education. Concerning academic and school education a distinction was made between "high" (five people with university degrees, mainly from Syria and Iran), "medium" (qualifying school leaving certificates, four people) and "low" access to education (six Eritreans; Fritzler 2018). As expected, the depth of the spatial knowledge correlated strongly with the level of education, and a higher age led to more extended spatial knowledge. In contrast, factors such as duration of stay or language skills had hardly any differentiating influence. The 15 sketch maps differed considerably: the number of spatial elements included in the drawings, for example, varied between six and more than 120. Generally, sketches are analyzed by number, type, naming, location and, if applicable, description of spatial elements.

In detail, six of the maps made by the Eritrean migrants mentioned above represent the image of local- or neighbourhood-focused individuals showing a very limited range of action (Fig. 4.3). Their drawings contain a manageable number of elements (between 6 and 16) that are predominantly in the immediate vicinity of the reception centre. A prominent strategic point is a busy intersection on a ring road not far from the AEO. There is a Wi-Fi hotspot with free access, which is the only urban quality in that location. The main hub in the closer town centre is an internet cafe, which provides high-speed internet access and offers pre-paid cards at reasonable prices. The shop is operated by a Nigerian migrant ("the najeryamen", Fig. 4.3), which makes it worth a visit as well. Besides that, further spatial knowledge of these residents is rather poor. For three of them, an A4 sheet was more than sufficient for the whole drawing.

Four other participants in the survey, coming from Syria, Iran and Morocco and with a moderate level of education, have more extended spatial knowledge, albeit mainly centred on the AEO and its neighbourhood. They included significantly more spatial elements in their maps and show higher variance (17 up to 70 elements). These elements, their location and the topographic and physiognomic relations are often incorrectly reproduced. Individual perception is usually influenced by individual interests or needs. For example, in the case of a Christian Iranian

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[9] It is the survey period, a year later, which explains the different structure of the samples, most obviously regarding nationalities. This evidences the high turnover and variability of the institution.
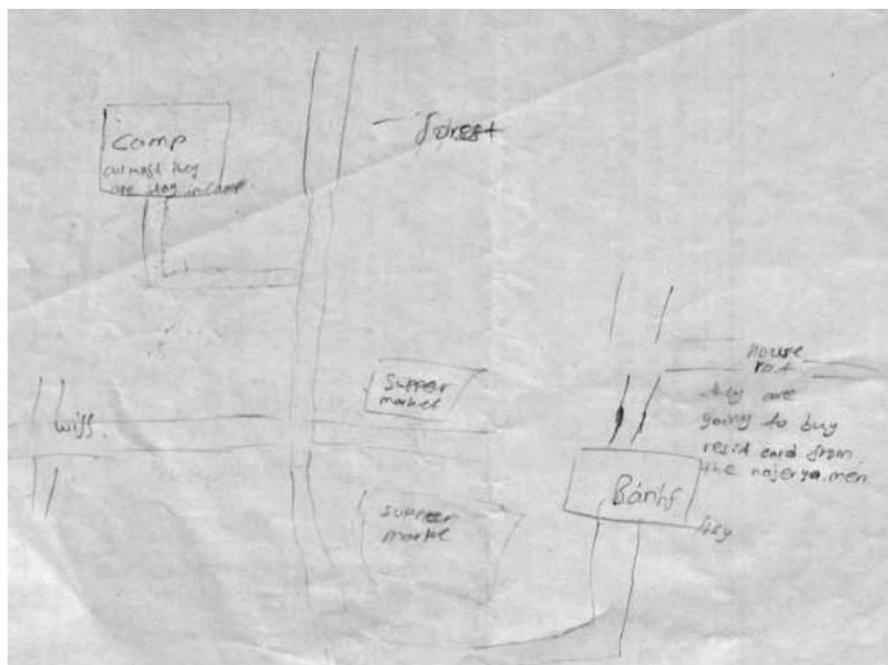
Fig. 4.3 Sketch map by a young migrant from Eritrea with limited spatial information. (Fritzler 2018, 77)

woman, churches play an important role (Fig. 4.4). In addition, shopping sites in Bamberg's central pedestrian zone are mentioned. What is on offer there is perceived, but cannot be benefited from due to individual, mostly financial, restrictions. A 35-year-old male Syrian drew a wide range of actions and numerous facilities, whose name and function he hardly knew. It revealed that he rides his bicycle through Bamberg and collects returnable bottles in order to earn a little bit of money. This also explains why he is quite familiar with Bamberg's vibrant bar area, even though he never visits any of the pubs – be it because he doesn't want to or because he cannot afford to. He serves as another example of obviously widespread capability constraints among asylum seekers.

Five other, highly educated refugees from Syria and Iran have very detailed knowledge of space – one of the sketch maps includes more than 120 elements. They show a clear orientation of the town centre. There is broad information on places of various functions, such as social services like Caritas, a dentist, a pharmacy, a lawyer, the town hall, shops, etc. Furthermore, several institutions for leisure and culture such as a cinema or a temporary art installation in public space are included, as well as symbolic places, such as the so-called "Gabelmann", which is a well-known meeting place in the main pedestrian zone. In two of these maps, the AEO and its surrounding neighbourhood are not included. Interestingly, the shuttle bus, which has connected the AEO with the railway station and the hospital since
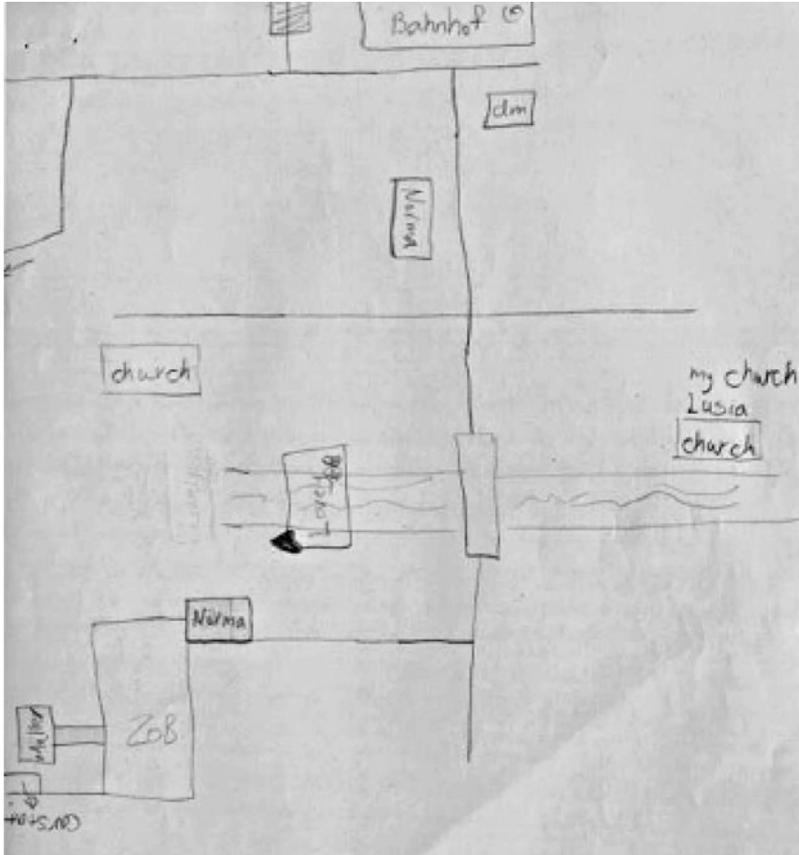
Fig. 4.4 Sketch map by a Protestant Iranian woman with accurate spatial information of the town centre. (Fritzler 2018, 71)

March 2017, plays an important role in the orientation and spatial behaviour of the residents (Fig. 4.5): In one case, the entire drawing was calibrated along the bus route, which was reproduced in great detail. Another respondent reported to have previously done the paths on foot and was thus limited when buying daily goods. So, infrastructure like a bus connection could be a means of planning, regulation and control of the residents' spatial pattern at the same time.

All in all, the residents' spatial field of action is a result of necessities of everyday life and individual interest outside the camp, sometimes combined with specific personal needs. The educational level plays a determining role, capability constraints a limiting one and provisions that are free of charge – like mobility via a shuttle bus – may have a liberating but also controlling effect. As a summary of the sketch maps of the AEO residents, a spatial pattern in the form of an east-west axis appears. This is of course due to the location of the AEO on the eastern outskirts of the town and the important function and orientation points located to the
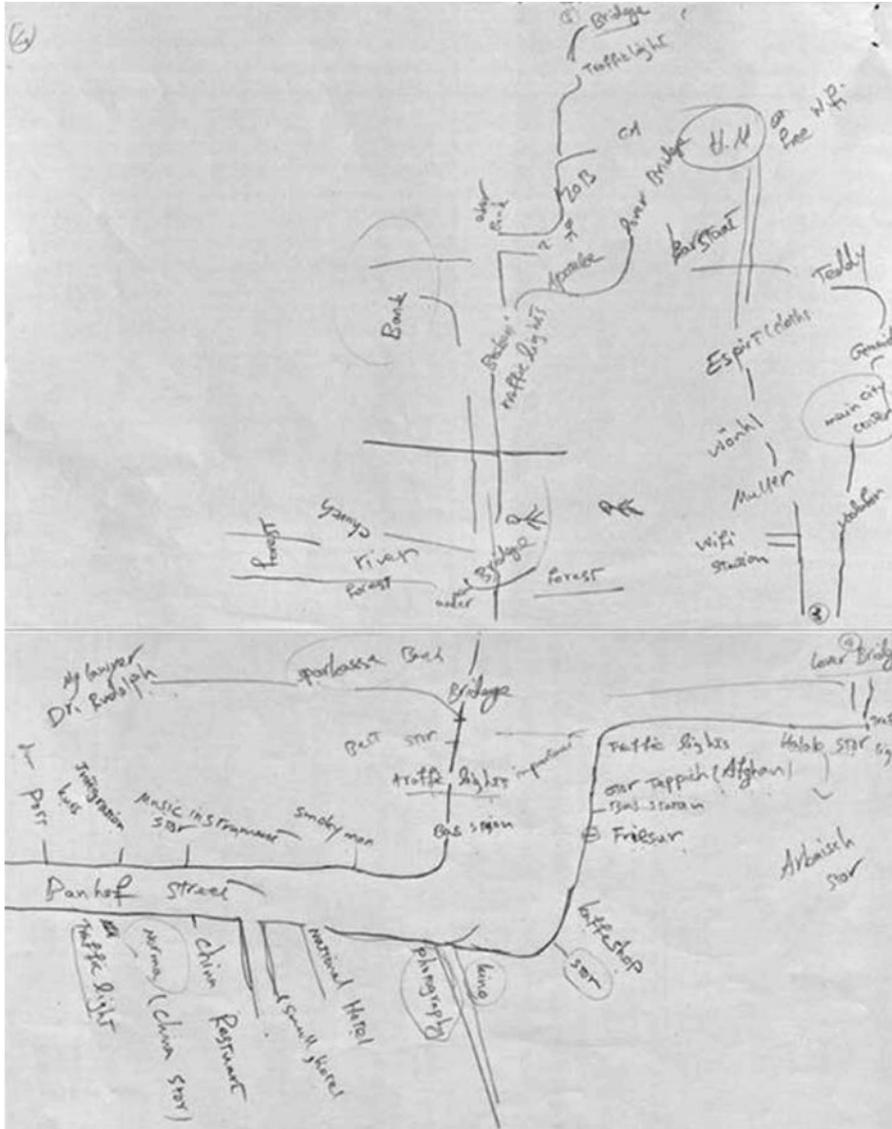
Fig. 4.5 Section of the sketch map by a woman from Iran with detailed information along the bus route and on the town centre. (Fritzler 2018, 65)

west of it towards the inner urban area. Places north or south of this axis, with the exception of the mentioned intersection, remain excluded. Incidentally, the findings from the analysis of mental maps presented here are essentially identical with those of perception geographies and research on action space in general (Downs and Stea 1973).

4.8   Discussion and Results

The geographicity of the reception centre is, as has become clear, characterized by manifold dichotomies, variabilities and limitations. This affects both the location, including the camp's spatial embeddedness, and the residents. This specific constellation of multiple ambiguities seems to be inherent to such places (see Oesch 2017). Following Martin (2015), although in a completely different context, this phenomenon may be interpreted as a "CampScape", with the suffix -scape representing the camp's generally fluid character and referring in particular to the special setting of the place (Martin 2015: 14).

The interplay of space, place and individuals defines the very special assemblage of Bamberg's CampScape, which includes certain dichotomies. This includes in temporary terms the fact that the duration of stay in the centre is unpredictable, but generally limited. Asylum seekers' transitory episodes end in compliance with the politically formulated function of the centre, i.e. the result of staying (and further integrating) or leaving the country. In this regard, the question of origin is more than significant. It defines, via the political construct of safe (and unsafe) countries of origin, the likelihood of staying and thus legitimizes almost *ex ante* the subsequent decision for approval of a residence status or upcoming deportation as a further dichotomy. The problem is defined by requirements of high efficiency of government institutions on the one hand, and preservation of humanity, human rights and international agreements on refugee treatment on the other. This question is of course irrelevant for the centre as a non-place, because this kind of dichotomy is reduced to an average as described by Augé (1995). Regardless of the motivation of migration, all residents have the same *de jure* status during their stay in the camp until the final decision on the asylum procedure has been made.

In fact, the occupancy was not homogenous either structurally or over time, but characterized by manifold variabilities of the CampScape. Time, for example, was a decisive factor in my field studies. It has been shown that the resident structure could change fundamentally just within half a year in terms of origin, ethnic group and/or citizenship due to the fluid character of the camp. In the Bamberg centre, for example, migrants from safe countries of origin in the Western Balkans were replaced by refugees from countries affected by civil war and other crises. This intensive fluctuation of 300–500 entrances and exits per month is the trigger for the structural variability regarding the composition of the residents. It was also part of the massive initial—and ongoing—discussion on the maximum capacity of the institution and related scepticism of many of Bamberg's citizens: On the one hand there is an informal consensus on a tolerable number of 1500 residents, and on the other hand capacity is officially still stated as 3400. There is no doubt that in case of a renewed increase in refugee immigration this capacity will be reached soon. Even an increase to the gloomy 4500 is relatively easy to implement if necessary.

The residents are subject to various limitations. For the duration of the asylum procedure, living in the camp is compulsory and residence obligations prevail. Self-settlement of refugees was and is not an option in Germany. Even local freedom of

movement is limited by the fencing off of the area. However, this is an essential part of the safety guarantee for the camp, thus making it acceptable to most local residents. Even the residents and their habitus are characterized by limitations and constraints. This was demonstrated, for example, in terms of spatial orientation and interest in the local area, including the individual's abilities. This is offset by certain disillusions, possibly resulting in immobility for some residents. But for most of them, even simple needs like a shuttle bus or the random availability of Wi-Fi access may change spatial patterns, which indicates that the CampScape and its people are organized elusively. These are the hallmarks of a certain alienation of refugees in the local and urban context, in which (politically deliberate) approaches to integration are largely missing. In addition, limitations also come into play when multiple capability constraints become relevant and they certainly do not end when it simply comes to shopping or going to a pub.

4.9   Conclusion and Outlook

Housing in the "Laboratory AEO" and the CampScape in Bamberg (as an intraterritorial solution to refugee immigration) or, for example, a refugee camp in Jordan (as an extraterritorial solution from a European point of view), are modest responses to the global challenge of migration. Each answer brings with it its own specific differentiation, dichotomy and limitation, which may serve as a superordinate finding of the study of refuge in the local context. With regard to the realities of refugee migration, any kind of average might not exist anyway. But the non-place can be produced whenever and wherever, if necessary – Bamberg's AEO serves to prove that argument.

Encampment, most recently in the form of AnKER centres, is a way towards efficient asylum processing in Germany. The figure of heterotopia, super-modernity and the vision of non-places each provide adequate access for an analysis of places and spaces like that. The concept of non-places (Augé 1995) is without any doubt the most suitable framework for a study of encampment in a narrow sense. As the (non-)place is just one part of the bigger picture, the suggestion is to widen the conceptual and theoretical lens. As underlined by the broad empirical approach applied, a more holistic assessment involves an analysis of the whole range of relevant phenomena in and around non-places like a reception centre, including their manifold interrelations. The relational perspective in terms of geographicities offers the chance to analyse spatialities, people and institutions on different scales and with multidimensional methodologies. There are lots of elements that produce the logic of the place, thus the heterotopia of the AEO, such as personal attitudes, perceptions, individual perspectives and origins, legal issues, politics, public discourse and, not least, time. The logic of the place is the product of both the organizational framing and the institutional setting.

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Chapter 5
Before and After the Reception Crisis of 2015: Asylum and Reception Policies in Austria

Sieglinde Rosenberger and Sandra Müller

5.1 Introduction

In 2015 Austria was among the European countries with the largest asylum arrivals per capita. Pictures of refugees crossing the borders from Hungary and Slovenia dominated the media and influenced how the issue has been framed, politicized and perceived by political elites, journalists and citizens. Although the massive refugee movement did not come as a surprise, the humanitarian challenge was enormous and the reception framework went through a major crisis. When state institutions partly failed to serve the high numbers of refugees with accommodation and basic services, volunteers from all walks of life and human rights organizations reacted and did their best to provide help and support. During this refugee policy crisis[1] local communities became key actors and sites in the admission of asylum seekers. However, this included both acts of support for individuals and protest against the creation of new facilities. Open and closed doors existed simultaneously. In addition, the reception policy crisis in 2015 was intensified by long-standing conflicts between the various political tiers over responsibilities for the territorial distribution and reception of asylum seekers[2] (Gruber 2017; Haselbacher and Rosenberger 2018; Knapp 2015; Müller and Rosenberger 2017; Rutz 2018; Sauer 2017).

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[1] The term goes back to legal scholar Manfred Nowak, cited in Der Standard, 7 December 2015. Below we use this notion to refer to what is often called *refugee crisis*.

[2] Asylum seekers are defined as international protection seeking persons whose applications are being processed. Refugees are defined as persons who have been granted asylum based on the criteria laid down in the Geneva Refugee Convention of 1951.

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Considering this phenomenon of large refugee arrivals, on the one side, and lacking cooperation within the tiers of asylum governance, on the other, this chapter focuses on the local responses to the asylum events of 2015 and considers both *administrative activities* by authorities and *social practices* by civil society and volunteers. Inspired by literature on multi-level governance in migration (Benz 2009; Scholten 2013; Scholten 2014; Tränhardt and Weiss 2016) and local immigrant integration issues (Aumüller 2017; Glorius and Doomernik 2016; Simsa et al. 2016; Walker 2014), we will combine a macro-level perspective on institutional arrangements and multi-level governance structures with a micro-level one to highlight not only vertical but also horizontal cooperation and conflicts between actors performing various types of formal and informal activities. Against this theoretical and analytical background, we explore in detail, first, conflicts and cooperation between the national, provincial and local levels over policy making and policy implementation in the fields of admission and integration. Second, we elaborate on how local communities responded to implementation needs and everyday life challenges during and after the reception crisis. Third, we analyse in which policy fields and forms of activities municipalities have gained or lost power, influence and responsibility during and after this event?

Austria is a case well suited to investigate local responses to the refugee policy crisis insofar as it applies a multi-level reception system that includes administrative tasks for the local level only at the policy implementation stage. As the local tier does not have any legal powers, a significant gap exists between those actors who are in charge of policy decisions and those who have to implement them (Götzelmann 2010; Gruber 2017; Merhaut and Stern 2018; Steininger 2006). At the same time, local communities pursue a wide range of social activities that clearly go beyond what is regulated in institutional arrangements on basic care. They help to enhance everyday wellbeing and inclusion into certain societal relations and institutions (De Jong and Ataç 2017; Simsa 2017). Finally, worth to be mentioned, the events of 2015 had a major impact on politics in Austria. The attitudes towards refugees changed profoundly during and after 2015 from welcoming to openly rejecting. Eventually, the asylum issue dominated the ensuing elections (Plasser and Sommer 2017), which led to a change in the coalition government from centre-left to centre-far right in 2017. As will be shown, this political shift to the right has severely affected the priorities in territorial dispersal and refugee integration.

This paper demonstrates that the assumption of a *local turn* in migration governance is shaped by very different designs and sequences. Austria does not follow a linear local turn-track in reception and integration governance as found in several country case studies (Hinger et al. 2016; Kos et al. 2015). As our case study highlights, the local turn rather depends on policy fields involved and the type of tasks considered. Most of all, in Austria the national government pursues a rather ambivalent strategy – to strengthen the central powers on admission policies and to take back responsibility and funding for policies to facilitate integration. Hence, the vertical governance structure clearly differentiates, first, between admission and integration issues and, second between decision making, implementation of policies and social assistance provided at a voluntary basis.

The findings presented in this chapter are derived from a qualitative analysis of the following sources: empirical studies on protest and volunteering in connection with asylum, human rights reports, legal texts, government documents, newsletters of the Municipalities Association, as well as media articles (from 2014 till 2018). Moreover, the analysis of local responses is based on a report on best practices compiled by an informal network of mayors (Forum Alpbach 2016). This range of material allows us a detailed mapping of policy developments and practical responses during and after the events of 2015.

In the next sections, we locate our analysis within multi-level governance literature and then we move on to a brief overview of current political developments.

5.2   Multilevel Governance in Asylum and Reception

The issues of migration and asylum have a strong national and European orientation. Literature discusses municipalities and local arenas primarily as sites where European and national regulation is implemented (Bendel 2015; Trauner 2016). However, as Walker (2014) underlines, national policies are not only being reproduced locally, but local sites also reinterpret national policies and may change the original intention by their own activities. By adopting a local perspective, scholars address the (discretionary) power of municipalities in the making and implementation of admission and inclusion policies (Garcés-Mascareñas and Penninx 2016; Langthaler and Trauner 2009).

Based on the fact that municipalities exert major tasks in accommodation and integration processes, scholars analyse the relations between national and local levels (Kronenberg 2018). In general, it is noted that the power relations within a multi-level system are subject to challenges by actors at all levels through negotiations, disobedience or redistribution of responsibilities and resources. Multi-level dynamics are mostly expressed as cooperation and/or conflict. As Hinger et al. (2016: 445) demonstrate, the local administrations can "negotiate, enhance or question legal norms and regulations according to specific problem definitions not anticipated by or included in state regulations." Also, Alexander (2003: 412) points out that municipalities can either "complement, contradict or preempt" national policies.

In the event of conflicts, Garcés-Mascareñas and Penninx (2016: 4) note that opposed policy rationales exist at national and local level. While the national government aims for control and sovereignty, local authorities tend to focus on social cohesion and well-being instead. Breeman et al. (2015) add that if there is a topic of major concern for the municipality, it will tend to handle it with a view to the best outcome for the local level rather than sticking to the national agenda. In the case of the Netherlands, among others, Kos et al. (2015) identify a situation of competition between national and local levels. The authors demonstrate that local authorities try to balance restrictive national regulations, which would lead to homelessness and destitution of unregulated/unregistered migrants, consequences which local communities want to avoid in the interest of coexistence, social order and security.

For Germany, studies which investigated the involvement of municipalities in the federal refugee regime stress a different aspect. They report that municipalities faced huge challenges and met them with rather pragmatic approaches. Civil society engaged in smoothing everyday life problems for both hosting society and newcomers. Finally, several studies notice that the local level gained in influence within the federal structure as a result of providing social practices (Aumüller 2017; Bogumil et al. 2017; Schammann and Kühn 2016; Tränhardt and Weiss 2016). In contrast, Emilsson (2015) stresses that in Sweden and Denmark the national government has increased its power and restricted the local governments' scope of actions (for more about Denmark see Chap. 3).

These insights from different countries reveal that the path is not linear, but that contradictory developments are ongoing; in some cases, the local level gains, in other cases it loses in importance.

The analysis of administrative functions of municipalities refers to federalism studies (Joppke and Seidle 2012) and to the multi-level governance framework. These studies include insights on modes of sharing and separating powers, activities and tasks between national, provincial and local levels. According to Benz (2009), the term multi-level governance describes political structures and processes at different political levels; multi-level governance may also refer to horizontal and vertical forms of coordination between state authorities as well as between state authorities and non-state actors. The specific constellations of the relationships within and between the levels also affect the policy outcomes. If politicians cannot fulfil the tasks and responsibilities assigned to them, these can be downloaded to the lower level.

Peter Scholten (2013) presents four approaches to describe and identify the relationship between the national and the local level and/or the role of the local level within a multi-level setting: (1) centralist; (2) multi-level; (3) localist and (4) decoupling. The centralist approach describes a top-down relationship between the national and local authorities. In this model, the national government is responsible for the formulation of policies, while local authorities are supposed to administer and implement them. The multi-level approach is characterized by cooperation, negotiation and strategic interactions between the tiers. In contrast, the localist approach entails a bottom-up procedure in which policies are not simply implemented but formulated as well. Finally, a decoupled approach refers to tensions between the national and local levels that arise from contradictory policies and interests between the levels.

As already emphasized, the different modes entail different manifestations of horizontal and vertical governance structures, conflicts and cooperation. Whereas a vertical structure describes how powers and responsibilities are divided or shared between national, provincial and local levels, a horizontal governance perspective indicates if and how administrative authorities cooperate with civil society actors, NGOs, political associations and organizations (Scholten 2013).

This chapter is informed by this briefly sketched scholarship and investigates local responses to the events of 2015. It discusses administrative activities and goes a step further by including also everyday practices and collective actions of resi-

dents – both in support of and in resistance to the admission of asylum seekers. We thus combine an institutional approach that refers to institutional arrangements and legal frameworks with a social perspective that covers acts performed by individuals and civil society.

At this point we want to clarify the key notions used in this paper and explicate our conceptual framework. The overall term *local response* is operationalized by two dimensions of activities and respective actors – administrative activities and social practices. *Administrative activities* pertain to officials and cover mainly implementation policies in the field of admission and basic care provision. By contrast, *social practices* are performed by individuals, initiatives and organizations who act for or against the admission of asylum seekers and their inclusion in local communities. Expanding work by Scholten (2013) in order to capture conflicts and cooperation between the tiers and actors we refer to multi-level governance framework which differentiates between *vertical* and *horizontal* structures. The vertical approach looks at the dynamics of legal responsibilities between the administrative levels (national, provincial, local). The horizontal approach sheds light on interactions, cooperation and conflicts among local actors, mostly mayors and refugee initiatives (see Table 5.1).

5.3 Contextual Information: Application Numbers and Asylum Politics

The reception policy crisis in 2015 was very serious, but it did not come as a surprise. Already in 2014, the two initial reception centres, designated to accommodate asylum seekers during the phase of bringing in their asylum claim, were overcrowded and overstrained. In late spring 2015, the large-scale facility in Traiskirchen, which is equipped to hold 1750 individuals, had to handle 2500–3000 people (Knapp 2015). At this time, the mayor of the city, alongside human rights activists and refugees from the camp, protested outside the Ministry of the Interior in Vienna

Table 5.1 Framework of governance structure and forms of activities

Forms of Activities/ Vertical governance structure	Administrative activities	Social practices
National level	Decision making on admission and integration	–
Provincial level	Decision making on and implementation of admission/ reception policies	–
Local level	Implementation of reception policies (basic care services)	Horizontal governance: Authorities and volunteers to welcome and integrate

Source: own illustration

and demanded better reception conditions and a faster distribution of refugees to other provinces. However, this protest met without any response or success.

With 90,000 asylum applications in 2015, almost four times the number of 2014, the demand for reception facilities and basic care increased massively. Within 1 year, the demand for accommodation places had risen from 30,000 to 78,884 by December 2015 (Mouzourakis and Taylor 2016). Between June and November 2015, the number of municipalities hosting asylum seekers, most of them located in rural areas, rose from 683 to 1138 (out of 2100 municipalities nationwide; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights 2015). This rise in the total number of municipalities indicates that small municipalities also came to host asylum seekers. Not only were asylum seekers distributed to small rural areas, within a few months the facilities had to be expanded from small and medium-sized facilities to some large-scale and camp-like settings (Knapp 2015).

The large influx lasted for a brief period of time. As a consequence of national and European measures, in particular the EU-Turkey refugee deal in March 2016 and the following closure of the Balkan route, the number of asylum applications dropped significantly.[3]

Interestingly, the number of asylum applications has continued to fall, but the issue of asylum has remained a highly negative politicized issue since then. As will be shown below, the situation was not only characterized by intense struggles between the national and municipal levels over the need to accommodate asylum seekers, it was also followed by major political changes. In 2016, the Chancellor Werner Faymann (SPÖ) came under pressure by his conservative coalition partner and the far-right opposition party to resign. Doubtless there were several reasons behind this resignation, but they included his role in the summer of 2015 when the government decided to take in refugees as well as letting them move through the country, largely without any registration at the borders. This loss of control over borders was a decisive factor in public perception. Within a very short time, attitudes towards asylum seekers and refugees changed from welcome to refusal, from an emphasis on humanitarian aspects to the threats and burdens that come with admitting refugees. Eventually, the provincial and the national election campaigns in 2017 became dominated by the asylum theme. The political promise of measures to stop future asylum seeker movements were supported by a majority of voters and led to a change in the government composition. The coalition government of the Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ) and the Conservative Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) was removed from office, to be replaced by a coalition government formed by the ÖVP and the far-right Freedom Party Austria (FPÖ).

Before we shall elaborate on the consequences of this change in government, we shall now turn to conflicts and lack of cooperation within the vertical governance structure and show how this impacted on the management of the reception crisis.

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[3] In 2017, it had dropped by 42% compared with 2016 (Federal Ministry of Interior 2017).

5.4 Lack of Cooperation: The Local Within the Legal Framework

Drawing on the four-dimensional typology of multi-level governance proposed by Scholten (2013) and speaking strictly in legal terms, we can identify two phases in the Austrian case: a centralist governance phase from 1991 to 2004, and a multi-level governance phase after 2004, characterized by divisions of powers between the national and the provincial level, but with the municipalities left out in this framework.

Below, we briefly sketch the Austrian reception regime and then go on to show how the local level responded to the demand for huge numbers of accommodation places in 2015. We argue that the federalist framework, which largely ignored and ignores the role of municipalities, has to be seen as a cause for the conflicts with and resistance from municipalities and communities.

5.4.1 A Multi-level Framework without Municipalities

In 1990, for the first time in history, nationwide basic reception conditions were adopted and the responsibility for material support assigned to the national level. One year later, the *Asylum Act* introduced accelerated asylum procedures in an effort to reduce the number of asylum applications. The aim of sharing responsibilities for basic care and accommodation between the federal state and the provinces could not be reached. Eventually, the legal responsibility for the reception remained with the national government till 2004, when a multi-level framework was introduced in the course of the transposition of *Council Directive 2003/9/EC 2003*.

The current legal basis for reception conditions and responsibilities for asylum seekers is the *Basic Welfare Support Agreement* (*Grundversorgungsvereinbarung, GVV*) of 2004. This framework was negotiated between the federal government and the governors of the nine provinces in the interest of achieving two goals: First, to comply with Council Directive 2003/9/EC 2003, which stipulates minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers, and second, to implement a power- and cost-sharing model between the federal government and the provinces. In this regard, the agreement also includes the compulsory distribution of asylum seekers across the territory and requires the provinces to offer places in proportion to the size of their population. However, the agreement envisages no sanctions if provinces do not comply with the quota system. As a result, the law failed to ensure even distribution of asylum seekers across the country or to sufficient shelters. On the contrary, conflicts between the provinces and the national government over the distribution of asylum seekers continued (Rosenberger and König 2011). To illustrate the situation: In 2015 Vienna was the only province fulfilling the quota requirement and taking in a proportionate share of asylum seekers.

The GVV sets out a multi-level structure of responsibilities. The administrative responsibility for accommodating asylum seekers rests with the nine provinces, not the federal state. The latter is responsible for running initial reception centres, deciding upon procedural regulation and border policies. That makes the provinces more powerful on the issue of reception than in other policy areas, where the main decision power remains with national authorities. Vice versa, national authorities enjoy a limited capacity for setting up new facilities. In this regard, the mutual cooperation of national, provincial and local authorities is needed (Götzelmann 2010).

As mentioned, the GVV leaves out municipalities as decision makers of asylum and reception. Local authorities are supposed to implement federal propositions and provide accommodation sites and fulfil various incorporation tasks. Municipalities have a say on only very few administrative aspects (for example, on building regulations). In 2015 and after, this two-tier structure was far from working properly and opened up for mutual finger-pointing and severe conflicts, causing what is called a reception policy crisis.

5.4.2   Conflicts, Resistance, and the Search for Cooperation

As early as 2014, but even more so in 2015, tensions between the three political tiers increased on the issue of taking in and sheltering asylum seekers. The federal government, formally co-responsible for accommodation and support for asylum seekers, faced resistance from provinces as well as municipalities when they were looking for new accommodation facilities.

In addition to the increased numbers of asylum applicants, two other developments contributed decisively to the reception policy crisis: First, the national distribution system laid down in the Basic Welfare Support Agreement did not work properly, most of the provinces refused to meet the quota requirements. Second, some municipalities, residents and politicians alike, protested against the federal and provincial demands to set up accommodation facilities for new arrivals.[4]

Although municipalities have almost no formal powers on asylum and therefore no legal instrument to stop the creation of an accommodation facility, they hold informal powers to do so. Protests organized by municipalities contradicted, questioned and partially also pre-empted national and provincial legislation. One policy instrument which successfully prevented the set-up of new accommodation facilities was withholding the classification approval for a building conversion (Gemeindebund 2016a; GfK Austria 2016).

During the time of many arrivals, the Ministry of Interior decided to run large accommodation facilities, predominantly for financial and logistic reasons. However, these facilities, mainly emergency shelters, often met with local protest.

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[4] Haselbacher and Rosenberger (2018) collected data on all protest activities reported in the (local) media in the province of Upper Austria between 2014 and 2016. The findings below are based on this empirical study.

Sometimes the protests stemmed from worse reception conditions, sometimes from resentments towards the inclusion of migrants and foreigners (Meinhart 2015).

The resistance against facilities for asylum seekers was more pronounced in small, rural municipalities than in cities. According to the survey carried out by GfK Austria (2016), bigger municipalities (>5000 inhabitants) had already sheltered asylum-seekers before 2015, while smaller ones (<5000 inhabitants) often provided accommodation for asylum seekers for the first time. Personal contacts with ethnic, cultural and religious diverse people had an impact on instances of resistance from the local population, authorities and politicians. As the study by Haselbacher and Rosenberger (2018) reveal, especially people and political authorities in rural areas, where the idealized norm of cultural homogeneity continued, took to the streets and started petitions to mobilize against the admission of asylum seekers. Moreover, this study emphasizes that

> […] mayors play an especially important role in organizing collective action against accommodation centres. As they feel left out, local politicians have a strong incentive to speak up against actors on the national level, claiming their involvement in consideration of local interests and sentiments. (Haselbacher and Rosenberger 2018: 263)

The national government in turn criticized the local protest activities and held municipalities responsible for the reception crisis. However, the task of sheltering refugees was poorly coordinated between the authorities. This lack of coordination increased the tensions on the side of municipalities as well as on that of the federal institutions.

In response to local protests, the national government took several measures, soft and not so soft ones. In September 2016, it installed a *refugee coordinator* with the task to facilitate a better distribution of asylum seekers across the territory through dialogue. The refugee coordinator stayed in office for 1 year and then left somewhat disappointed about a lack of governmental support for and interest in integrating asylum seekers.

In January 2016, the government adopted some restrictive measures concerning the admission of asylum seekers. The *Asylum Summit* organized by the federal government with the participation of representatives of the provinces, cities and municipalities agreed to limit new arrivals per year to a maximum of 1.5% of the population. This condition was supposed to result in 37,500 applications in 2016 and to decrease in the following 3 years to 25,000 applications in 2019 (Federal Chancellery 2016).

In addition, the national parliament amended the legal framework and entitled the national government to open up shelters without the consent of the given municipality. The *Accommodation and Distribution of Aliens in Need of Aid and Protection Act* (2015) guarantees the federal state the right to operate accommodation centres directly. The bill is meant to enforce distribution of asylum seekers by the federal state, without consent of provinces (and municipalities). In particular, it allows the Ministry of the Interior to establish new reception facilities in those municipalities that have not met the reception quota of 1.5% of the resident population. In 2015, in a similar way, the provinces Salzburg, Vorarlberg, Lower and Upper Austria adopted

state laws on accommodation and distribution of asylum seekers in order to bypass local resistance against the admission of asylum seekers. Carinthia even introduced a quota system for municipalities and changed the building regulations to lower administrative barriers for running accommodation facilities (Gemeindebund 2016b; Müller 2017).

These legal provisions envisage even greater powers for the national and provincial level at the expense of municipalities. Therefore, following Filomeno (2017), we state that the local power in migration policy is rather limited, but local activities can be seen as the result of broader multi-level governance constellations and conflicts.

Summarizing these lines of conflicts, we identify three major configurations: conflicts between federal and provincial authorities over admission and costs, conflicts between federal and municipal authorities over admission and reception standards, and conflicts between provincial and municipal authorities over providing accommodation places and sharing the burden. These conflicts are not novel to the asylum regime, but they were intensified during and after the crisis (Rutz 2018).

5.5 Social Practices to Welcome and Integrate

From the very beginning of 2015, tensions and polarization as well as support and engagement ran through municipalities. On the one side, refusal of and protest against new asylum facilities, on the other, instances of welcoming and voluntary initiatives, which helped in providing shelter and basic care. Local authorities and individual volunteers became key actors in the reception and integration of asylum seekers (De Jong and Ataç 2017; Gemeindebund 2016a; Simsa 2017).

Municipalities are the sites were asylum seekers live and receive material support according to European standards (Rosenberger and König 2011). In the course of 2015, municipalities developed a variety of measures to deal with asylum seekers and demonstrated that their responsibility goes beyond the simple implementation of regulations from higher levels. Citizens, associations and local authorities alike gave a hand to asylum seekers to cope with daily struggles, guided them to participate in community activities and found ways for them to access education and the labour market (Mouzourakis and Sheridan 2015).

In view of the admission situation in Germany, Bogumil et al. (2017) differentiate two temporalities, which require different types of support. In the first phase, institutions and people offer services to welcome and provide accommodation and basic care. In the second phase, when structural integration becomes the priority, local communities facilitate access to housing, education and job opportunities. Language acquisition and social contacts, often provided by local initiatives, are viewed as important facilitators for successful structural integration.

In the following, we differentiate between two groups of actors who respond in a supportive way to the needs of asylum seekers: administrative authorities on the one side, and civil society actors on the other.

5.5.1 Administrative Authorities

In Austria, mayors occupy an influential position in municipalities and enjoy a high degree of trust among inhabitants. The introduction of direct elections in many provinces has even strengthened their role within the municipalities. This is particularly true of their role in communication and information sharing within the community (Steininger 2006).

Mayors have been at the forefront of the challenge to act and find humanitarian and voters-oriented solutions. Some mayors leaned towards protest and rejection of asylum seekers (see above), others found pragmatic solutions for the admission and inclusion of asylum seekers.

In September 2015, a nation-wide horizontal coordination initiative started to provide mayors with best practice knowledge. It was initiated as a non-partisan network by the European Forum Alpbach, the Municipalities Association and the refugee coordinator. The network meetings brought together mayors who already hosted asylum seekers and those who were planning to do so. In five network meetings, more than 350 mayors gathered and exchanged best practices in the reception of asylum seekers and in further integration measures. One result was the compilation of a *Handbook for Municipalities* (*Offenes Handbuch für Gemeinden*; Forum Alpbach 2016) which lists and discusses reception and integration measures developed and realized in different municipalities and cities.

The handbook shows how mayors responded in various ways to the admission policy crisis: First, mayors became temporary policymakers, creating individual policies in their communities and enhancing the structural integration of newcomers. Administrative units and mayors were particularly active in the field of accommodation, education and opportunities for community, and unskilled work. They supported families in sending their children into kindergarten and schools, sometimes even paying for additional tuition for them. They also tried to include asylum seekers and refugees through offering small jobs for the community, like mowing lawns, clearing snow or cleaning windows. Some municipalities provided support beyond these petty jobs and help with everyday life and included activities like opening bank accounts to collect donations which were then used to help asylum seekers with public transport costs. Here and there, cultural events and leisure activities have been organized to build interaction between different sectors of society.

Second, mayors created horizontal coordination and cooperation structures, some nationwide, some limited to a region. For instance, twin cities or neighbourhood cities embarked on coordination and exchange of best practices. Regional networks have formed not only between municipalities but also including regional municipal associations, NGOs or churches. Then mayors initiated cooperation with civil society actors. For instance, some created volunteer platforms to enable the involvement of and exchange with local citizens. Other offered space for volunteers to hold German classes or provided room where locals and asylum seekers could meet regularly (Forum Alpbach 2016).

5.5.2   Civil Society Actors

Langthaler and Trauner (2009) argue that NGOs and civil society play especially in reception and integration demands a crucial role, be it due to personal solidarity or professional interests. In 2015, the visible suffering of asylum seekers, including families and small children, triggered a broad coalition of supporters to improve poor living conditions. Individuals and civil society organizations provided assistance, such as emergency shelters, on a nightly basis. Across the country, voluntary associations emerged which helped ad-hoc with goods and guidance, but also offered services and assistance for empowerment and structural integration. This has been visible in Austria but as well in many other European countries (Feischmidt et al. 2019; Mouzourakis and Sheridan 2015; Pries 2019; Simsa 2017). For more information on the practices in other European countries see for e.g. Chaps. 6 and 7 in this volume.

Some civil society actors became involved only locally within a given municipality, others exchanged experiences with initiatives active in other municipalities, with NGOs or local authorities. They created horizontal as well as vertical cooperation and coordination structures. De Jong and Ataç (2017) noticed that established NGOs in the field of asylum did not necessarily cooperate with newly established initiatives, because of different views on professional or not so professional work with social care and legal aid.

Civil society actors are mainly committed to offer cultural services, such as language courses. They are the ones who often established the first social contacts with asylum seekers and encourage further relations between residents and asylum seekers. A relevant source for building close relations are common leisure activities, running errands or meetings within communities (Forum Alpbach 2016).

In general, local initiatives did not receive any financial or other forms of support from the national government. Often local initiatives relied on fundraising or donations to help asylum seekers. Cooperation at horizontal level with local authorities, and especially with mayors, facilitated to secure funds for integrative measures and care (Forum Alpbach 2016; Simsa et al. 2016). Sometimes civic initiatives have enjoyed the material or ideational support of individual politicians. For instance, Secretary for Integration in Upper Austria, Rudolf Anschober, launched a platform "Helping Out in Upper Austria"[5] to spread knowledge and experience over activities and to facilitate partnerships between asylum seekers and citizens, NGOs and local organizations. The main aim was to coordinate groups and their engagement in the region, for instance, through regional conferences for volunteers. The Green Party published a list of local initiatives in Austria on their web page,[6] to enable networking and to share good experiences.

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[5] ZusammenHelfen in Oberösterreich. Gemeinsam für geflüchtete Menschen. Quelle: http://www.anschober.at/politik/asyl-integration/

[6] https://www.gruene.at/themen/menschen-grundrechte/fluechtlings-initiativen-in-ganz-oesterreich

Civil society and NGOs often filled the gap where provisions were missing or had never been envisaged by the national government in the first place. One example were the calls by local initiatives for donations of money and goods to ensure asylum seekers had access to clothing and basic products. With regard to language acquisition, civil society not only makes up for the lack of German classes offered, but sometimes are the only option for asylum seekers to study German, as national programmes are restricted to those who have been granted asylum (De Jong and Ataç 2017; Simsa et al. 2016).

Unfortunately, this kind of positive take on asylum seekers and the supportive mood decreased over time. With increasing critical voices and negative politicization of the issue, an anti-refugee climate emerged, also reflecting a growing dissatisfaction with the positioning of the government as such (Der Standard 2015).

5.5.3   After 2017: Ambivalent Tendencies

With the far-right government in office (since December 2017), the policy making in the field of admission and reception of asylum seekers on the one hand, and the provision of integration measures for refugees reached a turning point.

The national level has reclaimed a dominant role, not only in border control, return and asylum procedure policies, but also in policies on the territorial distribution and the provision of welfare services for asylum seekers. The working programme of the government (Regierungsprogramm 2017) entails a set of measures to separate and isolate asylum seekers and to reduce the scope and quality of integration measures. In office FPÖ ministers raised demands to restructure the accommodation system. In particular, asylum seekers should no longer be put up in small units and private facilities, but allocated to big facilities, camps and barracks with a curfew on the outskirts of cities.

The overall aim of *campization*[7] is to send tough signals to future asylum seekers and the voting population alike complemented by the related strategy of strengthening the federal powers at the expense of provinces and municipalities. Moreover, an indirect effect of the campization strategy will be to make it unfeasible for members of the host society to establish social contacts and relations with asylum seekers. Campization works against any form of belonging, it prevents civil society and NGOs from providing assistance to realize basic rights of asylum seekers. A phenomenon that is also visible in other EU countries (see Chaps. 3 and 4, in this volume).

With regard to admission and basic welfare support, municipalities, in particular in rural areas, will lose their role. This is different for integration activities aimed at those already living in the country. Here, municipalities and local initiatives are needed more than ever.

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[7] Kreichauf (2018: 1) uses this term to describe „a process in which the recent tightening of asylum laws and reception regulations have resulted in the emergence and deepening of camp-like characteristics of refugee accommodation in European city regions."

Although the number and costs of asylum applications are decreasing, more and more facilities remain empty and more and more refugee aid workers have had their contracts terminated, the national government has decided to withdraw funding for integration measures. In particular, funds for German classes as well as the financial resources to facilitate access to the labour market have been drastically reduced (Brickner 2017; UNHCR 2018).

The policy proposals have caused an outcry in civil society, nowhere more so than in Vienna, where roughly half of all asylum seekers live. Critics accuse the federal government of jeopardizing highly necessary integration activities and achievements (Meinhart 2018). These policy responses will affect the scope and quality of services as well as the leeway of local communities on the integration of asylum seekers and refugees. It is to be expected that integration processes and achievements – in the domains of housing, educational institutions and labour market – will depend even more on the good will of municipalities and social relations with volunteers. This voluntary approach to the hotly debated integration issue implies arbitrary results. Integration may become a lottery, depending on where asylum seekers live and whether they are lucky to have access to volunteers.

5.6 Conclusions

This chapter dealt with the multi-level governance of admission and integration of asylum seekers with a focus on the role of the local level. Conceptually, the chapter uses the term *local responses* to cover both formal decisions and implementation of basic care as well as measures that go beyond this to include social integration activities. Moreover, the chapter included not only pro-migrant tasks regarding admission and integration, but also collective actions which were openly directed against the admission of asylum seekers.

In retrospect, cooperation and conflict between the political tiers dominated the responses to the asylum challenges of the year 2015 and beyond. Within this framework, localities certainly have been and still are the places and spaces where reception, accommodation and integration happens, where barriers occur and facilitators are in place. The role of municipalities in migration and asylum governance changed in the course of 2015 and after, but has been and still is characterized by ambiguities and opposing trends.

The local level has shown a high degree of autonomy in implementing or contradicting national and federal legislation and, in turn, has also triggered national and provincial responses. Nevertheless, in some cases the local authorities and initiatives made up for what the national and provincial level could not provide. To do so, municipalities explored support networking strategies through sharing best practice experiences. For some time, the national government had a huge interest in getting as many municipalities involved and to benefit from an extensive voluntary reception and network. This can be understood as turning to a more pronounced localist approach, where not only the national government decides and the local government implements, but both levels work together.

In the meantime, however, on the *admission policy* side municipalities have lost in decision making power. As said above, the national authorities were stonewalled in the multi-level reception framework, when they searched unsuccessfully for places of accommodation. As a response to the resistance against the set-up of accommodation facilities, in 2016, the national government adopted a bill, which point to a strengthening of the central state in the admission domain. However, this reactive answer is followed by pro-active proposals. The centralisation of decision making at the national level has been intensified when the national government has turned to deterrence policies to keep away asylum seekers from entering the country, for instance, by proposing camp-like housing run by the federal state. Eventually, the short-term localist approach shifted back towards a centralist procedure on admission and territorial distribution. Hence, on admission, the local arena has lost leeway as the federal government has strengthened its legal powers.

On the *integration policy* side, the past and future tendencies are different from the admission rational. Here, the local arena has gained in importance when the nation state was overstrained by large asylum arrivals, and it will maintain this role not at least because the national government has largely withdrawn from the integrating tasks and more than ever before it remains with civil society to help with daily life challenges and integration requirements.

We conclude that the large refugee inflows of 2015 challenged municipalities and impacted on the handling of ethnic and religious diversity. However, the change in government, followed by a change in asylum and integration policies, will again largely affect the municipal activities. For the time being, it is local citizens, associations and authorities who have a decisive share in the success or failure of integrating asylum seekers and refugees. All this happens in an informal way and without changing the vertical governance structures, involved are social practices rather than administrative activities.

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Part II
Perceptions and Discourses on Refugee Reception

Chapter 6
Local Narrative-Making on Refugees: How the Interaction Between Journalists and Policy Networks Shapes the Media Frames

Andrea Pogliano and Irene Ponzo

6.1 Introduction

Mediatised local events are the gateway for national media narratives, and traditional local media play an essential role of gatekeeping. In this chapter we maintain that local journalism is highly influenced by local news sources, namely the local institutions and all other actors engaged in the issues at stake which are conceptualised here in terms of policy networks (Rhodes 1988; Marsh and Rhodes 1992).

Our previous investigations (Pastore and Ponzo 2016; Pogliano 2016) have suggested that the "narrative autonomy" of local policy networks is greater where they are more cohesive, i.e. when their representations of the issues at stake are consistent and when their actions are coordinated. More cohesive local policy networks appear to be better able to develop their own narratives on migration and self-representations of the local community, and more capable of influencing the media narratives. To a certain degree this study builds upon this hypothesis and further develops this previous work. Specifically, we confronted this approach by elaborating on two particularly significant case studies which are emblematic of the barriers and concentrations

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of refugees and migrants who are physically and symbolically reshaping Europe: the Central Station of Milan, where starting in 2013 the number of migrants engaged in trying to reach other European countries multiplied in spite of the rules imposed by the Dublin Convention; and the utilisation in the same year of the abandoned buildings of the MOI area (former Mercati Ortofrutticoli all'Ingrosso, i.e., Fruit and Vegetable Wholesale Market) in Turin by persons granted humanitarian and international protection who, due to restrictions in terms of circulation associated with these statuses, remained trapped in Italy at the end of a reception process that had proven incapable of guaranteeing adequate housing and work integration.

The joint analysis of media and policy dynamics is, in our opinion, the most innovative aspect of this contribution, since the media and policy literature remain substantially separate and unable to dialogue, despite the fact that the strength of the seminal work for media studies, *Policing the Crisis*, authored by Hall and colleagues in Birmingham 40 years ago, was significantly based on this connection (Hall et al. 1978).[1]

Years after *Policing the Crisis*, whose idea of the social processes drew from Gramscian concepts of hegemony, hegemonic bloc and strategic alliances, this way of researching communication and society barely survives in studies about moral panics and the media. The legacy of *Policing the Crisis* has arguably been taken up by social movement studies at least since the work of Touraine (1981), with his conception of society as something produced and reproduced in collective action, and his focus on the issue of who is able to intervene in social processes and how such interventions shape the direction of social process (Eder 2015). However, social movement scholars have often overlooked media and communication processes.

Only in recent years has the study of communication and media processes entered into the research agenda of social movement studies, with several attempts to formalise the role of media and communication (see Teune 2011; Mattoni 2013; Bennett and Segerberg 2015) in the organisation of "contentious collective action" (McAdam et al. 2001). In these studies a key question is about how communication serves social movements in their formation and by raising the visibility of their political claims. To use the words of Bennett and Segerberg (2015), the point is to understand when communication is an expression of existing organisations and when, instead, an organisation is the creation of communication.

Our work is an attempt to move forward by widening the scope of research from social movements to larger policy networks and analysing the logic of the actions and strategies of those networks and the media on an equal footing, avoiding viewing one of the two as instrumental for the other.[2] In fact, whereas the literature on social

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[1] In this regard, see the criticism by Curran (2002) of what he calls neoliberal revisionism and its consequences on media research after *Policing the Crisis*. It should also be noted that, even in the somewhat meagre production of research in the wake of Policing the Crisis, the role of the media is often underrepresented, and when it is central, the themes of migration and asylum are not (see Critcher 2006).

[2] The concept of mediatisation of society and politics (Couldry 2012; Thompson 1995) is a further incentive for reasoning and producing research embedded in a model of society in which collective and political actions operate in constant tension and mutual conditioning with the narratives, categories and logic of the media.

movements is focused mainly on organisations, our analysis is about policy networks which encompass several types of organisations, including social movements, and concerns the pattern of relations between them. Following the distinction proposed by Rhodes (1988) between the national government environment (macro), policy networks (meso) and organisations (micro), we could say that our focus is on the meso rather than on the micro level.

Furthermore, we consider the policy networks and the local media to be mutually involved in the process of narrative-making. Our work concerns the dialectic between policy networks and local media on the issue. How do these dialectical mechanisms produce and reproduce the media frames on migrants and refugees?

This research is based on a mixed qualitative methodology. To study the local policy networks, we analysed the available official documents and carried out 18 semi-structured interviews with local administrations, third sector organisations and social movements.

For the media analysis, we collected news items related to transit refugees in Milan and to the MOI occupation in Turin, by using keywords in the online archives of newspapers. We collected all the news items for the period from the beginning of the media coverage of the two cases – April 2013 for Turin and October 2013 for Milan – to the end of June 2016, when the local elections were held in the two cities (in Milan the centre-left coalition kept governing the city while in Turin the centre-left majority led by the Democratic Party was replaced by a Five Star Movement–led majority). The news titles analysed are from the two main national broadsheets with a local newsroom in the cities– *La Stampa* and *Repubblica* in Turin, *Corriere della Sera* and *Repubblica* in Milan. Specifically, we analysed frequencies and frames of the news items through a qualitative news framing analysis (D'Angelo and Kuypers 2010).

In total, we collected 301 news items for Milan and 162 news items for Turin. Finally, the mechanisms of local journalism in the two cities were investigated through eight semi-structured interviews (four in Milan and four in Turin) with the journalists who ended up being the most involved in covering the stories.

The chapter is structured as follows. Section 6.2 provides a brief overview of the main events in the two cities. Section 6.3 illustrates the local media coverage and framing of the two cases. The results of Sect. 6.3 will be explained through analysis of the organisation and functioning of local journalism (Sect. 6.4) and local policy networks (Sect. 6.5) and their interactions (Sect. 6.6). In the last Sect. 6.7, we will discuss the main findings.

6.2 Main Events and Turning Points in the Case Studies of Milan and Turin

6.2.1 The Transit Refugees in Milan

According to the Dublin Regulation, refugees have to claim asylum in the first EU country they enter. However, when refugee flows started increasing after the Arab Spring, neither Italy nor Greece identified every refugee and many of them crossed

borders to reach other European countries. Against this backdrop, Milan was a major passageway to northern Europe since it is close to the border. The phenomenon became significant in 2013 when many Syrian families started spending a few days in the Central Station before resuming travel. Since 2015, sub-Saharan Africans, especially Eritreans, began to arrive as well and after a while they exceeded the number of Syrians who soon moved away from this route. Overall, from October 2013 to April 2016 the number of transit refugees registered by the municipality was 88,067, peaking at 52,600 in 2014, and finally dropping to 4700 in the first half of 2016.

With the arrival of Syrian refugees, various NGOs (Save the Children, the Eritrean association Cambio Passo, etc.) as well as the City of Milan started offering support at the Central Station, establishing a so-called "hub".

In October 2013, thanks to economic resources provided by the Ministry of the Interior through the local prefecture, accommodation centres run by non-profit organisations (Arca Foundation, Farsi Prossimo, City Angels) were opened.[3] However, the length of the agreements between the City and the local prefecture was generally a few months. While waiting for the renewal of these agreements, the City repeatedly appealed to non-profit organisations and charities to deliver free accommodation. In fact, some parishes and Catholic NGOs (Casa di Carità, Fratelli di San Francesco, Sant'Egidio), and initially even some mosques, provided beds on a voluntary basis. Support for transit refugees became increasingly structured over time and the activities of screening and relocation to accommodation centres moved several times, eventually settling in April 2016 in the centre in via Sammartini, located along the railway line but further from the station.

Private citizens also rallied to provide help by triggering one of the greatest solidarity mobilisations ever seen in Milan. The summer of 2014 saw the start of what was called the SOS Syria Emergency volunteer group. Initially supported by a few people from the local branch of the Democratic Party, it soon became the largest grassroots volunteer group active at the Central Station. In contrast, right-wing parties and movements staged several anti-refugee demonstrations over the years in question, in both the city centre and the Central Station. However, citizens' participation in those demonstrations was never significant and was largely outnumbered by pro-refugee demos and mobilisations.

The mobilisation of civil society and the institutions has to be framed within the context of the Expo (Universal Exposition) held in Milan in 2015. This had two main relevant consequences. First, the Central Station became a sort of "entryway" into the city, especially from May to October 2015, when the Expo was open to the public. Second, the Expo emphasised the cosmopolitan identity of Milan, which

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[3] The legal basis for the intervention was the so-called Apulia Law (Law Decree 451/1995 converted into the National Law 563/1995) passed two decades earlier in order to manage flows from the Balkans to southern Italy. The law allows the establishment of emergency centres to accommodate irregular migrants waiting to be identified. Yet, public institutions did not identify refugees staying in Milan's centres, arguing that the Immigration Consolidated Law stipulates that foreigners must submit requests for residence permits to the public authorities within 8 days of their arrival in the country, and none of them stayed that long.

had impacted its approach towards migrant communities since the mid-2000s when preparations for the Expo first started, as immigrant associations and cultural groups were regarded as resources for the city's international outlook (Caponio 2014). This orientation and, more generally, the cosmopolitan atmosphere emphasised by the Expo contributed to limiting xenophobic attitudes among politicians as well as citizens.

The management of the refugee flows, however, was not conflict-free. The clashes were particularly strong between the City, with a centre-left majority, and the Lombardy Region, led by the Northern League, especially when it came to the management of health issues, which in Italy falls under the remit of the Regions. In the autumn of 2014 the Regional Council formally rejected the proposal, repeatedly pushed by the centre-left minority in the region, as well as the City, to set up a fixed medical unit at the Central Station. In order to make up for the lack of health assistance, doctors offered their help on a voluntary basis. Only in June 2015, when several cases of scabies surfaced, did the Lombardy Region finally establish a fixed medical unit at the Central Station to cope with the challenging health situation.

With the closing of borders in 2016, transit became almost impossible. Time spent in the accommodation centres increased and reached an average stay of 100 days in June 2016. Therefore, the large majority of would-be transit refugees ended up requesting asylum in Milan.

6.2.2 The Occupation of MOI Buildings in Turin

The occupation that occurred in Turin is intertwined with that of the so-called North Africa Emergency Programme, which started in 2011, triggered by the arrivals following the Arab Spring and the fall of Gaddafi in Libya. The Programme mainly concerned people from central Africa living in Libya who were hosted, upon arrival in Italy, in accommodation centres managed by the Department of Civil Protection and the Ministry of the Interior. When the North Africa Emergency Programme ended, in February 2013, a large majority of the people expelled from the accommodation structures were homeless and unemployed. Between March and April 2013, around 400 of them, most of whom held humanitarian permits,[4] occupied three buildings of what is known as the MOI (former Mercati Ortofrutticoli all'Ingrosso, i.e., Fruit and Vegetable Wholesale Market) area, located on the eastern edge of the Lingotto neighbourhood, just along the railway line (Fig. 6.1).

The occupied buildings belong to the Olympic Village and are composed of 30 structures that accommodated the athletes during the Winter Games held in Turin in 2006. After the Games, 19 buildings were sold by the City of Turin to the Turin City Fund, a real estate fund whose investors are the City of Turin itself (35%), Equiter (29%) and Prelios (36%). The latter is also the asset management company which

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[4] The permit of stay for humanitarian reasons lasts 2 years and can be converted into a permit of stay for work. It does not allow holders to freely circulate in Europe.
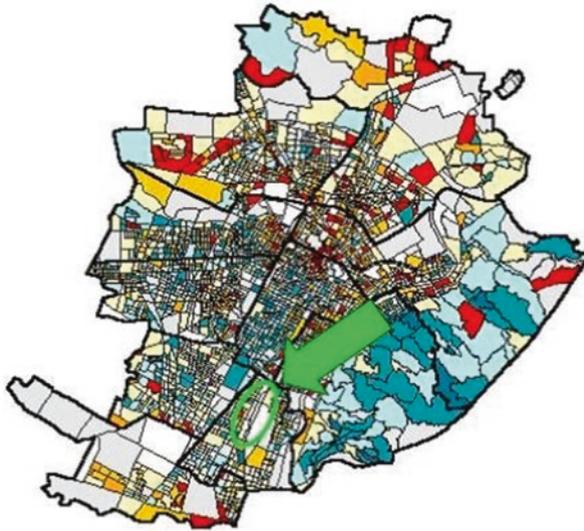
Fig. 6.1 The location of the MOI area in the city of Turin. (Source: Authors' own design)

manages the Fund, is responsible for the reconversion and commercialisation of the buildings and thus acts as owner. Despite the efforts made, four buildings remained unsold and thus empty until the time they were occupied by refugees.

The occupation was supported by the extreme-left organisations Gabrio and Askatasuna, inspired respectively by communist and anarchist ideologies, and by the Migrant and Refugee Movement linked to the radical trade union USB. In the days following the occupation, a Solidarity Committee supported by those organisations was set up with around 15 Italian volunteers and some refugees from the occupation. Neighbourhood residents provided basic goods, no protests were registered, and neither the police nor the Municipality intervened. The occupation soon gained the solidarity of the Archbishop of Turin who visited the occupied buildings in July 2013 and was supported by the Pastoral Office for Migrants (Ufficio Pastorale Migranti, UPM), which is the branch of the diocesane curia responsible for migration issues.

In August 2013, a fourth building, the only empty one left, was autonomously occupied by Somali refugees, the majority of whom came from the previous occupation of Clinica San Paolo which occurred in 2008, and who had never been properly accommodated by the local institutions. Overall, the number of occupants rose to around 600.

During the investigated time period, the main negotiation between the organisations supporting the occupation and the City occurred in the autumn of 2013 and

concerned the possibility of enrolling the refugees living there on the civil registers in order for them to gain access to local services, sign work contracts and renew their residence permits.[5] After several public demonstrations and meetings, the City decided to provide homeless refugees[6] living in the city, including those squatting in the MOI buildings, with an artificial residence[7] which differs from full residence because it does not allow access to social benefits and, being granted only to homeless people, is regarded as stigmatising. This event marked the breakup of the alliance between the extra-left movements and the Migrant and Refugee Movement since the first were less keen to accept the compromise on artificial residence than the second, and more oriented towards highly participatory approaches and refugees' direct engagement in the negotiation with the City.

Although the public demonstrations played a relevant role, the decision on artificial residence also suited the City's plans. In fact, the City expected the enrolment on civil registers to provide a sort of census of the refugees living in the MOI buildings which should have been the starting point for planning their relocation across the Region through tailored interventions of integration, financially supported by the Ministry of the Interior. In fact, only a portion of people living in the MOI buildings enrolled on the civic registers. The main obstacle to the above relocation plan, however, was the lack of support from the Ministry of the Interior, which did not meet the City's requests to establish national common rules for enrolling homeless refugees on civil registers and to provide economic resources in order to cope with the MOI occupation. This lack of support from the central government was one of the main differences between Turin and Milan and, as we will see in Sect. 6.5, contributed to the opposite outcomes observed in the two cities.

Against this backdrop, the right-wing political opposition in the Municipal Council continuously called for the occupied buildings to be evicted. This request became more pressing in the winter of 2014 when the councillors of the right-wing parties repeatedly tried to enter the occupied buildings to check on the situation inside but were stopped by members of the extreme-left organisations Askatasuna and Gabrio. A municipal councillor from the Northern League claimed to be looking for cocaine and marijuana near the occupied buildings and filmed the scene in order to denounce the drug-selling that he alleged was occurring in the area. In response, the Solidarity Committee organised a 24/7 task force together with the refugees and some neighbourhood residents to oversee the area and push out drug dealers.

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[5] In fact, resident permit renewal is not dependent on enrollment on the civil register, as specified in a communiqué issued by the Ministry of the Interior on 18 May 2015. However, before that communiqué it seems that the Prefecture of Turin acted differently.

[6] Namely people seeking asylum, granted international protection or holding a residence permit for humanitarian reasons.

[7] The artificial residence is an imaginary address which allows homeless people to enrol on the civil registers, thus obtaining city residency and access to services. Two other artificial addresses already existed at that time, via Casa Comunale 1 and via Casa Comunale 2, for Italian and foreign homeless people, respectively. A new artificial address, via Casa Comunale 3, was created for homeless refugees.

The square in front of the MOI occupation also became the stage for public demonstrations by the Northern League national leader in December 2014 and 2015, and by far right movements. However, as in Milan, citizens' participation was never massive.

Finally, it is worth reporting an episode which gained relevant public attention, namely the alleged rape of a young woman with severe learning disabilities in the occupied buildings in June 2015. The men accused of that crime were caught with the help of the people living in the occupied buildings.[8] Public demonstrations followed, organised by right-wing parties, and a police garrison began to oversee the area 24/7. At the same time, the Mayor announced a census of the people living in the occupied buildings, though it never happened. In June 2016, the number of people living in the MOI occupied buildings was estimated to be around 1000.

6.3   Local Media Coverage and Media Framing

In this section we report on our analysis of the coverage in the local pages of the examined newspapers and of the frames that informed this journalistic coverage at the narrative level. For the framing analysis we referred to Benson's (2013) distinction between victim frames and threat frames. Through a literature review of both European and the US materials, Benson arrived at a list of 10 broad immigration frames: three victim frames, four threat frames and three hero frames. Victim frames are "the global economy frame", "the humanitarian frame" and "the racism/xenophobia frame". Threat frames are "the jobs frame", "the public order frame", "the fiscal frame", and "the national cohesion frame".[9] The hero frames were irrelevant in our dataset.

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[8] The final judgement concluded that the young woman spent time with the men, one of whom was her boyfriend, on a voluntary basis but the men were nevertheless sentenced for having taking advantage of a person with severe learning disabilities.

[9] Not all news items express a clear frame. In those cases the news items are irrelevant for the frame analysis. In other cases, more than one frame can be found in the same item: in accordance with most research on media frames, including Benson's, we included in the data set all the frames that appeared in the news items analysed. The more frequent occurrences were clearly those of the humanitarian frame and of the public order frame. The former is defined by Benson thus: "Immigrants are victims of unjust government policies (violations of human rights, fair legal process) or business practices; they suffer from poverty, lack of access to health care, dangers related to border crossing, etc.; or they have difficulties in adapting to their host society". The latter: "Illegal immigrants break the law in coming into this country; once here, immigrants – legal or illegal – are more likely than others to commit crimes, use drugs, and carry diseases; immigrants are coming in such numbers that they threaten overcrowding and environmental degradation". Frames are sometimes directly supported by journalists or they can be found in claim-making from politicians or from members of institutions or civil society, reported in the news. Because our research was conducted on the local sections of national newspapers we considered the page and the position of the articles to be irrelevant.

Fig. 6.2 The coverage of Milan transit refugee news by Repubblica and Corriere della Sera – compared with the distribution of city press releases (October 2013– June 2016). (Source: Authors' own design)
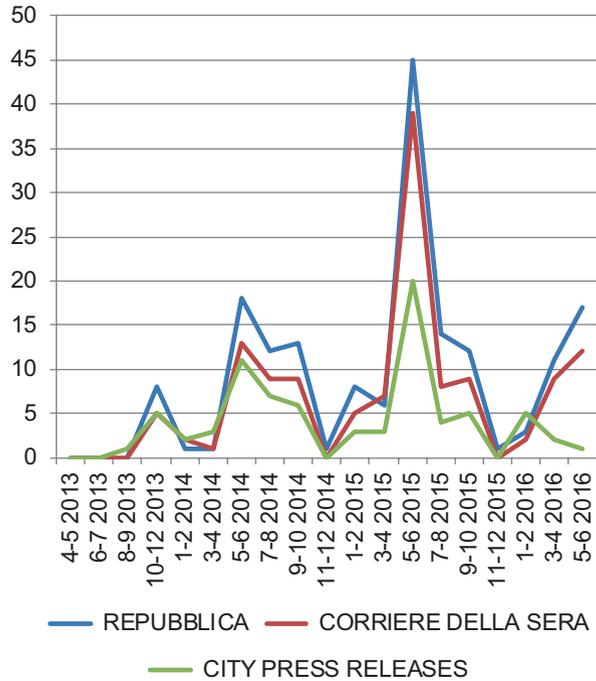
6.3.1   Milan: Intense Coverage and the Dominance of the Humanitarian Frame

On transit refugees in Milan, *Repubblica* produced 171 articles in the 32.5 months from the middle of October 2013 to June 2016, which means an average of 5.26 article per month, while *Corriere della Sera* produced a total of 130 articles (an average of four each month). Considering only the hot seasons (from May to October), when the numbers of refugees arriving in Milan were higher, we get an average of more than one article every 3 days (12 per month in *Repubblica*, 11 per month in *Corriere*) (Fig. 6.2). These numbers of news items allow us to speak of intense coverage.

As indicated, in spite of slightly different absolute numbers, the trend in the coverage over time for the two titles is virtually identical. This is so rare in the analysis of the contents of the media over such a long period of time that the most plausible explanation is twofold: firstly, constant news management of the large number of small news events that occurred during the reference period – confirmed by a comparison with the press releases issued by the City of Milan; and secondly close cooperation, of a community type, between journalists of the two newspapers, similar to what happens with embedded journalists in war contexts.
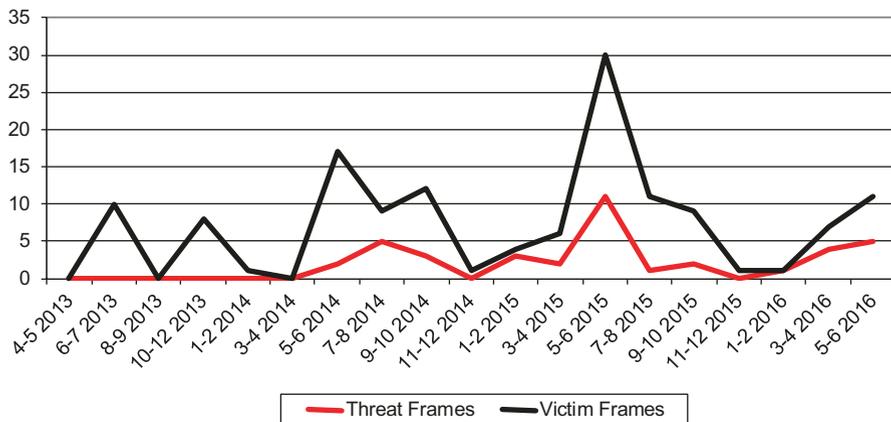
Fig. 6.3 The distribution of frames in Milan transit refugee news (Repubblica + Corriere). (Source: own design)

In general terms, the peaks are easy to explain because of the intensification of refugees crossing the Mediterranean Sea and then transiting to Milan during the hot seasons. The highest peak, that of May–June 2015, which is a media hype (more than a quarter of the entire coverage of 32.5 months is concentrated in this 2-month period), is a consequence of the sum of various factors: (a) the beginning of the hot season with an intensification in the number of refugees, (b) the opening of the Expo in Milan with the resultant increase of attention around the city and its security system, (c) the medical alarm about scabies, (d) right-wing politicians' public state-ments and demonstrations aimed at creating a public health moral panic, and (e) the local government's communication action efforts in order to counteract the panic.

The victim frames (the humanitarian frame) led the coverage (Fig. 6.3), and even when the threat frames (the public order or the fiscal frame) promoted by right-wing politicians or civic society's protest groups were the real first material for producing news, both newspapers very often embedded the threat frames within news items which started with quotations from the victim frames' supporters. This way of rep-resenting the threat frames has been favoured by the strong news management of the Councillor for Social Policies Pierfrancesco Majorino, which aimed to present the local administration as a pragmatic and anti-ideological actor engaged in a sort of resistance against adverse fate ("the State and the Region have left us alone"), and to demonstrate how the local administration was driven by both humanitarian and public order concerns. This kind of constant and coherent communicative action led to a rejection of the racist/xenophobia frame (the accusation of racism in coping with the threat frames) in favour of a distinction between "people who do things" and "people who only talk", where the latter were easily labelled as contradictory and demagogic.
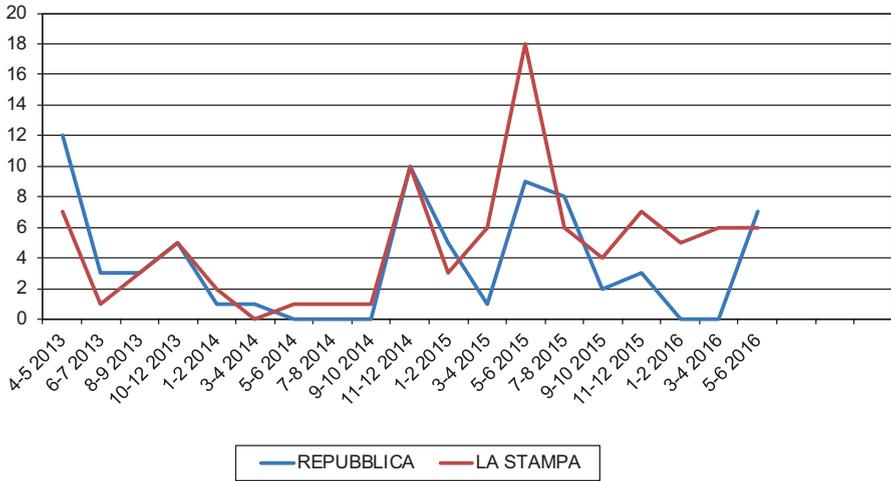
Fig. 6.4 Coverage of the ex-MOI occupation in Turin in the local pages of Repubblica and La Stampa (April 2013 – June 2016). (Source: Authors' own design)

Journalists appear to find that this narrative adheres to the climate of citizen solidarity observed every day in the Central Station by reporters. It is perhaps above all this non-contradiction between narratives that created a "natural" climate for the affirmation of the humanitarian frame in *Repubblica* and *Corriere*, which also have few differences in this aspect.

6.3.2 Turin: Light Coverage and the Dominance of the Public Order Frame

The coverage of an event such as the MOI occupation would be expected to produce high numbers of articles from local journalism, for various reasons, including the important news value of "quantity" (the number of people involved in the occupation). However, *Repubblica* produced only 70 articles on it in the 38 months from April 2013 to June 2016, which means an average of 1.84 articles every month, while *La Stampa* produced a bit more with 92 articles in total (2.4 per month).

The first peak occurs in the beginning of the occupation, the second is registered more than a year later, in November–December 2014, and a third peak occurs in the summer of 2015. These are small peaks, around 10 articles in 2 months, which can be regarded as coverage intensification rather than as media hype. The highest peak is that of *La Stampa*'s coverage of May–June 2015 with 18 articles in 61 days (Fig. 6.4).
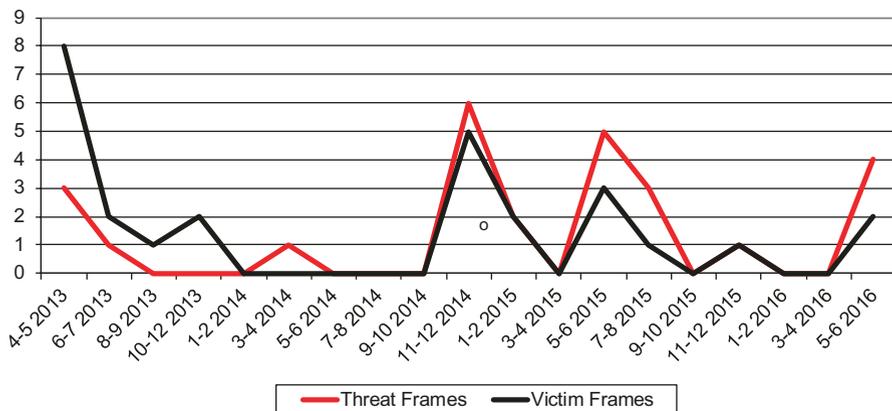
Fig. 6.5 Trend of the victim and threat frames in all the collected articles (Repubblica + La Stampa) for the case of the ex-MOI occupation in Turin (April 2013 – June 2016). (Source: Authors' own design)

Both the second- and the third-most significant attention spans are due to crime and to statements and protests arising out of these events (drug dealing in the first case, alleged sexual violence in the latter).

Frame analysis (Fig. 6.5) shows a situation in which the victim frames are prevalent in the very first phase of coverage of the occupation, while the threat frames are generally more frequent in the following months. In particular, with respect to the two attention peaks indicated, the public order frame guides the coverage. A detailed analysis of the production of frames in the articles of the two publications reveals a sort of overturning of the narrative structure that dominated the representation in the Milanese case. While in Milan threat frames were evoked in order to contrast the humanitarian frame that structured the story, in the case of the occupation of the MOI – except for the very first phase – the victim frames (in particular the humanitarian frame and the racism/xenophobia frame) encouraged a story built mainly around the frame of public order. The most frequent narration followed this script: it starts with interviews with members of the neighbourhood committees or local and national politicians from right-wing parties who use the public order frame, continues by talking to supporters of the victim frame, and then closes by placing an emphasis on the public order frame.

An aspect of great interest for this work is the following: the victim frames only rarely appear on the pages through the words of political subjects, whether or not they are members of the local administration in charge. The voices that support these frames are those of the Prefecture, the police headquarters and civil society.

6.4 The Organisation and Functioning of Local Journalism

In this section we use interviews with local journalists in Milan and Turin from the above mentioned national newspapers to offer a first explanation of how events were told, which circumstances led to certain narrative productions and the development of frames that prevailed in the journalistic stories of the two cases, as well as relationships with some members of the local policy networks. Three topics are investigated: (a) the professional experience of journalists with respect to migration (6.4.1), (b) the editorial offices of local journalism; and (c) an analysis of the setting, or the work dynamics linked to physical places (6.4.2).

6.4.1 How Journalists' Specialisation Impacts Local Narratives

In Italy, despite migration being a central theme for political and media communication, among journalists in the newsrooms of the main daily newspapers, few have specific skills on the topic. This is especially true for local journalists. The trend is made worse by the fact that in Italy local journalism on migration largely relies on the desk production of news based on official sources rather than on first-hand materials, and civic society is often under-represented.

Despite this general framework, some exceptions are present, especially for Milan and Rome. In fact, entities such as Redattore Sociale, Radio Popolare and Avvenire in recent years have formed a group of editors who interpret their work as mostly concerned with the production of a form of news (Barnhurst and Nerone 2001) that Benson (2013) has described as "dramatic personalized narratives" which is closely linked with the humanitarian frame, having its origins in advocacy-oriented and social journalism (Schudson 1978).

Some of these journalists were hired by the local editorial offices of national newspapers, especially, if not almost exclusively, in Milan and Rome. In the case of migrants in transit in Milan, this meant the presence of a small group of reporters who are used to dealing with different communities of migrants in their work and are able to frame the local events in a broader context. This situation is quite rare in the city sections of national newspapers that we have analysed, and in the local journalism more broadly. The Turin case exemplifies what turns out to be the norm. Despite the length of the occupation and its direct connection to an important story (the North Africa Emergency and its political management), the journalists engaged in the local narrative were not able to deal with the problem by connecting it in a relevant way to migration issues and to policies concerning migrants and refugees. One of the main reasons is due to the lack of specific skills on the issues being discussed. Local journalists moved from one local event to another, but did not focus on a central theme. When they were engaged in telling the MOI story they were out of their comfort zone.

6.4.2   Newsroom Framing and the Reporting Setting

In part as a consequence of what has been written above, and in part as a result of
the choices of the respective newspaper editors, the two cases were in fact framed in
the newsrooms we have studied in distinct terms. In Milan, the city sections of the
national newspapers analysed favoured an intensive approach, involving a few jour-
nalists with specific skills on the issue of migration and asking them to go deep into
the story and follow it over time, while in the case of Turin the story was not
entrusted to any one journalist, but combined the distinction of privileged tasks and
contacts with typical sources of ordinary and routine work. These profound differ-
ences led in the Milanese case to the production over time of a clear and coherent
editorial frame, while in the Turin case the definition of the situation first shifted
from the migratory question to the occupation of buildings and from there took
more subtle directions depending on the specific skills of reporters (e.g. the relation-
ship between antagonistic groups and the city administration, neighbourhood
dynamics, etc.).

All this was amplified by the extreme diversity of the settings. The Turin case
was characterised by the difficulty of journalistic access to the stories of the occu-
pants. In fact, the journalists interviewed complained about the difficulty of entering
the MOI, the long waiting times for the decisions of the Solidarity Committee,
which were badly adapted to the timetables of the daily news, and a series of preju-
dices and misunderstandings that sometimes made for strained relations.

The extreme-left movements supporting the occupation failed in their attempt to
build strong networks with supportive journalists. Adopting Rucht's (2004) "Four
A's" model of social movement media strategy, we noticed that "abstention" was
predominant, while "adaptation" was explicitly refused – partly as an opposing
reaction to the way journalists reported from the MOI and partly because of the
absence of communication staff – while "attack" and "alternative" were limited in
their scope, directed to a small radical audience through a couple of "alternative
media" forums (Downing 2000). However, instead of the well-documented ten-
dency of the media to report negatively on movements (Gamson 2004), what we
noticed in this case had more to do with journalists' lack of trust in the Solidarity
Committee as both a source of information and a gateway for accessing the refu-
gees' stories, the latter being related to the fact that the Solidarity Committee was
clearly intended to be an intermediary.

With respect to the question of exchanges between journalists, these were lack-
ing because of the absence of a common place in which the reporters of various
newspapers could work, or because of the declared absence of meetings inside the
editorial offices to discuss the issue of the MOI.

The Milanese situation appears to be the complete opposite. The presence of a
public access setting with relatively small dimensions like the Central Station pro-
duced a sense of community among the journalists involved, which on some occasions
also became a solidarity commitment linked to emergency management. The mix
between the role of reporter and that of an active and supportive citizen finds journal-

istic form in the appeals to collect food and clothing for migrants in transit published on an online platform by journalists of *Repubblica* reporting from the Central Station, thus building an echo chamber between the City and organised citizens.

6.5 The Local Policy Networks

In this section, we will analyse the local policy networks, paying special attention to those elements which can explain the differences in local media narratives highlighted in Sect. 6.3.

Policy networks may indeed differ along several dimensions such as the frequency and continuity of participants' interaction, the variety of interests they express, the distribution of resources and the possibility of finding solutions with advantages for all members through positive-sum games, and the degree of consensus on basic values and paradigms or, at least, on issue definition (Heclo 1978; Marsh and Rhodes 1992). As we will see, the differences between the policy networks of Turin and Milan in many of these dimensions contributed to explaining the diverse outcomes observed in the two cities.

6.5.1 A Highly Compact and Centralised Policy Network in Milan

Although the processes of spontaneous mobilisation and the activation of volunteering were extremely important in the Milanese case, the network as a whole soon assumed a compact and strongly centralised configuration revolving around the figure of the Councillor for Social Policies Pierfrancesco Majorino, supported by the Mayor Giuliano Pisapia and the Councillor for Security Marco Granelli, which allowed the network to take quick and fairly coordinated action. In addition to managing the relations among other local institutions and the central government, Majorino maintained direct contact with the media and with the various entities involved in the policy network, organising periodic meetings and frequently visiting the hub.

Beyond the strong coordination role played by Councillor Majorino, a factor that strongly contributed to the compactness of the Milanese policy network was the identification of a clear and circumscribed policy issue, which allowed the field of action of the network policy to be clearly delineated: it was to manage migrants in transit, who were staying in Milan for a few days, with the aim of giving them temporary material support and managing public order and decorum in the station and, more generally, in the city. The issue that in the same time period ignited the European debate—the violation of the Dublin Regulations—seems to have never been a subject of discussion within the local policy network because it was seen as a matter for the central government.

A second element is represented by the economic resources made available by the Ministry of the Interior, since without them night-time reception would probably have been impossible and the phenomenon of migrants in transit would have turned into a political and social emergency that was difficult to manage.

Finally, the policy network was able to develop thanks to the convergence of interests between the various organisations due to, firstly, the availability of economic resources that acted as an incentive, especially towards the organisations involved in the management of night centres to which these resources were destined and, secondly, by the limited expertise on migratory themes of the people who made up the policy network.[10] Only Farsi Prossimo (in favour of a more in-depth screening of individual situations and the introduction of legal and psychological support), and Save the Children (particularly attentive to the needs of minors, pregnant women and families) had specific skills on migratory issues when the policy network was established, and they had different approaches from those of the administration, leading to a progressive modification of the intervention over time. The limited number of organisations with complex and specific "visions" on the issue of migrants in transit, together with a "definition of the problem" with clear and rather narrow borders, reduced the internal conflicts of the network, favouring its durability. The main conflict line was between the third sector organisations and spontaneous volunteer service, of which the main and most visible exponent was SOS Syria Emergency, but it focused more on the practical management of certain issues than on the definition of the problem and the solutions for dealing with it. The only major conflict was with the Lombardy Region (Sect. 6.2). However, since the Region is a higher-level body than the City, this rift ended up making the citizen's network policy more compact.

6.5.2   A Fragmented and Conflictual Policy Network in Turin

The situation in Turin was completely opposite to the one in Milan. The definition of the policy problem appeared to be extremely complex. In the first place, it concerned people destined to remain in the area, raising, next to issues of public order and the protection of occupants, all the multiple and complex problems that generally concern integration and, specifically, access to work and housing.

Moreover, the organisations belonging to the policy network saw immigration and access to housing as central themes of their mission, with respect to which they affirmed their reference values and defended their own interests, thus ending up reducing the room for negotiation and creating the conditions for strong antagonism between the parties. The Refugee and Migrant Movement, along with the UBS trade union, showed a more pragmatic approach and appeared to be keener to compro-

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[10] The involvement of organisations with little expertise on migration and asylum was possible because of the "bed and soup" approach of the Municipality aimed at providing light support to transit refugees who spent just a few days in Milan.

mise with the local institutions. In contrast, for the extreme-left movements the ideological aspects had a decidedly greater weight: defence of the rights of the occupants of the MOI is part of a framework of more general protest of the institutions and is linked to a wider struggle for the right to housing, where resistance to evictions and illegal occupations are central instruments. For their part, the diocesane curia and the Pastoral Office for Migrants, far from seeking a clash with the institutions, framed support for the occupiers of the MOI within their mission of solidarity with the most vulnerable. Finally, the municipal administration, intervening in favour of refugees, feared inciting competition for scarce resources, such as housing and work, with citizens who they are required to protect and represent. Moreover, it wanted to avoid dialogue with the extreme-left movements, which used illegal occupations among their main tools in the housing fight, fearing legitimising this strategy of contra legem action at the city level. Overall, since central members of the local network saw the issues at stake as crucial to their core mission, and they held a certain degree of expertise and rather specific perspectives on those issues, room for negotiating shared solutions was lacking.

Relations between local actors were then further complicated by tensions that developed in other policy networks. Relations inside a policy network always occur within a broader context and set of relationships. Therefore we have to consider multiple and overlapping memberships and recognise that action in one network may affect a group's role in other networks (Marsh and Rhodes 1992). The extreme-left movements had for years been in dispute with the administrations led by the Democratic Party on the construction of the TAV (Treno Alta Velocità, i.e., High Speed Train) line. At the same time, the Pastoral Office for Migrants and, even more so, the other third-sector entities of the city that had mobilised during previous occupations of refugees such as that of the San Paolo Clinic had evaluated attempts to collaborate with the municipality as disappointing (Manocchi 2012). They ended up not mobilising for the MOI, or else developed an attitude of great distrust towards the local institutions, at least with respect to their methods of managing occupations. The tensions and mutual distrust generated in other networks reverberated in the specific policy network that developed around the occupation of the MOI.

To these dynamics are added two other important factors that distinguish the Turin case from the Milanese one. The first is the internal division of the local administration, well summarised by the words of an interviewee: within the Council "each of them tried to pass the hot issue onto someone else's shoulders". Whereas in Milan the local administration showed itself to be compact and ready to make support for migrants in transit its standard, in Turin internal conflict and the lack of a shared position probably prohibited the establishment of city platforms involving other local actors and working groups aimed at coordinating and acting jointly.

The second factor is traceable to the lack of financial support from the Ministry of the Interior, which only arrived into the coffers of the local administration after Five Star's victory in the administrative elections in the summer of 2016. In fact, the only relevant agreement among the members of the policy network, which concerned civil registration, occurred in the early stages of the occupation and, from the perspective of the administration, served as an initial census in preparation for an evic-

tion and relocation intervention that should have happened with the financial support of the Ministry. Given the paralysis of the central government, the City ended up taking a step back and opportunities for joint action within the policy network became thin on the ground.

We can therefore conclude that in Turin the fragmentation of the policy network depended on several factors: the difficulties in defining the problem and therefore the field of action; lack of economic resources; the strong divergence of visions and interests between the organisations belonging to the network and sometimes on the same side, e.g. between organisations supporting the occupation (Refugee and Migrant Movement versus the extreme-left movements), and within the local administration. In Milan we observed completely opposite conditions, which favoured the development of a cohesive network: a definition of the problem that delimited a precise and rather circumscribed field of action; the availability of huge funding from central government and the consequent presence of economic incentives; the convergence of the positions of the components of the policy network as a result of a lack of "strong visions" on migration issues.

6.6   Interactions Between the Local Policy Networks and the Media

The different compactness of the two local networks seems to have had significant effects on the quantity and quality of the media narratives through two mechanisms: the management of relations with the media and the degree of consistency of the narratives developed by the components of the policy networks.

In Milan, the Municipality and especially the Councillor for Social Policies Majorino developed close relations with the local media, almost on a daily basis, and completely centralised the communication flows within the policy network. Members of the issue networks generally did not give interviews without passing through his press office, so Majorino was the central "speaker" for the local issue network. Furthermore, some newspapers, such as Repubblica, were close to the local administration and explicitly supported it both generally and in that specific circumstance by amplifying Majorino's messages or calls for citizens to help provide first-aid supplies. These elements appeared to contribute to the development of a sort of "co-production" of public narratives by the policy network and the local media.[11]

With regard to opposition politicians, journalists in Milan all remarked on the low frequency of their communications, explaining it as a reflection of the administration's (successful) news-management operation, but also as a consequence of a vision stimulated by the Expo of migrants as part of the cosmopolitan

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[11] Jasanoff (2004) used the term co-production to describe the joint generation of knowledge by science and politics.

appearance of the city (Caponio 2014), a climate of opinion particularly sensitive to the fate of the Syrians and a lack of politicisation of the theme, addressed with a pragmatic approach.

If direct and frequent contact with Councillor Majorino was the true strength of coverage with regard to hard news, the search for stories also passed through the associations present in Central Station, mostly stable and "close at hand" for all the reporters. However, those sources did not produce alternative narratives: the compactness of the Milanese policy network and the sharing of a certain "definition of the problem" and of the solutions to be pursued by its members produced the convergence of the narratives given to the media.

In contrast, the communication strategy of the City of Turin was explicitly aimed at limiting outward communication and relations with local media according to a strategy that we can define as "non-communication". As a result, journalists all complained of a lack of information despite attempts to contact the policy representatives. In this vacuum of political communication on the occupation, the police headquarters and especially the Prefecture were the main institutional sources. Although it contributed largely to supporting the humanitarian frame from the first day of the occupation, acting as a "primary definer" (Hall et al. 1978), it must be said that the communication strategy of these institutions seemed to journalists like a "firefighter" who runs around extinguishing some fires, while keeping the remaining fires at a minimum level of visibility, communicating as little as possible, even on the news stories that had reached the limelight. This dynamic can be explained by the fact that in Turin the institutions, i.e. local administration, police headquarters and Prefecture, did not have shared solutions to communicate and indeed were careful to avoid statements that could exacerbate conflicts within an already very weak and divided policy network. At the same time, as we have said, journalists' access to the MOI occupation was anything but easy, so it was also difficult to collect the voices of the organisations that supported the occupation and the refugees themselves. In this situation, journalists looking for information on the occupation increasingly gave more space to protest committees and demonstrations of political opposition, however limited and unrepresentative they were, opening the door to narratives which were often distant from and contradictory to those of local authorities.

6.7 Conclusions

The literature on the relations between media and political actors – mainly dealing with social movements and agenda-setting – is often unable to account for the complex local mechanisms leading to the production of media frames. By combining the two sets of literature on policy networks and on the media, we have tried to identify new hypotheses.

The local institutions are crucial sources of information for the mainstream local media (Ekström et al. 2012)—what Hall et al. (1978) called primary definers. When they achieve the leadership of a network and keep control over frame production through the creation of a coherent and shared narrative, as happened in Milan, media production follows and it is unlikely that the political opposition will see its frames efficiently represented. However, when local institutions fail either to act as the primary definer or support the development of a cohesive policy network and shared narratives, things risk falling apart. Under such conditions, the media tend both to follow the traditional news values of conflict and sensationalism (Altheide and Snow 1979) and to look for information from any available voice, with the risk of overweighting and overexposing protest groups and opposition parties, as occurred in Turin. We can thus affirm our hypothesis that the cohesion of the local policy networks, understood as shared frameworks and operational cooperation, strengthens their "narrative autonomy", namely their ability to produce public narratives and impact those of the media.

Alongside the cohesion of the local policy networks, on which our initial hypothesis was focused, the presence of a cohesive local media community, i.e., a group of journalists sharing the same definition of the situation and exchanging information and contacts, has emerged as key in developing positive and coherent media narratives. More generally, the conditions of journalists' work in itself, not only in terms of news-making routines (Maneri and ter Wal 2005), but also in terms of knowledge and orientations, are crucial in shaping reporting on refugees and migrants. In this regard our findings highlight the central role played by another factor, namely expertise (or lack of expertise) on migration and asylum, which can be defined as having reported experiences from the migrant or refugee perspectives (so-called advocacy journalism), and commitment to "the cause". Where such expertise and commitment are greater, the local media community tends to be more cohesive and the media frames more positive.

Paradoxically, while expertise and commitment have an adhesive function for the local media community, they might play a disruptive role within the policy community since they tend to generate different and not negotiable definitions of the situation and desired solutions.

To conclude, we can affirm that the main factor able to explain the different evolution of the media narratives in the two analysed case studies is the cohesion of the local policy and media communities. That cohesion seems to be in turn influenced by different elements such as the actors' expertise and commitment, and the role played by local institutions which are a sort of primi inter pares and hold a stronger position compared to the other actors. Nevertheless, we cannot exclude that other members of the policy networks could be key in producing cohesive communities and promoting consistent narratives, even if this has not emerged from our analysis. In order to assess the possibility of generalising our empirical results and explore different configurations, further research is needed.

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Chapter 7
Shaping the "Deserving Refugee": Insights from a Local Reception Programme in Belgium

Stiene Ravn, Rilke Mahieu, Milena Belloni, and Christiane Timmerman

7.1 Introduction

In 2015, almost a million refugees arrived in Europe. Although those who made it to Europe were only a small number compared to those displaced by the conflict, the sudden increase of asylum applications, mostly in Germany, mobilized public opinion and the attention of the media for months. While some asked to what extent Europe could bear what was described as a "human flood", others lamented that many among the applicants were not real refugees. Images of vulnerable refugees needy of assistance were reproduced along with images of threatening aliens overflowing European borders.[1] Since then, the discourse surrounding the "refugee crisis" has been in a way or another shaped by the idea of *deservingness*. Who deserves to enter into European territory? Who deserves to receive state-funded assistance?

In recent years, "deservingness" has increasingly become a focus of attention for those studying public discourse on refugees. Most authors investigating these issues highlight how these categories shape refugee reception systems, programmes of social assistance and the views of those who work in these programmes (Casati 2017; Hardy and Philipps 1999; Holmes and Castañeda 2016; Sales 2002; Walaardt

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[1] See Chap. 6 in this volume by Pogliano & Ponzo on the role of different actors (media, policy makers) in the production of public narratives on refugees.

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2013). While analysing Germany's reception context in the midst of the 2015 refugee crisis, Holmes and Castañeda (2016) argue that the lexicon of terror used to frame refugees and the crisis can have fatal consequences. As they write:

> The discursive frames used in the media and in political and popular narratives can help us learn a great deal about how the responsibility for suffering is shifted; how fears of cultural, ethnic, and religious difference are mobilized; and how boundaries of social categories are made and unmade, sorting people into undeserving trespassers versus those who deserve rights and care from the state. (Holmes and Castañeda 2016: 13).

The point here is to understand how the discourses on deservingness influence not only public opinion, but also practical interventions and programmes at a national and local level. We aim to understand to what extent and how these general discourses on deservingness are interpreted, reproduced and/or contested on a local level and how this translates into practice. This article contributes to this trend of literature by analysing a local assistance programme implemented in the city of Antwerp (Belgium). This programme was funded by the European Union in the aftermath of the refugee crisis. Its creation was directly linked to the surge in the amount of refugees entering Belgium. The programme aims to assist unaccompanied minors – recognized as refugees or receiving subsidiary protection[2] – who are about to turn 18 or have recently turned 18. This group represents a particularly vulnerable group in the professional caregivers' perceptions, since the youngsters' newly acquired adulthood leads to a sudden withdrawal of the public support measures available to unaccompanied minor refugees.

By examining the aims and the rationale of the project, as formulated by project team members, we aim to assess how categories characterizing the discourse on refugee crisis are reproduced, interpreted and questioned by local actors and stakeholders. In particular, we observe how the category of deservingness and its different dimensions have shaped the perspectives of those involved in this local intervention. The article illustrates the theoretical usefulness of distinguishing between three main dimensions of this notion: legal, moral and economic deservingness. In addition, we analyse how varieties in local stakeholders' perspectives on deservingness can be explained. By examining the interaction between locally rooted organisational cultures and wider European discourses, we point to the role of localities in shaping innovative policies.

We first discuss theoretical debates on the moralities of refugee assistance and elaborate on three different dimensions of deservingness: juridical, moral and economic deservingness. After briefly describing the context and aims of the local refugee programme, we analyse notions of deservingness in the project stakeholders' perspectives. Finally, we show how different dimensions of deservingness are often in tension with each other: while young refugees are expected to be "highly vulnerable" from a moral point of view, their inclusion in the programme depends on their capabilities to be economic deserving actors.

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[2] The refugee status is granted according to the United Nations Refugee Convention of 1951. As a refugee, individuals are initially granted the right to stay in Belgium for 5 years, after which they are given permanent stay. Contrarily, subsidiary protection is more temporary and granted to those who cannot be defined as a refugee but who would face a real risk of being harmed upon return to the country of origin. (CGVS 2015).

7.2   The Deserving Refugee: Theoretical Debates About the Moralities of Refugee Assistance

Although the idea of deservingness has been central in recent academic debates on refugee reception and related discourse, it has rarely been examined in its manifold aspects. However, when reading the literature, it is evident how the image of the deserving refugee is a rather multifaceted one, evolving over time and space (Ludi 2014).

Some authors have highlighted how the image of deservingness in public discourse can change even in relatively short periods and influence asylum-related practices or attitudes. Walaardt (2013) has analysed the case of the Christian Turks who sought asylum in the Netherlands in the 1970s. He shows how after initial rejection by Dutch authorities, Christian Turks managed to successfully present themselves as "deserving refugees" by changing the refugee paradigm. At first portrayed as Eastern men seeking refuge from communist regimes, they then shifted the image of the refugee into a vulnerable, easily assimilable grateful victim. While previous assessments on asylum claims in the Netherlands were based more on credibility and persecution frames, those lobbying for Christian Turks introduced a moral frame justifying protection based on a humanitarian standard.

The image of the deserving refugee is context-dependent; it varies according to local institutional and socio-economic conditions. Casati's (2017) study of a small reception programme in a Sicilian town shows how local actors interpret deservingness through locally embedded moral criteria. These reflect the socio-economic marginality of the area and the limited institutional support provided to refugees and Italians alike. Casati (2017:13) argues that "notions of gratitude, suffering and autonomy take on specific connotations in relation to local economic, political and historical configurations". In particular, she illustrates how locals' evaluation of refugees' deservingness is based on how grateful these are to receive assistance – when resources are little for locals too –, how desperate they are (to justify prioritisation of refugees' needs over locals' needs), and how hardworking they demonstrate to be.

A review of the literature shows that deservingness encompasses several dimensions. The first dimension is grounded in legal definitions derived from the 1951 Geneva Convention. Deservingness here implies a legal entitlement to seek asylum and receive assistance in Europe. A sharp distinction is made here between *authentic* refugees, fleeing persecution or war, versus *bogus* refugees, unauthorized or economic refugees who are just trying to "jump the queue" for regular visas. While the former category is considered "deserving", the latter would have no legitimate reason to come to Europe. Interestingly, both human rights promoters and those in favour of state sovereignty over their territory use these categories of deservingness (Hardy and Philipps 1999).

The second dimension of deservingness emerges from a meritocratic, capitalist perspective, which identifies the deserving with the active, potentially productive refugee/migrant. This dimension of deservingness is built around the idea that

refugees represent a burden on welfare states (Sales 2002). The notion of particular groups representing a burden on society is older than contemporary refugee discourses, though. It can be found in discourses on the poor too. Katz (1989) investigated the common perception among Americans that the poor are undeserving of help because they brought poverty on themselves. Although this image has shifted in context and time, the idea has perpetuated and continues to influence the rationale of public social assistance. Deserving refugees are those who are thought to have the potential to evolve from their dependent position to an active one from which they will be able to contribute to national economy. It is assumed that investing in them is worthwhile, because the expected return on investment is significant. On the contrary, refugees who remain assistance receivers are framed as "profiteers" burdening host society.

The last dimension is ethical: who deserves hospitality most from a moral point of view? Who is most vulnerable? As it is framed in public discourse, the right of people to seek asylum and to be assisted is tightly connected to their vulnerability. This idea is reproduced by humanitarian discourse of international organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) aiming to raise awareness and funds on the plight of refugees (Malkki 1996). Images of women and children are systematically selected over other representations to elicit compassion. Be it for strategic reasons or for sincere belief, refugees are continuously portrayed as traumatized people who have lost their home, their families and their possessions. In this stereotyped image of the refugee as the ultimate vulnerable victim, there is little space for personal agency, entrepreneurship and physical strength, which are indeed characterizing many of those who make it to Europe through extremely challenging voyages.

Remarkably, this image of the vulnerable refugee is employed not only by those who seek to protect refugees, but also by those who want to keep them outside national borders. American president Trump's statement that the European refugee crisis was mostly dominated by "young strong men" was precisely based on this assumption of deservingness. His words implicitly meant that those seeking asylum in Europe did not "deserve" their status as refugee not only because they were not vulnerable enough, but also because they were cowards escaping their responsibilities of defending the country and their families.[3]

Unaccompanied youngsters, the target group of the programme discussed in this article, occupy an ambiguous position within the above debate. On the one hand, these youngsters, usually boys, are portrayed as harmless, vulnerable children in need for help. On the other hand, they are also described as a group at risk (Bryan and Denov 2011), being potentially aggressive and prone to religious radicalisation. This is especially true in the Belgian public debate where young Muslim men represent the group mostly associated with terrorist attacks and religious fundamentalism (Fadil 2014).

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[3] See a media coverage about this at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2016/05/16/trumps-claim-that-young-strong-men-dominate-the-european-migrant-crisis/?utm_term=.ddafc80d9df6

7.3   Creating Categories, Crafting Policies: Views from a Local Programme in Antwerp (Belgium)

In the wake of the 2015 Syrian refugee crisis, a consortium of stakeholders in Antwerp applied for, and was granted, a 4.9 million budget by the European Regional Development Fund to set up a holistic support programme for "unaccompanied young adult refugees".[4] Antwerp is the second largest urban centre in Belgium with around 520,000 inhabitants. This city has a diverse population of which 48,5% is of foreign ancestry (Buurtmonitor Antwerpen 2015) including a considerable share of refugees.

The programme is led by the city authorities and more in particular the local Public Centre for Social Welfare,[5] the agency responsible for social rights of all Antwerp residents. Other executive stakeholders are (1) the city's municipal agency for the integration of newcomers, (2) a hospital-based psychotherapist NGO, specialised in diagnosis of psychotrauma and therapy for young refugees, (3) a youth NGO, with a special focus on neighbourhood-oriented street corner work with urban youth, (4) an NGO specialised in empowerment, civic participation and adult education. All stakeholders involved have considerable experience with ethnically diverse and socially vulnerable clients, patients or participants. Most project team members are practitioners, who meet refugees and newcomers on a daily basis, as these are a part of the target population of their institution.

In the choice of the programme focus, the increase in the number of unaccompanied minors in Belgium has been significant. In 2015 the number of asylum applications of unaccompanied minors (3099) was six times higher than the year before (486). This growth was seen as an opportunity to develop a targeted assistance programme for "unaccompanied young adult refugees". An additional element of concern for municipal authorities has been the low educational background of a considerable share of unaccompanied minors, and their generally weak position in education, and later, on the labour market.[6]

The overall objective of the intervention is to empower "unaccompanied young adult refugees", with a particular focus on their (future) labour market position. The intervention is two-fold: on the one hand, it provides inexpensive small-scale communal housing with local residents;[7] on the other, it offers individual guidance and training trajectories for the refugees involved.

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[4] For more information about the programme, see Mahieu and Ravn (2017).

[5] At the time of the research, this was still a separate institution. In 2019 however, it has been integrated into Social Services.

[6] About foreigners' participation in the Belgian labour market, see Ouali and Rea (1999).

[7] For an up-to-date review of how locals and civil society more broadly are engaged in refugee integration, see Feischmidt et al. (2019).

7.3.1 Methodology

This paper focuses on the viewpoints of the stakeholders involved in the interventions' target group and the relationship between these views and the project design. The main source of data used are focus group discussions with the team members from the five executive stakeholder organizations involved. For each institution, one focus group was held.[8] In total, six group interviews were conducted, each with between two and four team members of one respective stakeholder organisation (N = 17). Interviews were conducted between January and February 2017, a few months after the launch of the project, but before the actual implementation started. Respondents were asked about their views on the project design, vision and goals; their experiences with, and perceptions about, young adult refugees; and their expectations about the project. In addition, the researchers observed several project team meetings. Interviews were recorded and transcribed, and all data was scrutinized with the aim of laying bare the underlying assumptions of project team members.

7.3.2 Legal Deservingness: The Legitimate Refugee

As mentioned before, the programme under study targets young refugees who have been granted legal protection (asylum status or subsidiary protection) in Belgium. The programme is therefore implicitly based on legal deservingness. This decision may stem from the strategic need to attract funds, or from a practical consideration that this type of integration programme would be less useful for asylum seekers or unsuccessful asylum applicants.

However, it should be noted that, while stakeholders may not have the intention to purposely exclude asylum seekers or groups without a legal status, the legal dimension of deservingness remains unquestioned and is reproduced in this programme. Implicitly, the prioritisation of refugees with a legal status indicates how investing in the future of asylum seekers or undocumented people is deemed as less feasible or efficient. An alternative approach can be found for instance in a Dutch cohousing programme where stakeholders decided to include both refugees and unsuccessful asylum applicants (see Chap. 12 in this volume, Geuijen, Dekker and Oliver). Differently, this programme focuses less on civic and social integration, and more on the development of individual entrepreneurial skills on the short-term.

While legal deservingness is an implicit premise of the programme, it is probably not the most important dimension to understand how local stakeholders have constructed it. The crucial question for professional caregivers providing assistance to

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[8] For the leading institution, the Social Centre for Public Welfare, two group interviews were conducted: one with the intervention's designers, and one with social workers involved in the implementation.

refugees is less "who deserves to enter and to stay in our country" but rather "which groups, within the larger population of refugees, deserve/are worthy of special care and attention?" Beyond purely *legal* interpretations of deservingness, *moral* and *economic* dimensions are crucial to understand local level policy discourses.

7.3.3   Moral Deservingness: The Vulnerable Refugee

The alleged vulnerable condition of the particular group of "unaccompanied young adult refugees" lays at the basis for the creation of the project. According to stakeholders, their vulnerable condition is multi-layered and can be discerned at the micro-, meso- and macro- level.

7.3.3.1   Micro-Level Vulnerability

On a micro-level, being "young and separated from parents or primary caregivers" is identified as a marker of increased vulnerability of this group compared to the larger refugee population. It implies nobody cares for them. This, in turn, increases the responsibility of the governmental care system and the receiving society as a whole.

It is believed that being separated from one's parents since an early age, both during and after migration, has major psychological consequences. Stakeholders argue that many of these youngsters struggle with feelings of loss, trauma, stress or other psychological issues, related to the fact of being separated from their families. On top of the trauma accumulated during the journeys from their countries to Belgium, project stakeholders stress that these youngsters, being adolescent, are going through a crucial phase in their development.

These perspectives overlap with the findings of researchers that have investigated journeys of unaccompanied minors to Europe. Research has shown that unaccompanied minors in Belgium are experiencing higher levels of anxiety and depression compared to similar groups of children accompanied by their families, and native adolescents (Bean et al. 2007). Unaccompanied minors are generally at high risk of developing mental health problems due to (traumatic) experiences before, during and after migration (Derluyn and Broekaert 2007). However, studies have also highlighted refugees' resilience. Refugees are not simply passive recipients of care, instead, they are pro-active individuals that develop personal help- and support-seeking strategies and construct social networks (Williams 2006).

Stakeholders feel that existing public services in Belgium do not sufficiently address vulnerability in all its complexity. Therefore, their programme aims to provide psychological counselling, psychotrauma diagnosis, treatment to refugees and specialised training to team members.

While the young refugees' vulnerable position is emphasized by all stakeholders as one of the main reasons for the project, perspectives on their vulnerability differ.

One of the psychotherapists states that psychological problems are often underreported. However, this stakeholder also argues that refugees' psychologic problems are often wrongly pathologised:

> With regard to [the mental health of] refugees, there are two problems. On the one hand, psychiatric problems are underreported. On the other hand, there is a large pathologisation of difficulties that are situated in refugees' context. People underestimate what migration as a psychological process entails. It always involves an intensive mourning process. (NGO offering mental health care)

This stakeholder emphasizes that migration in general is a demanding psychological process involving grief for the accumulated losses. In addition, vulnerabilities often arise from harsh material and social circumstances of refugees in the receiving societies. In sum, this stakeholder warns against "decontextualisation" and a too individualised understanding of refugees' (mental health) problems.

Differently, team members of the NGO working with youth state that the vulnerability of "unaccompanied young adult refugees" is largely similar to that of youngsters with immigrant or deprived socio-economic backgrounds. Similar to the NGO's wider target group, unaccompanied young refugees are considered to be in need of individual and social empowerment. This can be acquired through self-development (e.g. the development of skills, reflection and self-knowledge) and emancipatory actions (e.g. raising a public voice). Interestingly, social workers from this NGO even refuse to label their target group as "vulnerable":

> We consciously do not talk about 'vulnerable' youngsters. A part of our target group is vulnerable, yes. And we do try to target those that are most vulnerable, but we do not talk about them that way, because it emphasizes their vulnerability. We talk about an urban crowd and focus on the opportunities within a city that is inhabited by this diverse crowd of urban youngsters. (NGO working with youth)

This quote illustrates how the concept of vulnerability itself is contested within the project team. In addition, the different views of two stakeholders illustrate how understandings of vulnerability are grounded in institutions' backgrounds.

7.3.3.2   Meso-Level Vulnerability

Beside their identifications of vulnerabilities on the micro-level, stakeholders also point at meso-level factors. They all agree that unaccompanied young refugees lack social networks. In particular, stakeholders argue that young refugees need to build new horizontal relationships with Dutch-speaking locals, as opposed to the more hierarchic vertical relationships with professional caregivers. These relationships should allow for the formation of *bridging capital*.[9] The main reason as to why refugees need these kinds of horizontal social networks is the presumed positive impact

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[9] When constructing social networks during resettlement processes, refugees may build ties with individuals from the same ethnic group leading to the development of bonding social capital. Bridging social capital, in contrast, involves ties between individuals from a different ethnic group (Putnam 2007). For a review of the concept of social capital in migration, studies see Portes (1998).

on their Dutch language proficiency. Remarkably, this focus overlooks other types of social networks or sources of social support young refugees might benefit from. The relevance and potential advantages of fostering *bonding capital* or existing social networks are not mentioned by the project team members. Furthermore, it should be stressed that social support and social networks can also be found in other life spheres. Raghallaigh and Gilligan (2010), for example, found that religion significantly facilitated the coping strategies of unaccompanied minors while they were adjusting to living in a new country. However, in this project, religion or religious networks are not considered as relevant.

More specifically, stakeholders feel that young refugees' opportunities to encounter native citizens are limited. This understanding adds to their vulnerability because it is assumed that this negatively affects their sense of wellbeing and their potential for "successful" integration. Stakeholders observe that the environments young refugees navigate or reside in – Dutch language classes, the local reception centre, newcomer education and activities – allow them to get in touch with peers from foreign background only, with a lack of bridging capital involving the native population as a result. Stakeholders also point out the fact that native Belgian youngsters lack opportunities to encounter young refugees too. Communal living by young natives and refugees is thus seen as an opportunity to engender meaningful durable social interactions between these groups.

Beside their contacts with co-ethnic peers and other newcomers, unaccompanied young refugees' position in the care system implies that caregivers and other professionals (e.g. teachers) take a central position in these youngsters' everyday social encounters. The programme stakeholders too are professional caregivers and are thus part of the institutional 'carescape' (De Graeve and Bex 2017) surrounding the youngsters. However, they also problematize the implications of these vertical social relations:

> In a professional care relationship there is always a power imbalance: you have the therapist/caregiver who has a certain expertise, on the one hand, while you have the caretaker who needs assistance, on the other. Inevitably, there is a hierarchy. (NGO offering mental health care)

This quote shows that stakeholders are aware of the fact that refugees' vulnerable condition may be reinforced by the intrinsically hierarchical nature of the caretaker/caregiver-relationship. More than other stakeholders, this point was particularly stressed by the civic education NGO. Based on their experiences in other refugee-oriented projects, this stakeholder feels that positioning refugees as "persons in need" who are dependent on professional caregivers strengthens refugees' sense of ignorance and incompetency. The NGO argues that informal contact with ordinary citizens has the potential to influence refugees' self-perception positively, as they will learn that it is normal to struggle with everyday life matters, such as bureaucratic procedures. Therefore, the NGO for civic education particularly emphasizes the importance of the horizontal bridging capital:

> [In relationships with professional caregivers] there is no honest reciprocal connection. I think that the added value of the buddy [i.e. the native flatmate of the refugee] is that he or

she will engage in a real, more authentic relationship with the refugee. (NGO for civic education)

This quote shows the importance adhered by this NGO to the development of an egalitarian relationship between the refugee and his flatmate, an argument shared by all other stakeholders.

In sum, on the meso-level, the project team understands the refugees' vulnerability in terms of a lack of durable social relations with natives, and with non-professional "ordinary citizens" in particular.

7.3.3.3   Macro-Level Vulnerability

On a macro-level, stakeholders maintain that the particular age of the refugees (just 18 or slightly older) puts them in a vulnerable position within structural care policies in Belgium. This concern overlaps with findings in research on "care leavers". Studies have shown that young people who are forced to leave care due to reaching adulthood face an increased risk of social exclusion from various life domains (e.g. to have poor educational attainments, become homeless or end up in poor housing, have higher levels of unemployment, etc.) (Stein 2006).

In Belgium, most existing support services target either minors or adults, and there is no transition zone between these types of services. This problem is salient within regular services of some stakeholders involved in the programme. For instance, in the municipal agency for integration, actions for minors and adults are completely separated. Only recently, attention for people in the transition zone emerged. Introducing the new category of "unaccompanied young adult refugees" is in fact a way to cater the particular needs of this group. Different stakeholders stress that exactly because this group is not recognized as such — even an appropriate term is lacking — they "disappear" into the broader refugee population.

There are enough measures for minors, but from the moment they turn 18, they are considered as adults. They have to manage everything on their own without support.[10] (NGO working with youth)

We can notice here how this stakeholder expresses the need to adopt more fine-grained policies. By establishing new categories of vulnerable people deserving public assistance, the programme attempts to overcome this problem.

While the lack of policies for this group was denounced by all stakeholders, the NGO working with youth raised another concern. The NGO argues that these young refugees, like many other urban youngsters, face large barriers in their search for help and assistance in Belgian society. It is explained that these youngsters often feel discouraged and unable to engage with institutions (e.g., schools, health services, etc.) independently. According to this stakeholder, difficulties arise when

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[10] For a similar discussion of the age transition and its formal consequences regarding access to education see Chap. 9 (Glorius and Schondelmayer) in this volume.

negative encounters with societal institutions accumulate, leading to disengagement and distrust:

> According to the social-institutional vulnerability theory, youngsters experience a vulnerability towards institutions. We use this term often and we know the theory very well. Once you've been hurt four or five times, you will probably not go to that institution a sixth time. (NGO working with youth)

Subsequently, for this stakeholder it is important not only to strengthen youngsters on an individual level, but also to empower them on the societal level and to foster their engagement with broader society. Additionally, the mental health care NGO also notes how public institutions may add to refugees' vulnerability through exerting "institutional violence" on caretakers:

> I believe that many professional caregivers […] are totally unaware of the institutional violence. For example, if you have to go to court in Brussels, to enter that enormous building, *that*[11] is also a form of institutional violence. When you enter that building, you immediately get the feeling: 'I am *nothing,* in this court'. (Mental health care NGO)

Another major macro-level element adding to the vulnerability of "unaccompanied young adult refugees", relates to their disadvantaged position in the local housing market.[12] The problem is especially pressing in urban centres, such as Antwerp, where most refugees tend to move. Stakeholders all denounce the lack of decent, affordable housing for refugees in general. Although other groups of citizens experience similar problems, refugees are particularly vulnerable to discrimination on the private housing market. Their foreign names and appearance, low proficiency in Dutch and (usually) dependency on social welfare benefits contribute to natives' distrustful attitude towards them. Moreover, upon receiving a refugee status, refugees have to leave state-funded shelters within 3 months. Young single refugees are in a disadvantaged position as they have very limited savings (which is needed to cover the warrant) and because single-room accommodation is sparse and relatively expensive. The combination of all of these elements turns young refugees into easy targets for exploitation by dishonest house-owners:

> The fact that [this programme] provides decent, affordable housing also means that these young refugees won't be living in housing where, let's say, mushrooms are growing on the walls. This is a huge problem in Antwerp. In our services, we encounter many young refugees who are living in houses where you wouldn't even let your dog enter, while paying a monthly rent of €500 to €600. (Integration agency)

We conclude that notions of moral deservingness are saliently present in stakeholders' perspectives on young refugees. The fact that this project actually creates a 'new' category of refugees, extending the notion of "unaccompanied", usually connected to the group of unaccompanied minor refugees to adult refugees, shows that stakeholders find this target group to be "worthy" or "deserving" of special care. They perceive this group as being vulnerable, needy, neglected by current policies

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[11] Words in italics are emphasised by the interviewee.

[12] For a broader discussion on the housing of refugees after acquirement of a legal status, and on how local policies impact upon housing opportunities, see Chap. 10 in this volume (Adam et al.).

and services and want them to be recognized and cared for. The project's stakeholders thus seem to feed into the more general stereotyped image of the refugee as the ultimate victim. As was mentioned before, the reasons for this type of portrayal can be based on both sincere belief and/or strategic reasons. In the context of this project, framing the target group as "vulnerable" can, next to other grounds or beliefs, also be perceived as a strategic choice. We can assume that the more vulnerable a group is perceived, the easier it is to find resources for a project catering to the needs of the group. Therefore, creating a perception of vulnerability is important.

Another essential aspect to take into account in how the vulnerability of this group is discussed, is the fact that the overwhelming majority of "unaccompanied young adult refugees" are boys. As mentioned before, in current public discourses, young male, especially Muslim, refugees are often framed as potential threats to the nation state. In the official project proposal, one of the main objectives was formulated as follows: "successful young newcomers set an example to their peers and personify an opposing force to growing fears about failed integration and radicalization in Belgian cities." Although several stakeholders were sceptical about this project objective, the fact that the project coordinator included this as one of the project's main goals shows that it plays a role in the project design and the way in which the target group's identity is constructed. We can assume that the focus on these youngsters' vulnerability and deservingness is also a way of opposing racist and gendered discourse in which young immigrant Muslim men are framed as dangerous and threatening to Western society.

7.3.4 Economic Deservingness: The (Potentially) Productive Refugee

However, to be morally deserving is not enough to be part of this programme. The ultimate goal of this programme is to *empower* young adult refugees, understood here as enabling them to build an independent future in Belgian society. It is assumed that all of the project's interventions will contribute to this main objective: increasing refugees' skills through training and learning, building social networks, participating in leisure activities, etc. Importantly, the focus on *young adults* reveals the preventive nature of the programme. By and large, the goal of the intervention is to shield participants from the social problems mentioned above through preventive actions. Actions are introduced to stimulate active participation and, as such, to avoid the development of a problematic condition of dependency, rather than to help (older) unaccompanied adult refugees who already are in this vulnerable situation. This explains why the intervention targets the age group of 18–21; there is a strong belief that young adults will benefit most from the intervention.

> They are going to stay here. They are going to build a life here. We don't want them to end up again in statistics of youth unemployment or early school leaving. So, you have to be able to grab them quickly and prevent them from leaving school or being unemployed.

Because at that age, there is a real risk that they will disappear 'under the radar'. (NGO working with youth)

The various trainings and activities aiming at increasing refugees' skills are mandatory. So only those who are willing to make efforts, "deserve" the support and care offered by the project. Especially the social welfare agency stresses that refugees have to be willing to commit themselves to learn Dutch, to attend trainings, etc. If they display a lack of motivation for these activities, candidate-participants are not allowed to enter the project. This attitude may however reproduce the discourse on the "deserving poor", mentioned above. Those willing to cooperate with social interventions, deserve care; while a lack of compliance with the social measures designed to take them out of poverty would be interpreted as a sign of laziness. The non-compliant would be perceived as guilty of his/her own misfortune and for that, "undeserving" (Katz 1989). The programme too is based on the assumption that only a group of committed refugees will be able to benefit from the programme.

Compared to other stakeholders, the welfare agency is especially focused on activation and on strengthening refugees' productivity potential rather than on elements relating to a moral deservingness of care. In order to comprehend this stance, it is important to understand the welfare agency's general mission. For the agency's team members, the implicit comparison group for "unaccompanied young adult refugees" is the broader population this institution provides services for: social welfare recipients. The agency's main goal is to facilitate welfare recipients' social integration and to empower them to become independent from social welfare. The obligation for refugees to engage in project activities conforms the broader policies of this institution for all of its clients: care is contingent upon individual efforts. In return for the financial social welfare benefits and the services that clients receive, the welfare agency expects certain efforts from the recipients, that should ideally lead to independence from social welfare. The centre can withdraw social benefits from welfare recipients that do not commit themselves to obligations.

The choice for the particular target group, the preventive character of the interventions and its focus on refugees becoming productive citizens reveal the existence of an *economic rationale* in the programme design. This economic rationale is strongest in the statements of the welfare agency. Other stakeholders highlight active participation in society as well, but from a different point of view. The NGO working with youth also concentrates on activating the participating refugees and urban youngsters in general, but they distance themselves from the welfare agency's assumption that the provision of care should depend on the client's individual effort. This discussion seems to be intertwined with broader discussions on integration of migrant youth. When asked about the recurrent use of the word "integration" in the project proposal, one of the youth workers expressed a critical perspective about pushing towards assimilation/integration:

It [the welfare agency's frequent use of the term integration] tells us something about their assumption that youngsters should be 'integrated'. We [the NGO working with youth] feel that a bunch of people [refugees or second and third generation youth] simply have the *right* to be who they are and to be here. […] And that is a different viewpoint than the one focussing on all the things youngsters have to do until they 'belong': 'you have to learn Dutch,

you have to know the rules, you have to put the trash out, you have to be able to talk to your neighbour, because if not…'. (NGO working with youth)

This quote illustrates how this NGO stresses the moral dimension of deservingness more, and rejects the economic rationale. Similarly, for the NGO offering mental health care, active participation as a form of social integration is also important not for economic reasons, but because their integration is seen as a leverage for psychological wellbeing.

In spite of different point of views, all stakeholders find it important that participants undertake steps to become active members of society. However, all project partners emphasize that active participation in society is a long-term process. Both the welfare agency and the integration agency stress that the success rate of the project is not dependent on the number of refugees enrolled in education or work at the end of the programme. There is no predefined standard outcome to be expected for all; rather, the yardstick of success is the difference between a refugee's position at the start and at the end of the programme.

Another essential project objective that draws on economic deservingness is "to support refugees in creating a clear and realistic vision and plan for their future life in Belgium." One of the psychotherapists explains why this is important:

Some of these youngsters arrive here with very high expectations regarding their position in our society and in particular in the labour market. They expect to find a good job quickly and to raise enough money to support their families back home. However, in reality there is usually a mismatch between their skills and our labour market. In addition, because many are nearly illiterate, their learning progress is very slow. […] Upon arrival in Belgium, they are often deeply disappointed […]. Therefore, it is important to help them to turn this sense of disillusionment into a positive future ideal. (Mental health care NGO)

From stakeholders' perspectives, young refugees either lack aspirations, or have aspirations unsuitable for their new life in Belgium. With regard to this point, however, research has shown that refugees' individual aspirations are not lost in the flight; rather, they are crucial to understand their migration trajectories, their determination to overcome geographical borders as well as their pathways once arrived in the new country (Belloni 2016). However, these aspirations, such as the aspiration to support family back home (Nunn et al. 2014) or to become a professional football player or a doctor, may not be in line with what social workers, teachers, and other professionals dealing with these youngsters expect (Glorius and Schondelmayer, Chap. 9 in this volume). On the one hand, these aspirations may be considered unsuitable for young men in their late teen years, as being loaded with responsibilities toward left-behind kin implies they are unable to focus on personal development. On the other hand, these aspirations may not be seen as legitimate, because unrealistically high for someone who has limited possibilities to pursue higher education. This attitude corresponds with the local support programme's aim to (re)shape refugees' aspirations in order to increase their participation in the Belgian labour market, while taking into account young refugees' disadvantaged position in that market.

In sum, notions of economic deservingness are present in professional caregivers' perspectives about refugees' active participation. This is most visible in the governmental perspectives (the welfare agency and integration agency); however, these notions are expressed in a nuanced way. Other stakeholders take into consideration moral dimensions of deservingness (vulnerabilities) more strongly. In the next section, we take the analysis one step further by investigating how these two types of deservingness in stakeholders' perspectives interact. As we will argue, stakeholders' attempt to reconcile both perspectives leads to inherent tensions in their approach.

7.3.5   Tensions Between Different Dimensions of Deservingness

The programme aims at balancing different rationalities, drawing on notions of both economic deservingness and moral deservingness, which we discussed earlier. The tensions between these dimensions are especially salient as the programme is negotiated between stakeholders with diverse perspectives.

While the moral deservingness of the specific target group is emphasized and used as a justification for the creation of the project, it is important to note that the most vulnerable among the group of "unaccompanied young adult refugees" cannot enter the project. Upon entering the programme, candidate-participants are screened during an intake procedure in which a psychotherapist assesses to what extent youngsters suffer from trauma, chronic stress, 'frozen' grief, etc. Those with very severe psychological issues (e.g. depression, paranoia), problematic social behaviour (e.g. aggression) or a criminal record are not eligible to enter the project. Stakeholders mainly fear that their inclusion would overburden the resilience of the refugee's flatmate, which would eventually make communal living impossible. As this would negatively affect the expected impact of the project, it can be considered a pragmatic choice to exclude the most vulnerable refugees. If we consider this from the framework of economic deservingness (Sales 2002), the decision to exclude the most vulnerable refugees also indicates the tensions between different dimensions of deservingness. While from a moral point of view (Malkki 1996; Casati 2017), the most vulnerable need care more than anyone else; from an economic viewpoint it is more rational to invest resources in the group that is most likely to benefit from the project.

In addition, those who are most needy in terms of Dutch language acquisition are excluded from the project. Upon entering the project, candidate-participants are required to have sufficient proficiency in Dutch. If this is not the case, they are excluded as stakeholders feel their inclusion would significantly affect various intervention actions of the project. It is argued that certain training methods (such as participatory ones, where Dutch is the language of instruction) will be difficult to apply and will have little effect. With regard to communal living, it is expected

that when Dutch language proficiency is low, the quality and quantity of social interaction between the flatmate and volunteer will be limited. Once again, this implies a trade-off between the logics of moral and economic deservingness, as discussed in Sect. 7.2.

The intertwinement of moral and economic dimensions of deservingness are also salient in the external communication of the programme. On the one hand, there is a focus on the vulnerability of the targeted group: the young refugees are portrayed as lacking a supportive social network and being somewhat 'lost' in Belgian society. Simultaneously, it is stressed how a high 'return on investment' of the project is expected because of the young age of the participating refugees: it is a group worthy to invest public money in today, in order to reduce the burden they would impose on the welfare state tomorrow.

7.4   Conclusion

This article explored how the "refugee crisis" and related discourses have become the main frame for local level policy interventions and assistance programmes. By examining the categories and views employed in the tailoring of a local support programme in Antwerp, we have shown how the idea of "deservingness", as a central notion in wider European discourses on reception of refugees, is represented in the perspectives of different local stakeholders. Their perspectives, as we highlighted, vary according to their different organisational backgrounds. Each organisation perceives deservingness according to their historical mission and the usual target population of their services. The collaboration of different welfare and integration agencies, and health care, youth and civic educational NGOs, produces within the frame of one project a plurality of understandings associated to the idea of the deserving refugee.

As illustrated throughout the article, the creation of a target group as well as the description of young refugees' special needs is grounded in different dimensions of deservingness, which usually remain undistinguished in academic debates. We explored deservingness along three main dimensions: the legal, the moral and the economic one. While different dimensions of deservingness of care are often evoked in an interwoven manner, our empirical analysis of professional practitioners' accounts also reveals the tensions between a moral and economic approach to deservingness. On the one hand, the vulnerability of young refugees is used as a rationale for the creation of the project. Due to their vulnerable position, "unaccompanied young adult refugees" are seen as deserving extra support and care. On the other hand, when refugees are perceived as being *too* vulnerable, because of severe psychological issues or weak language proficiency, they are not eligible to enter the local support programme. This tension between moral and economic deservingness

demonstrates that, in making decisions about what categories of refugees to support, not only moral rationalities but also economic, efficiency-driven rationalities are employed by local stakeholders.

Finally, it should be noticed that discourses on deservingness are linked to stakeholders' different aspirations about the kind of citizens young refugees should become. Talking about who deserves assistance and protection implies a discourse also on what citizenship, integration and participation in the society of arrival means. Our point here is that discourses on deservingness do not only function as ways of shifting "responsibilities from historical political and economic policies supported by powerful actors" to refugees themselves, as claimed by Holmes and Castañeda (2016: 13). In discussions concerning what kind of refugees are deserving assistance and for what reason, different actors within the receiving society reproduce, discuss and contest positive and negative models of citizenship. Our case study, thus, illustrates how refugee reception programmes may serve as a laboratory for reflection on the kind of society – and the kind of membership in this society – that local civil and state organisations would like to promote.

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Chapter 8
The Public Perception of the Migration Crisis from the Hungarian Point of View: Evidence from the Field

Bori Simonovits

8.1 Introduction

Hungary is distinct from most other European countries that have experienced huge migration flows in the past years, both in terms of the political context and the radical change in the volume of migration during 2015. Since the legal and physical closure of the borders in autumn 2015,[1] significantly fewer asylum seekers have entered Hungary. While in 2015, approximately 177,000 people claimed asylum and more than half a million migrants and asylum seekers crossed Hungary's borders,[2] in 2016 less than 30,000 asylum claims were registered and in 2017 the number of claims was approximately 3000 (see Appendix 8.1 for further statistics). Furthermore, from a policy perspective, it is important to mention that integration policies have been non-existent since the Hungarian state completely withdrew integration provisions, such as a monthly cash allowance and school-enrolment benefits, on 1 June 2016. Since that date, only NGOs and religious charity organisations have been entitled to provide specific help in the refugee integration process (e.g. assistance in housing, finding employment, learning the Hungarian language or family reunification). Leading human rights organisations warn that this process has brought about significant negative changes in the integration possibilities of forced migrants, and most importantly serious risks of destitution and homelessness, even

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[1] 16 October 2015.

[2] "After Hungary completed a fence on its border with Serbia in September, the flow of migrants shifted to Croatia. In all of 2015, the region recorded 764,000 detections, a 16-fold rise from 2014. The top-ranking nationality was Syrian, followed by Iraqis and Afghans." Source: FRONTEX http://frontex.europa.eu/trends-and-routes/western-balkan-route/

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in case of recognised refugees (Hungarian Helsinki Committee 2017; Amnesty International 2017). As far as the NGOs are concerned, there are certain influential organisations[3] dedicated to the integration of third country nationals (hereafter TCNs), organising various services for them related to housing, finding employment and learning Hungarian. These services rely partly on funding programmes from the European Union. Furthermore, a significant number of volunteers organised by grassroots organisations took an important role during the 2015 migration crisis, e.g. by providing different forms of help for asylum seekers at various railway stations throughout the country.[4]

Now I turn to briefly discuss Hungary's demographic profile. The following two main features must be emphasised. Firstly, Hungary is a relatively homogenous country both racially and ethnically (the largest ethnic minority is the Roma, who make up 5–6% of the total population, according to Kemény and Janky 2006), as well as in terms of religion (the overwhelming majority is Christian, mostly Catholic). Secondly, the proportion of the migrant population is low; the number of immigrants per 1000 inhabitants remains well below that in most Western European countries. The crude immigration rate—the number of immigrants related to the size of the population in the destination country—has been fluctuating between 1.8 and 2.6 since 2000, whereas in the majority of Western European countries this rate is over 5 or in some cases even over 10 per thousand (Gödri 2015).

In this paper[5] I aim to assess different components and levels of mass migration-related fear based on the theoretical framework of integrated (later re-labelled intergroup) threat theory developed by Stephan and Stephan (1993; Stephan et al. 2009). My main research question is why *symbolic threats* from migrants crossing or settling in Hungary are as dominant as *realistic threats*, based on national (Simonovits 2016) and international quantitative research results (Messing and Ságvári 2018) that rely on Round 7 of the European Social Survey. This chapter is structured in the following way: in Sect. 8.2 I briefly discuss the most recent Hungarian political developments relevant to our topic. Section 8.3 presents the theoretical framework and aims to introduce the concepts of intergroup threat theory, while Sect. 8.4 discusses the empirical strategy. Section 8.5 is devoted to an overview of the most important survey results measuring xenophobic attitudes, while qualitative results are presented in Sect. 8.6. Finally, the conclusion (Sect. 8.7) reflects on the most

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[3] Most importantly, Menedék Association should be mentioned in this regard: https://menedek.hu/en

[4] The main motivations of the aid work and the composition of the volunteers at both the organizational and individual level has been analysed by Bernát et al. (2016) and Feischmidt and Zakariás (2019).

relevant findings from the quantitative and qualitative data analysis as well as the limitations of the research.

8.2   Political Context

As far as the political context is concerned, during the 2015 migration crisis the official communication of the Hungarian government purposefully refrained from using the words 'asylum seekers' and 'refugees', and preferred to use the terms 'illegal migrants' and 'economic migrants', in order to frame public discourse. In opposition to this, certain left-wing political parties, as well as certain research institutes (e.g. Publicus Research),[6] intentionally used the terms 'asylum seekers' and 'refugees' for this heterogeneous group of people to frame the public discourse the other way around. This dichotomy in the perception of the different migrant groups was reinforced by the field research, as most participants in the focus group discussions emphasised the need to distinguish the two terms: while *migrants* were mostly perceived as illegal, *refugees* were perceived as a deserving and vulnerable group. For the crisis of 2015, we use the term *migration* crisis, as it can be best described as a mixed flow, according to the UNHCR (2015), comprising various kinds of migrants who left their countries on a forced or voluntary basis.

Further discussing the political context, it is important to mention that throughout 2017 the Hungarian government ran a billboard campaign against George Soros' pro-immigration stance, as a follow-up to an anti-immigrant billboard campaign introduced in spring 2015. The campaign—featuring Soros's smiling face with the words "Don't let Soros have the last laugh"—resulted in sporadic incidents of anti-Semitic graffiti throughout the country.[7] One of the major issues in the campaign for Hungary's 2018 parliamentary election, which was dominated by the governing party, was the possible dangers of mass migration affecting Europe. Furthermore, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán recently drew a parallel between Hungary's Roma community in the north-eastern city of Miskolc, where the percentage of the Roma population has been very high since the 1970s, and the recent migration crisis.

> There was a time when people from the outside en masse immigrated into this city. And you remember what happened. The people of Miskolc experienced what happened then. … Yet those people who moved to Miskolc came from the territory of Hungary. Now you imagine what will happen when people who in their culture, customs, and views are completely different from us arrive from outside of the country.[8]

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[6] http://www.publicus.hu/en/

[7] We used these billboards as supplementary research materials in our focus group sessions. You can see examples in the following direct links: https://goo.gl/images/6GVFQb, https://goo.gl/images/KNBc9B

[8] The strategy of hate: Viktor Orbán in Miskolc (4 March 2018): Hungarian Spectrum. http://hungarianspectrum.org/2018/03/04/the-strategy-of-hate-viktor-orban-in-miskolc/ Accesses 23 March 2018.

It is obvious to anyone with any recollection of recent Hungarian history that the prime minister meant the Roma citizens of Hungary in the quotation above.

For a better understanding of the Hungarian context, it is important to note that influential scholars (Róna-Tas 2015; Erős 2016) have framed the mass migration-related public discourse within the context of a moral panic.[9] A *moral panic* is the process of arousing social concern over an issue, usually through the work of "moral entrepreneurs" (people initiating the panic who create a clear message and set the agenda) and the mass media. This process can be described as intensive fear and a high level of anxiety raised by news transmitted by the mass media that is responded to by government measures, and thus it has a special relevance to our subject matter. Both Erős and Róna-Tas argue that a moral panic was stoked by the Hungarian government, relying on strong national feelings, and xenophobic attitudes closely related to welfare chauvinism and scapegoating. Furthermore, Barlai and Sik introduce the concept of the Moral Panic Button as a Hungarian Trademark (2017), which they define as a complex set of state-propaganda techniques, including various forms of manipulation such as 'national consultation', the 'quota referendum', Parliamentary elections and overlapping waves of billboard, TV and radio ad campaigns. The aim of using the moral panic button, in their understanding, is to win popularity by framing and manipulating the political discourse in the public sphere.

8.3   Theoretical Framework

The Intergroup Threat Theory (Stephan et al. 2009)[10] is a widely used theoretical framework to examine anti-immigrant sentiments in European societies (see for example Velasco-Gonzalez et al. 2008) as well as in the USA (see for example Croucher et al. 2013). The theory—incorporating several theoretical perspectives on stereotypes and prejudices—suggests that four basic types of threat may lead to prejudice. First, there are *realistic threats* at the material, economic and political levels, focusing on the competition over material and economic group interests. Realistic threats are threats that pose a danger to the in-group's well-being, including threats to physical safety or health, threats to economic and political power, as well as threats to the existence of the group. Second are s*ymbolic threats*, which in contrast to realistic threats are based on perceived group differences in values, norms, and beliefs (Stephan and Stephan 1993). The basis of these perceptions is that out-groups (in this case immigrants) often have differing world views than dominant groups. Third is *negative stereotyping*, which is expectations of how a member of an out-group will behave, often related to feelings of threat or fear. Fourth is *intergroup anxiety*, which is a feeling of being personally threatened during interactions with out-group members.

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[9] The original concept was developed by Cohen in the early 1970s; for the Hungarian application and contextual background, see, for example, Kitzinger (2000).

[10] Originally labelled as Integrated Threat Theory and developed by Stephan and Stephan in 1993.

In the analysis below the primary focus is on the distinction between realistic and symbolic threats, as this distinction is crucial to understanding anti-immigrant sentiments in contemporary Hungary. Analysing the Hungarian case, it is important to note that not only symbolic, but also realistic threats may be understood at the level of perception; the kernel of truth (in this case the actual "danger" of immigration) is not that relevant in our understanding. Following the interpretation of Velasco-Gonzalez et al. (2008), the core issue here is the perceived competition over scarce resources (e.g. jobs, houses, social welfare), and the perception that these resources are threatened by outsiders.

The concept of realistic threat is closely related to the idea of welfare chauvinism, as both concepts assess the perceived competition of scarce resources (such as labour market positions and social services), and the majority's perception is that these resources are threatened by outsiders, i.e. immigrants. In Hungary—and also in the neighbouring Central-Eastern European countries—welfare chauvinism[11] and scapegoating have been measured to be central elements of anti-immigrant sentiments (see more on the Hungarian context by Enyedi et al. 2004; Simonovits and Szeitl 2016). Beyond that, previous research has confirmed both in the European context (Bizman and Yinon 2001; Velasco-González et al. 2008; Stephan and Stephan 1993) and the US context (Croucher et al. 2013) that Muslim immigrants are perceived both as a *realistic* and as a *symbolic* threat to the dominant—mostly Christian—Western cultures. Recent empirical research—both in the international and in the Hungarian context—has underlined that asylum seekers with a Christian background are more welcomed than those with a Muslim background.

Hainmueller and Hopkins (2012) and Bansak et al. (2016) have recently tested empirically how economic, humanitarian, and religious concerns affect attitudes towards asylum seekers in the US, and in certain European countries. Both studies were based on a survey experimental research design and tested for the influence of an extended list of randomised immigrant attributes on generating support for admitting immigrants. Both the US and the European results underlined that host societies prefer immigrants of higher social status, i.e. more highly educated immigrants and in jobs with higher status. In contrast, they view asylum seekers unfavourably, seeing them as people who do not plan to work, have entered their country without authorization, or do not speak English. Regarding the religion of asylum seekers, a high level of anti-Muslim sentiment was measured (in comparison to anti-Christian or anti-agnostic sentiment) by Bansak et al. (2016). Boda and Simonovits (2016) showed using Hungarian data that respondents at the later phase of the migration crisis (in January 2016) tended to accept asylum seekers being persecuted due to belonging to a Christian denomination twice as likely as asylum seekers who were being persecuted due to belonging to a Muslim denomination (23% vs 9%).

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[11] Welfare chauvinism refers to the idea that welfare benefits should be restricted to certain groups, particularly to the natives of a country, as opposed to immigrants. The term was first used by Jørgen Goul Andersen and Tor Bjørklund in Denmark and Norway in 1990.

8.4   Data and Methods

This study relies on both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data analysis is based on TÁRKI's long-term research on xenophobia and attitudes—from national representative surveys—while the qualitative part is based on joint research of TÁRKI and Artemisszió Foundation[12] in the framework of what is called the "ThreeZ" project. In 2017, all together 12 focus group discussions were held in five different places across Hungary. The analytical framework of these group discussions was developed by a research team consisting of anthropologists and sociologists.[13] Our main aim was to better understand what people think about the increasing level of mass migration in Europe, how they feel about migrants with different racial and ethnic origins, and most importantly how they conceive the different aspects of threats related to mass migration. By applying qualitative methods, we aimed to better understand what was in people's heads, as this method enables researchers to gain first-hand experience with people forming different opinions on migration.

The group discussions were organised in two waves, as they slightly differed in terms of their research focus. In the first wave of our empirical research (implemented in March 2017) four main interrelated topics were discussed: (i) general problems and public issues in Hungary, (ii) solidarity in general and specifically towards refugees, (iii) attitudes towards different types of migrants—asking respondents to differentiate between asylum seekers, refugees and labour migrants—and (iv) personal experiences with migrants. In the second wave (carried out in June 2017) we concentrated more on the different types of perceived threats related to mass migration into Hungary and Europe; more specifically, we discussed in the groups (i) directly perceived threats, (ii) welfare chauvinism and labour-related threats, and (iii) national and cultural isolationism. The socio-demographic composition of the focus groups that participated in the two waves can be found in Appendix 8.2.[14]

During the selection of the target locations, our primary criteria was to find locations affected by the migration crisis at different levels, as the main goal of these group interviews was to explore how citizens—in different geographical locations—respond to the migration crisis and to xenophobic political discourse spread all around the country via the mass media, national consultations, and billboard campaigns. We selected three locations (Keszthely, Vecsés and Salgótarján) that had not been affected at all by the recent migration flow, alongside Szeged, as an example of a town heavily affected by the 2015 migration crisis (as it is situated near the Serbian-Hungarian border), and finally Budapest, as the capital of Hungary was part

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[12] http://artemisszio.blog.hu/

[13] Here I want to thank, for the collaborative work, Teréz Pataki, Diána Szántó (Artemisszió Foundation), Bence Ságvári (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Social Sciences), Anikó Bernát and Blanka Szeitl (TÁRKI, Social Research Institute).

[14] Further details on the sampling process, the screening questionnaire and the focus guidelines can be sent upon request.

of the main migration route in 2015, with its three main railway stations operating as transit zones that summer. The compositions of the groups were homogenous in terms of level of education and mass migration-related attitudes (we differentiated between very dismissive and less dismissive respondents, as we could hardly find any people with pro-immigration views), but heterogeneous in terms of gender; the selection process was based on a screening questionnaire.[15]

The focus group guidelines were designed in line with the theoretical framework described above, asking specific questions on the different types of mass migration-related threats beyond the general questions related to the experiences of the recent mass migration. I developed the analytical framework of the focus group discussions using the theoretical approach of Stephan and Stephan (1993), distinguishing the different levels of anti-immigrant threats.

8.5   Anti-Immigrant Attitudes at the National Level (Quantitative Analysis)

Intergroup relations between the majority population and immigrant minorities are actually a hot issue in the European context. In international comparison—based on European Social Survey Round 7 and Round 8 data, and a Gallup World Poll carried out in 2016—Hungary is one of the worst-performing countries in terms of social distance and welcoming attitudes towards migrants (Messing and Ságvári 2018; Gallup 2017). Generally it can be stated that not only Hungary, but most Eastern European countries (e.g. Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Czech Republic, Latvia, Slovakia) are among those least accepting of migrants (MEDAM 2018).

Based on a recent survey on xenophobic attitudes in Hungary—carried out by TÁRKI in January 2017—the level of xenophobia has reached an all-time high (60% of the total population), and xenophilia has practically disappeared (Fig. 8.1).

Analysing results of the European Social Survey—Round 7, the fieldwork for which was carried out in 2014 and 2015—on anti-immigrant sentiments, Messing and Ságvári (2018) concluded that different components of *fear (welfare, labour market, crime, cultural and religious)* are the most important basis of anti-immigrant views. The following five factors correlated most strongly with less negative attitudes towards mass migration in all examined countries at the individual level: high levels of interpersonal and institutional trust, tertiary education, contact with different racial or ethnic groups, and feeling safe in the dark. Beyond the micro-level factors, the authors concluded that the following macro-level factors most explained the differences in attitudes towards migration: "people in countries with a large migrant population, with a high level of general and institutional trust, low level of corruption, a stable, well performing economy and high level of social cohesion and

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[15] For the exact location and composition of the groups see Appendix 8.2.
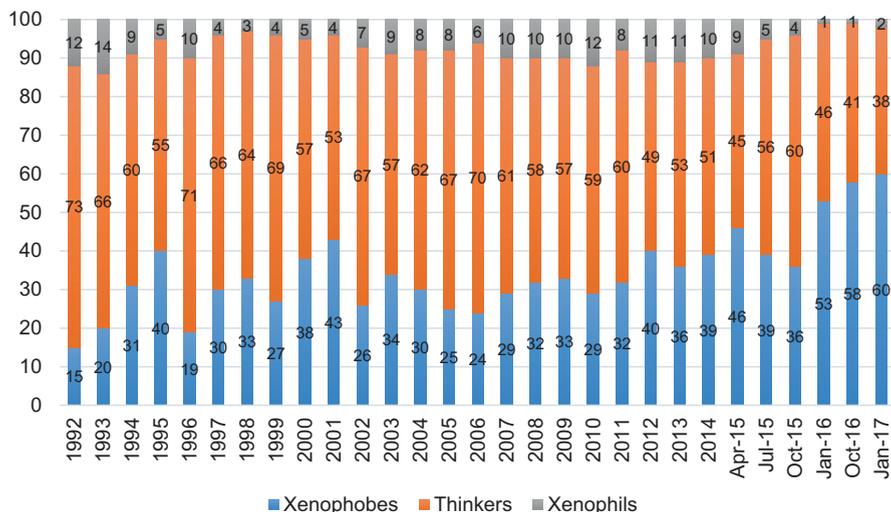
Fig. 8.1 The ratio of xenophobes, xenophiles and thinkers (I labelled as "xenophobes" are those respondents who would not admit any asylum seekers into Hungary, as "xenophiles" those who would admit all asylum seekers into Hungary, and "thinkers" as those who would consider admitting asylum seekers into the country) 1992–2017 (in per cent). (Source of data: Tárki Omnibus survey 1992–2017)

inclusion (including migrants) fear migration the least according to the data from 2014–15" (Messing and Ságvári 2018: 28).

To the best of my knowledge, relatively little attention has been paid to examining attitudes to refugees and asylum seekers in Hungary, but much more to attitudes towards migrants (e.g. the 7th Round of the European Social Survey), even though these two groups raise different concerns, especially in today's European context. The questions we used in our survey from 2016[16] addressed both groups, as the increased flow included various kinds of migrants, best labelled as a 'mixed flow' according to the UNHCR (2015).

In line with the theoretical framework presented above, we tried to separate between the two types of threats by using a simple set of anxiety-related questions. We measured *realistic threat* with two interrelated questions assessing the majority's perceived anxiety related to the volume and 'irregularity' (i.e. undocumented status) of the current migration flow arriving into Hungary and Europe. To measure *symbolic threats,* we used two questions to assess perceived anxiety related to the

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[16]The fieldwork was completed in mid-January 2016, 2 months after the Paris terror attack (13 November 2015) and right after a series of sexual assaults, allegedly perpetrated by migrants, in several German cities on New Year's Eve. The survey block on migration-related attitudes—a part of TÁRKI, Hungarian Social Research Centre's regular Omnibus survey—was based on a representative sample (by age, gender, place of residence and level of education) of 1000 adult respondents.

different cultural and religious backgrounds of migrants arriving into Hungary and Europe.

Figure 8.2 illustrates that the level of perceived threat was very high in all aspects measured, and that levels of threats are somewhat higher about the irregularity and volume of the current migration flow (realistic threat: 92–93%) than the level of fear related to the different cultural and religious background of the migrants (level of symbolic threat: 89–90%). The results of my principal component analysis (2016) underlined that the two types of mass migration-related threats were strongly related as well, and the correlation analysis revealed most of the respondents think in a similar way concerning the perceived cultural and symbolic threats to Hungary.

In the same survey we also measured how Hungarians felt about asylum seekers with different reasons for flight. Figure 8.3 shows changes in attitudes towards asylum seekers' different reasons for flight, in the order of how welcomed a given group was in October 2015 and January 2016. It is clear that respondents made a clear distinction between on the one hand those who had left their country due to (civil) war, had fled due to hunger or natural catastrophe, or with the aim of family reunion, and on the other hand those claiming asylum for other reasons such as being part of an oppressed ethnic, national or religious minority; the level of acceptance of this second group was significantly lower. In the case of those who had left their home country due to lack of work, the percentage of acceptance was very low, which means the great majority of the Hungarian adult population is not welcoming towards them at all, in line with both the Hungarian government's and the European Union's current asylum policy. A more elaborated analysis on the social basis of the symbolic and realistic threats can be found in Simonovits (2016).

Analysing the trend, it is clear that welcoming attitudes dropped dramatically between October 2015 and January 2016, in most cases by half, regardless of
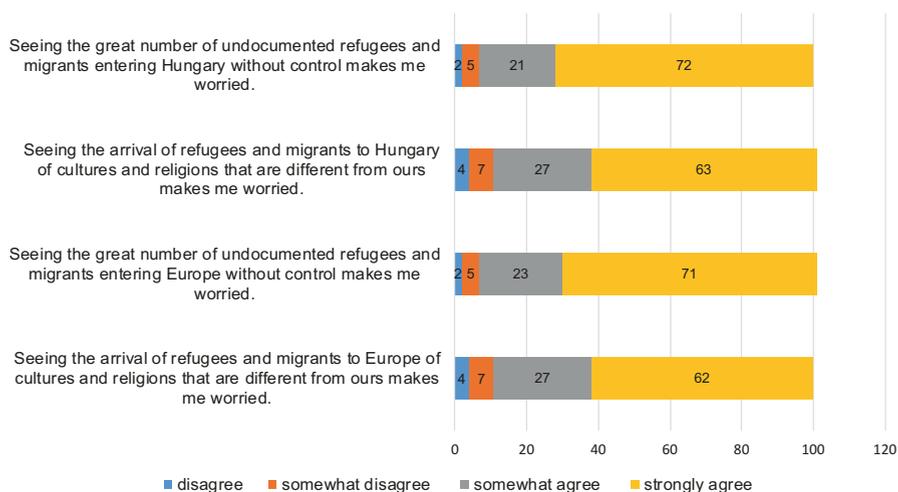

Fig. 8.2 Different components of the perceived threat from the current migration flow into Europe and Hungary (in per cent, approx. N = 980). (Source: Boda and Simonovits 2016)
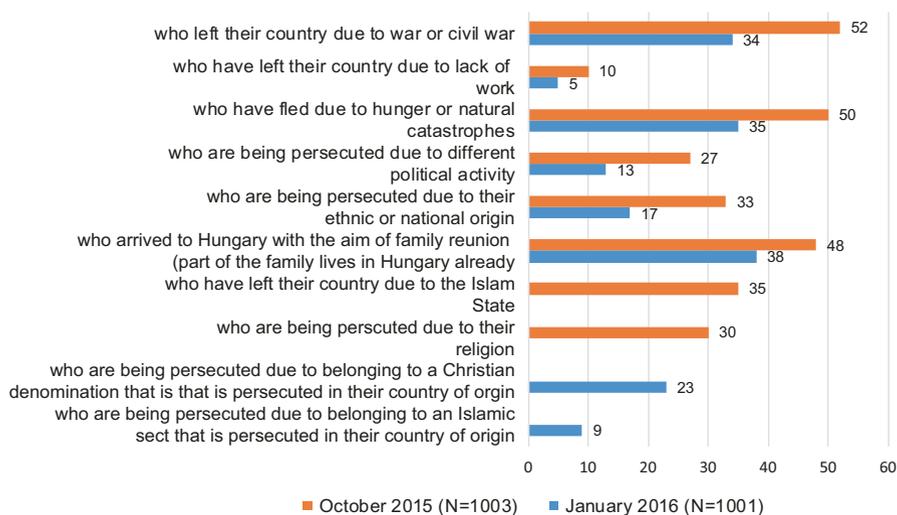
Fig. 8.3 Reasons for flight: Acceptance of different reasons for flight, in order of being welcomed ('From among the asylum seekers, should Hungary admit those…?' – those who answered "yes", in per cent, in October 2015 and January 2016). (Source: Boda and Simonovits 2016)

whether the refugees' reason for flight was war or religion. While in October 2015 more than half of the population would have accepted asylum seekers who left their country due to war or civil war, in January only one third of the respondents had a welcoming attitude towards them. The numbers are similar in the case of hunger and natural catastrophes as well (where the level of acceptance dropped from 50% to 35%), and family reunion (decreased from 48% to 38%). Moreover, the level of acceptance in the case of being persecuted due to one's ethnic or national origin dropped by half, from 33% to 17%, as well as in the case of being persecuted due to one's political activity (from 27% to 13%). The level of acceptance in the case of lack of work was almost non-existent in January 2016, while in October 2015 it was twice as high: 10%. This is perfectly in line with the Hungarian government's and the European Union's recent asylum policy. (See more on that in the qualitative analysis in Sect. 8.4).

It is worth mentioning that in the second wave (January 2016), religious affiliation was divided into two separate questions (Christians and Muslims) in order to see if there is a difference in response to each. While roughly every fourth respondent (23%) would welcome asylum seekers who are being persecuted due to belonging to a Christian denomination, only 9% responded positively in the case of Muslims.

Before shifting our attention to the qualitative results, it is worth to take a look at the Hungarian respondents' personal contacts with migrants. Based on our representative survey, the proportion of those who personally knew migrants was very low at both times we measured during the migration crisis: in October 2015 only 3%
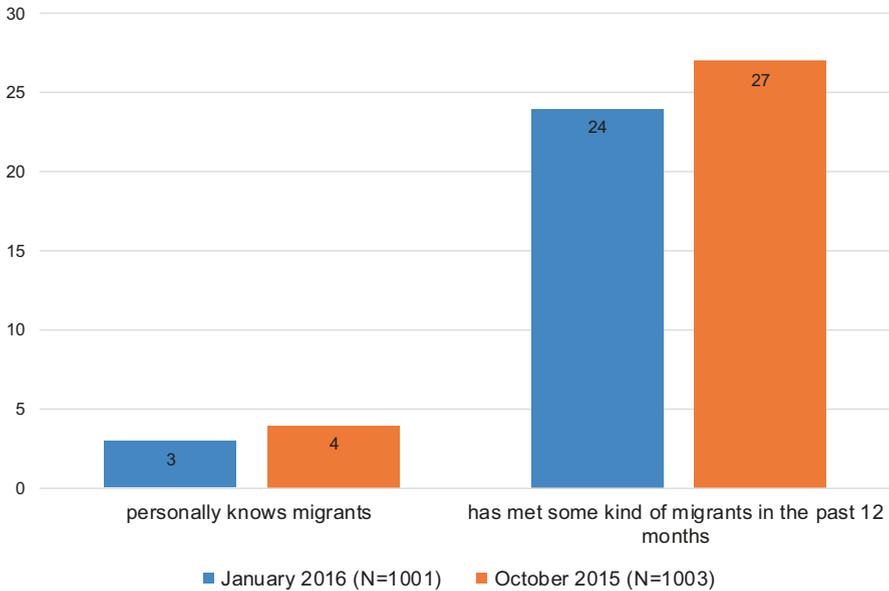
Fig. 8.4 The proportion of those who personally knew migrants and those who had met some kind of migrant in the past 12 months (in October 2015 and January 2016). (Source: Tárki omnibus survey October 2015 and January 2016)

of the Hungarians said that they personally knew any kind of migrant, and in January 2016 this proportion was 4% (Fig. 8.4).

Surprisingly, the proportion of those who had met some kind of migrant in the past 12 months was high (24% in October and 27% in January), suggesting that people interpreted this question broadly, i.e. presumably even those who only saw or passed by migrants in the past year answered "yes" to this question.

8.6 Anti-Immigrant Attitudes at the Local Level (Qualitative Analysis)

For the qualitative analysis, it must be noted that the focus groups were organised in the political climate described above, during the different waves of billboard campaigns against immigration and George Soros' pro-immigration stance. For the qualitative analysis below, I have organised the results in the following way: based on the scripts of the 12 focus groups, I first briefly discuss the respondents' level of knowledge regarding mass migration, and then focus on the different aspects of mass migration-related threats (illustrative quotations are summarised in Tables 8.1 and 8.2 by location type).

Table 8.1 Types of the perceived threats: *realistic* and *symbolic* threats expressed in the focus group discussions, by type of location (March and June 2017)

Type of the perceived threat	Szeged (Serbian-Hungarian border area)	Budapest (its 3 railway stations and their surroundings were affected to a large extent)	In locations not affected by the 2015 migration crisis
Realistic threats			
Safety (crime, terrorism, diseases)	"We were afraid of going out on the street" "I did not feel safe at the border" "I was afraid of catching diseases from them" "The mass at the border was frightening"	"It is not the older generation, but the kids of the Pakistani taxi driver that might blow us up"	"Within Hungary, only Budapest might be a potential target for terrorists" "We definitely need the border fence, though it is not strong enough"
Labour market	"They do not want to work" "We do not need them as they do not have special skills"		"They [the Chinese entrepreneurs] do not pay taxes" "Their products are of bad quality"
Welfare (social services)	"The wars and ethnic conflicts of the Middle East are not our problem"	"Mass migration means a huge burden to Europe" "We have the Roma, we do need other burdens, such as immigrants"	"Hungary's welfare system is not strong enough to accommodate large amounts of migrants"
Volume of migration, proportion of minority groups in the receiving countries	The alleged high fertility rate is perceived to be a problem; Most respondents were against an undocumented stream of migration	"Too many immigrants have arrived in Europe and also in Hungary" "They have too many kids"	"There are certain districts in Budapest, where there are a lot of them [migrants]" "Their fertility rate is much higher than ours, and this is the problem" "If family reunification is allowed, they would bring 8–10 (!) wives and their kids with them"
Symbolic threats			
Religious threats	Muslim religion and religious fanaticism: "Christians could assimilate better" "Only whites should be accepted into Hungary"	"They should respect our religion and us" "Islam aims to destroy Christianity and Western civilization"	"They are Islamists, they would behave towards us as they are used to; i.e. they rape kids and cut the hands off of 8-year-old children" "They stick to their religion"

(continued)

Table 8.1 (continued)

Type of the perceived threat	Szeged (Serbian-Hungarian border area)	Budapest (its 3 railway stations and their surroundings were affected to a large extent)	In locations not affected by the 2015 migration crisis
Cultural threats	"Their culture and their habits are the problems" "Because of their culture they would never assimilate" "They do not respect our girls and women"	"They have their own rules. It is impossible to make them adapt to the European culture" "They look dangerous"	"They would not learn our language" "If 3 or 4 families live in the same street, with their same culture and habits, they won't adapt to our behavioural patterns" "They are violent"

Note: the author's analytical framework is based on the theoretical approach developed by Stephan and Stephan originally in 1993

Table 8.2 Perceived positive impacts of mass migration, articulated in the focus group discussions, by type of location (March and June 2017)

Areas	Szeged (Serbian-Hungarian border area)	Budapest (with the largest immigrant population)	In locations not affected by the 2015 migration crisis
Labour market	–	"The Turks in the kebab shop also work hard (from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.)"	"Those who work [i.e. Arabic doctors, Chinese entrepreneurs] can stay" "The Chinese immigrants are hardworking"
Religious	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Cultural	"Only new tastes and music, nothing else is needed"	"Let's have a colourful Europe, but not at the cost of me being afraid to leave my home after dark."	"Restaurants run by migrants are acceptable, but nothing more" "We do not want to change our Coat of Arms" "The Chinese are okay. They have the money to move here"

8.6.1 General Knowledge and Attitudes About Migration and Integration

Even though the overwhelming majority of the focus group participants had hardly any personal experiences with migrants and asylum seekers, they formed quite definite and categorical views on recent immigrant groups entering Europe as well as on those who arrived into Europe in the past decades. They differentiated quite easily between forced and labour migrants, and expressed a bit more empathy towards forced migrants who had to leave their homes because of political persecution, as

well as towards Christians who had to flee their homes due their religion (in line with the quantitative results presented above).

Generally, most of the respondents had an overwhelmingly negative view of both the recent migration flow affecting Europe and the integration process. In line with the aforementioned quantitative results, focus group participants also thought that too many migrants had arrived in Europe and Hungary without a proper screening and documentation process. As far as immigrant populations in Western European countries are concerned, the participants were able to enumerate some of the countries that had experienced huge migration flows in the past decades and recently. They seemed to be well-informed about the so-called no-go zones in certain European cities as obvious signs of failure of integration policies.

It turned out that most respondents had been informed via public media channels—echoing primarily the official views of the Hungarian government's anti-immigrant rhetoric—as well as via the taxpayer-funded billboard campaign all over Hungary.[17]

Most of the respondents had some basic knowledge of the main migration trends into Europe, i.e. they were aware of the fact that certain Western European countries—most frequently Germany was mentioned—had experienced a huge migration flow since the 1960s. They were also quite certain that generally it is not the first generation of immigrants, but members of the second and third generation who might become terrorists. The dominant view was that Hungary is a small country compared to most Western European states, and thus unlikely to become a primary target of terrorist attacks. "They do not even know where we are [Hungary]; there are bigger fish in Europe" (Budapest Group, June 2017). Some of the respondents shared the view that "it is not the migrants who are responsible for the terrorist events, but bigger forces, like the European and American world powers" (Budapest Group, June 2017). In contrast, some of the respondents placed the primary emphasis on the individual dispositions (the case of Breivik was mentioned) as well as on the effects of socialisation (i.e. if someone is raised in a deprived neighbourhood), thus they did not agree with the total exclusion of Muslim migrants. We could identify a type of reasoning, making use of the social-psychological phenomenon of relative deprivation: "in Belgium, for example, second and third generation migrants don't work; they see their neighbours doing better than them… so they go bombing" (Vecsés Group, June 2017).

Comparing the Hungarian towns and cities, most of the respondents agreed that Budapest has been the most affected by migratory movements in the past decades. They claimed that "there are certain districts of Budapest where there are a lot of migrants" (Keszthely Group, June 2017). Some of the participants emphasised that the growing number of immigrants poses a challenge to public safety, and they also find this tendency problematic from a cultural point of view, i.e. they argued that if too many migrants live in a locality, their culture will become dominant. Even

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[17] See more on the content analysis of the Hungarian media by Bernáth and Messing (2015) as well as a comparison between the Austrian and Hungarian media coverage, and an analysis of the news coverage of three symbolic events in the migration crisis, by Bernáth and Messing (2016).

though we did not ask the participants to estimate the actual ratio of migrant populations in Hungary, they seemed to be overestimating the real numbers. Again, it has to be noted here that in Hungary the proportion of migrants is very low; the foreign-born population makes up 1–2% of the total population, the overwhelming majority of which are ethnic Hungarians who migrated from the neighbouring countries that used to be part of Hungary before 1920 (Gödri 2015).

Discussing the different types of migrant groups, most of the interviewees differentiated between (i) the old migrants who had lived in Hungary for decades and worked mainly as medical doctors or in other professional positions (most of which having arrived in Hungary from Northern African or Arab countries in the 1970s as students), or run their own local businesses (i.e. Asian immigrants, primarily from China or Vietnam), and (ii) the "newcomers" who are mostly perceived to be as neither useful for the economy (i.e. they do not have the proper skills) nor truly vulnerable people eligible for social welfare. We learnt this primarily in the focus groups of lower status respondents according to whose reoccurring reasoning there were Hungarians who were more in need than the Syrian refugees "wearing Nike shoes and having smartphones" (Salgótarján Group, March 2017). The following idea also emerged in several groups: "if someone is a refugee, thus fleeing from a war zone, why doesn't he stay in his home country and fight?" (Salgótarján Group, March 2017). They also argued that it is not Europe's responsibility to let the refugees in, as on their way Turkey was the first peaceful country.

8.6.2 Perceived Migration-Related Threats

Discussing welfare services provided to recognised refugees, the overwhelming majority expressed views that can be best labelled as *welfare chauvinistic*. It again has to be noted that the Hungarian government completely withdrew from integration services provided to beneficiaries of international protection in summer 2016. At certain points of the group discussions, participants drew a parallel between the Roma and the migrants in terms of both groups being "lazy" and "a threat to public safety" as well as tending to conserve their own identities and being unwilling to assimilate into Hungarian society. These ideas were primarily articulated in Salgótarján, situated in one of the most economically depressed areas of Hungary with a significant Roma population. It has to be mentioned here that Prime Minister Victor Orbán also pointed to alleged similarities between the Roma and the immigrants a number of times during the migration crisis.

As far as *labour market threats* are concerned, we learnt of two basic ideas. Regarding the *old migrants*, the hardest criticism was articulated about Chinese and Vietnamese businessmen who do not pay taxes and sell bad quality goods. However, there was not a perfect agreement in this regard: some of the respondents liked cheap Asian products. The *newcomers,* in contrast, were criticised for their "laziness" and for their lack of language (Hungarian and English) and professional skills.

As far as *symbolic threats* are concerned, the Prime Minister warned the Hungarian Parliament as well as visiting Polish politicians about Europe's possible dark future if they continued to allow more immigrants into the old continent:

> We may lose our European values—our very identity—by degrees, like the live frog allowing itself to be slowly cooked to death in a pan of water. Quite simply there will be more and more Muslims, and Europe will be transformed beyond recognition. If we are unable to change things now, we can predict with sufficient mathematical accuracy—all one needs are some mathematical calculations—what Europe's cities will look like in two or three decades (Viktor Orbán 2016).[18]

Opinions in the focus groups were formed in line with these ideas, repeating that Hungary does not need people with other cultural and religious backgrounds (see selected quotations in Table 8.1).

Summing up, the qualitative results underscored the quantitative results, as both realistic and symbolic threats by Muslim immigrants are perceived to be high in contemporary Hungary, and letting in a great amount of people with unknown identities is seen as posing a serious risk to the receiving society. Most of the arguments given by the focus group participants echoed the concepts of the government, in terms of terrorism, contagious diseases, as well as immigrants imposing a huge burden on the welfare state. As far as cultural threats are concerned, lack of language skills is perceived to be a crucial problem. Focus group participants repeatedly emphasised that the basic problem is that migrants tend to arrive in groups and live in blocks in European cities, making integration nearly impossible. Some of them added that even though they make up only a minority of the population, they tend to dominate the majority population.

In contrast, we could hardly find any positive or neutral opinions related to migration into Hungary or Europe. In Szeged, the city with direct experience of the 2015 migration crisis, we did not record a single positive statement related to immigration (see Table 8.2).

To sum up, we could hardly find any positive views with regards to the effects of migration. Most interviewees were in favour of the strict immigration policy introduced by the Hungarian government, including the 170 km-long border fence. Furthermore, they proposed building a wall similar to the one at the US-Mexico border as a more effective tool against irregular migrants.

8.7   Conclusion

To understand the Hungarian case, it is crucial to re-emphasise that a new era in asylum policy began in 2015, at the beginning of the recent migration crisis, which manifested itself in a different approach to the provision of reception conditions as

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[18] See the whole speech on the official page of the Hungarian Government at: http://www.kormany.hu/en/the-prime-minister/the-prime-minister-s-speeches/prime-minister-viktor-orban-s-address-in-parliament-before-the-start-of-daily-business20160912.

well as a dismantling of integration services.[19] As a result, in the last few years, the permanent, better-equipped reception facilities have been replaced with temporary centres offering less favourable reception conditions. Since 2016, asylum seekers have been systematically detained in transit zones, which are in remote locations, built into the border fence. Furthermore, the vulnerabilities of asylum seekers have been systematically ignored—most importantly, unaccompanied minors over 14 years of age are also detained in the transit zones. From early 2016 the monthly cash allowance that asylum seekers were given to spend how they wished, as well as the school-enrolment benefits previously provided to asylum seekers, were withdrawn.[20]

These developments have had an increasingly serious effect on asylum seekers trying to find refuge in Hungary. Moreover, the dismantled integration services and further negative changes in family unification rules have discouraged recognised refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection from staying in Hungary for the long term. So I can conclude that the pronounced aim of the Hungarian government has been to stop the immigration of irregular TCNs into Hungary. The above-mentioned policy changes have been accompanied by an extensive anti-immigrant campaign since early 2015, and an elaborated moral panic (related to the threats of mass migration) in Hungarian society. In light of these developments, it is not surprising that the empirical research could barely find support for refugee reception among the Hungarian population.

The quantitative and qualitative results were mostly in line with each other. The overwhelming majority of the Hungarian population is absolutely dismissive towards any kind of migrants (either forced or voluntary). According to the latest representative survey results, 6 out of 10 Hungarians would not let any asylum seekers into the country, and during the focus group discussions there were rarely narratives in favour of either labour migration or forced migration into the country. Based on the complex analysis conducted here, I can conclude that perceived threats—both realistic and symbolic—have real consequences, regardless of whether or not the perceptions of threats are accurate.

Most Hungarians were able to differentiate between different types of migrant groups. There seemed to be a contradiction however: on the one hand—based on the quantitative results—respondents felt more solidarity towards *forced* migrants; on the other hand—based on the qualitative results—out of the main immigrant groups, the Chinese, were always mentioned as most acceptable. One reasoning behind that was that Chinese immigrants do not impose a burden on the Hungarian welfare state (as they run their own businesses) and they are not perceived to be a threat either in a realistic or a cultural way. Asked about forced migrants from war zones or those fleeing from natural catastrophes, roughly one third of the respondents expressed

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[19] Similar tendencies were also observed in other European countries (see Chaps. 3, 4 and 5 of this volume).

[20] For more details see the Hungarian Helsinki Committee (2017).

their theoretical solidarity, but based on the qualitative results the overwhelming majority of the Hungarian population did not express welcoming attitudes towards these groups either.

All in all, it is obvious that migrants who are Muslims are rejected to a large extent, as they are perceived by Hungarians as presenting both a *realistic* and a *symbolic* threat. The overwhelming majority of the group interviewees shared the opinion that Islam is a violent and domineering religion (i.e. aiming at taking control), and that Muslim migrants are unable to integrate into European societies. Our qualitative results showed how the key messages of the official public discourse were echoed in the groups, as well as how successfully and efficiently the moral panic has reached its target population. However, it has to be mentioned that the findings derived from the qualitative research have low external validity, as the number of observations was rather low (approx. 100 respondents) and not representative of the Hungarian adult population.

Appendices

Appendix 8.1
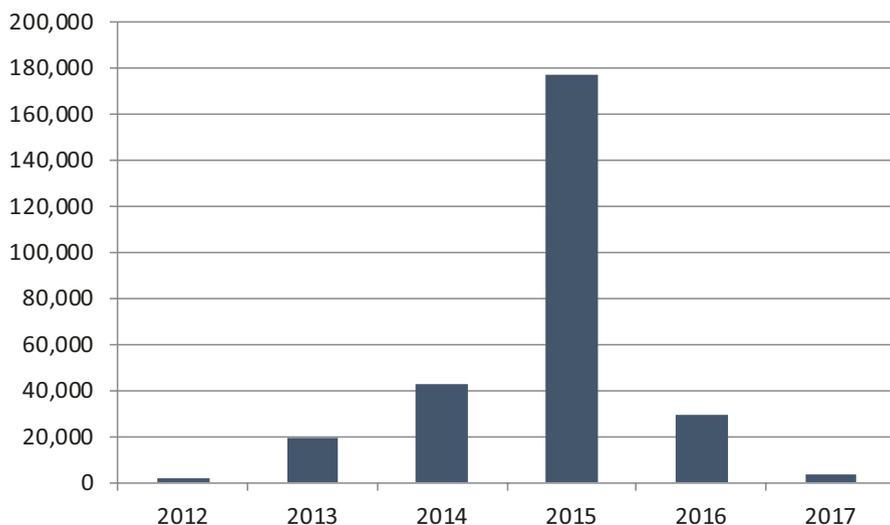
Number of asylum applications (2009–2017). (Source: Hungarian Helsinki Committee 2017)

Appendix 8.2

Composition and Locations of the Focus Groups Held in Hungary in 2017

Wave 1: Composition and locations of the focus groups, in Hungary in March 2017

No.	Name of the location	Date of the focus group	Gender	Age	Social status[a]	Attitude towards migration
1.	Budapest	8 March	heterogeneous	60+	middle	very dismissive
2.	Budapest	8 March	heterogeneous	25–60	high	rather dismissive
3.	Salgótarján (north-eastern part of Hungary)	14 March	heterogeneous	25–35	low	very dismissive
4.	Salgótarján (north-eastern part of Hungary)	14 March	heterogeneous	35–60	middle	rather dismissive
5.	Szeged (Serbian border zone)	10 March	heterogeneous	25–35	middle	very dismissive
6.	Szeged (Serbian border zone)	10 March	heterogeneous	35–60	low	rather dismissive

[a]Based on a complex definition of the level of education and the financial status of the respondent. Screening questionnaires assessing both social status and attitudes towards immigration can be sent upon further request

Wave 2: Composition and locations of the focus groups, in Hungary in July 2017

| No.	Name of the location	Date of the focus group	Gender	Age	Level of education[a]	Attitude towards migration
7.	Budapest	24 July	heterogeneous	60+	middle	very dismissive
8.	Budapest	24 July	heterogeneous	25–60	high	rather dismissive
9.	Vecsés (in the agglomeration of Budapest)	26 July	heterogeneous	25–35	low	very dismissive
10.	Vecsés (in the agglomeration of Budapest)	26 July	heterogeneous	36–60	middle	rather dismissive
11.	Keszthely (south-western region of Hungary)	27 July	heterogeneous	25–35	middle	very dismissive
12.	Keszthely (south-western region of Hungary)	27 July	heterogeneous	36–60	low	rather dismissive

[a]Based on a complex definition of the level of education and the financial status of the respondent. Screening questionnaires assessing both social status and attitudes towards immigration can be sent upon further request

The Geographical Location of the Focus Groups Held in Hungary in 2017
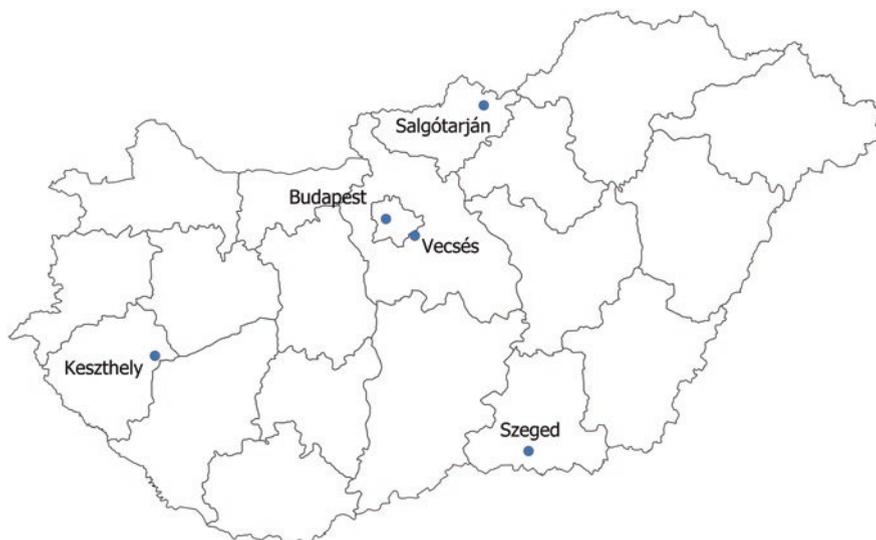
GeoData from gadm.org (counties) and OpenStreetMap (cities)

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Part III
Local Practices of Refugee Integration

Chapter 9
Diverging Perspectives on "Integration" in the Vocational Education System: Evidence from an East German Periphery

Birgit Glorius and Anne-Christin Schondelmayer

9.1 Introduction

In 2015, around 890,000 asylum seekers reached Germany, the majority of them aged 25 and younger (BMI 2016: 15). Among them, there were a large number of children and adolescents under 18 who had the fundamental right to receive (and also the duty to attend) school education. Due to years of war in their home countries or a poor educational system, many of them had received limited years of schooling and thus lagged behind their age peers in Germany who had pursued a continuous educational biography. This is also true for the large groups of young adults under 25, who could not finish their degree programmes in their home countries and now needed opportunities to catch up. This chapter presents results from an empirical case study carried out in 2016 in two vocational schools in a remote, rural district of East Germany. During the last decades, the region had experienced population losses rather than net migration, and there were few experiences with the integration of foreigners. Even though theoretical knowledge and concepts existed, they were not embedded in the actual experience of teachers and headteachers.

Our research aimed to evaluate the practical implementation of a programme for continuous language education, which had been used for the integration of migrant children for a long time. However, its implementation with a group of young refugees who entered the German school system at the ages of 14–17 was rather novel. During the year of our research, we accompanied stakeholders who collected and

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reflected upon first experiences, and observed the development of structures and regulations for this educational field and this specific group. In this chapter, we will first show how the implementation and outcome of the concept is linked to the interpretation of stakeholders on site, who are not always ready to apply conceptual approaches that were developed without consultation with them. Second, we will highlight that the definition of integration not only varies on an individual level, but that it is entangled with social positions and roles. Third, we will show how the specifics of the locality affect integration processes, taking into account regional characteristics like the shape of the labour market, population structures, and perceptions of and public discourses on migration and asylum.

To tackle those aspects, we address the following guiding questions:

What idea of "integration" is present in the narration of the main stakeholders?
How is this interpretation framed?
How do varying interpretations of "integration" influence the practices of integration?

In order to address these questions, we will first elaborate upon the notion of "integration" from the perspective of various disciplines and their development (Sect. 9.2). Section 9.3 will address the policies and regulations for the education of migrant children and recent policy changes due to the arrival of refugees. Section 9.4 discusses the regional settings of our case study, our research methodology and implementation, and Sect. 9.5 turns to the results of our case study, which are discussed and generalized within a wider explanatory frame in the final section (9.6).

9.2 Perspectives on Integration and Its Implications for Educational Planning

The notion of "integration" has manifold meanings and interpretations, which vary throughout societal groups, professions, and over time. Generally speaking, integration means the connection of single parts within a system, like for example a social system. When all parts are connected with each other, the system can be understood as being a whole and can be identified by its clear delimitations with respect to other systems (Esser 2000). Following social theory, the differentiation between the systemic level and the actors' level is of crucial importance for understanding integration processes. While system integration, according to Lockwood (1964: 245), means "the orderly or conflictful relationships between the parts", social integration characterizes "the orderly or conflictful relationships between the actors" of a social system. Social psychology uses the term integration for the description of intergroup relations (Berry 1984). Pettigrew (1988) defines "integration" as "intergroup interaction that involves social processes that facilitate both intragroup integrity and intergroup relations" (Pettigrew 1988: 19). Both social theory and social psychology stress the importance of social structures and human (individual or group) interactions for the process of integration. More specifically, social theory distinguishes three main mechanisms of social integration:

1. culturation, which means that the actors need to acquire specific knowledge and competences (like language skills) to get into contact with other actors;
2. placement, which means the assignment of a specific social position; and
3. interaction, which means the mutual orientation of actors with the help of shared knowledge, symbols, daily communication and emotions.

Following the mechanisms of social integration, schools seem to be the ideal place for integration processes, as they offer knowledge and skills which are relevant for integration, and provide an overall accepted social identity (as students) to their members, as well as opportunities for interaction in a shared environment.

In the context of migration, the term "integration" is frequently equated with "assimilation", especially in political and public discourse (Bowskill et al. 2007, Hersi 2014), or when referring to specific aspects like culture and religion (see Schneider and Crul 2010:1145). This perspective is criticized from the field of pedagogics, because those framings of both assimilation and integration are based on the assumption of a deficient "other", who can only enter a given structure by abandoning his/her own norms, values and habits, and instead adopting the norms and values of the host society. It also denies ongoing societal changes, which result in a higher social divergence and the creation of new identities. The assimilation approach conceptualizes the host society as a homogeneous entity, which is threatened by the addition of other, foreign cultures. Thus, already existing differences in the host society are neglected (Nohl 2010: 17ff). In this perspective, integration is a process of determining and distinguishing between the inside and the outside, the "we" and the "other", or the "local" and the "stranger" (Riegel 2009: 24), and therefore contributes to a process of exclusive identification and essentialization.

Taking a transatlantic comparative perspective on discourses and processes of migration and integration, Schneider and Crul (2010) point to the varying interpretation of the terms "assimilation" and "integration" in the US and Europe. In the US, the term assimilation refers to the idea that all groups of immigrants and their offspring can become similar ("the mainstream"), which basically means to be incorporated into a dynamically developing system (like the immigrant society of the nineteenth and early twentieth century). "Studying 'successful 'assimilation' thus has mainly meant to measure the degree of incorporation into patterns of economic and social 'success'" (Schneider and Crul 2010: 1144). In the European context, on the other hand, this dynamic and inclusionary perspective of "assimilation", especially in terms of economic performance, is often overlooked. "European 'integration' predominantly carries the implicit ideal of (a minimum degree of) cultural homogeneity especially referring to language as a prerequisite for social cohesion" (ibd.) Also, Schneider and Crul (2010) highlight the different traditions of social politics in the US and Europe. While in the US a neoliberal economy with low regulatory influences and a high self-determination of the individual prevails, the (Western) European context is especially characterized by a strong welfare state with a high number of regulations and specific policies aiming to overcome group inequalities and integrate strangers. In this framing, the term "integration" fits better, as it more explicitly includes structural aspects of incorporation into society than "assimilation" (ibd.: 1145).

Since the late twentieth century, the transnational paradigm in migration research challenges the traditional approaches of migration and integration. The term "transnationalism" reflects migrants' lived realities, which are characterized by the expansion of their individual reference frame and social relations beyond borders, thus creating a transnational social space (Pries 1996). These processes cannot be adequately addresses by dualistic models of inclusion and exclusion, such as in traditional assimilationist approaches. Pries (2003: 32) therefore suggests an expanded model of social incorporation as an open-ended social process of economic, cultural, political and social interdependence for migrants at the local, regional, national and transnational levels. In the context of ongoing globalization and a multitude of migration processes, he argues, nation states cannot uphold models of homogenization or dominant integration paradigms any more, but should prepare for flexible processes and results of incorporation (ibd.: 33, see also Treibel 1999: 151). Incorporation in this sense entails the negotiation of self-perceptions and external perceptions, which requires a certain level of openness from all actors involved. This is in line with the post-migration paradigm, which points to societal negotiation processes that acknowledge the (irreversible) realities of immigration countries with high levels of diversity and the concomitant necessity to adapt regulatory structures, institutions and political cultures to those new realities (Foroutan 2015). However, the post-migration paradigm is more radical in challenging the conventional understanding of migration and in problematizing racist practices. In relation to educational issues, the turn towards open-ended modes of incorporation would involve a change of perspectives: Rather than asking how students need to adapt to an educational system, we would have to explore the adaptation of schools to respond to the individuality and resources of their students. This perspective brings the notion of "inclusion" to the fore—an educational approach that aims to acknowledge differing but equal ways of life on the basis of formal regulations and structural adaptations (Georgi 2015: 26). The notion of inclusion thus also implies the acknowledgement of diversity.

9.3 The Positioning of Foreign and Asylum-Seeking Students in the German Educational System

9.3.1 Development of "Foreigner Education" in Germany

The German educational system is traditionally constituted as a monolingual school system and is associated with a homogeneous and monolingual nation-state concept (Gogolin 2010: 303).[1] Questions of migration, social plurality and multilingualism were considered rather late in educational planning and politics. It was not until

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[1] In Germany, the governance of education is organized on the level of the 16 states, which results in a considerable variation regarding educational trajectories and school types. A good overview can be found at https://www.schulsystem.info/bildungssystem.html

1964 that the compulsory education regulation was extended to foreign children, even though many children of the so-called "guest workers" already lived in West Germany, and it took many more years until the specifics of educating children with foreign backgrounds and non-native German speakers were seriously considered in the educational planning process (Herwartz-Emden 2007: 12). At the end of the 1960s, preparatory classes for foreigners were established in West Germany, followed by curricular developments for German as a second language, but also for the support of the children's native language, which was mainly constituted as a preparation for the anticipated return of guest workers and their families to their country of origin (Baur et al. 2004: 162). During the 1980s and 1990s, as a reaction to the numerous arrivals of ethnic German repatriates ("*Spätaussiedler*") and their offspring, differentiated curricula were developed for German as a second language. These curricula also established measures for labour market orientation and preparation, as well as issues of general social integration (Kühn and Gawlick 1994). In what was then the German Democratic Republic (GDR), however, specific integration programmes for migrant children were not provided. After the re-unification, most East German states adopted the West German system of stepwise integration and installed integration classes for migrant children. In the 2000s, all federal states harmonized educational planning processes in this regard and developed curricula for German as a second language, and corresponding training programmes for teachers. However, the development of an educational infrastructure for foreign minors and adults varied due to the differing shares of foreigners and changing migration processes. This is especially true for the East German states, which have a significantly lower share of population with a migration background than West German states (6.8 vs. 26.5% in 2017) (StBA 2018). While in the 1990s a considerable infrastructure was established for the education of ethnic Germans and other migrants, this infrastructure was dismantled during the 2000s due to reduced arrival numbers of "Spätaussiedler" and asylum seekers (see Glorius 2008: 87f).

9.3.2 Organizational Aspects of the German School System and the Placement of Migrant Children

In general, the German school system provides 9–10 years (depending on state laws) of compulsory full-time education, followed by compulsory vocational education, which terminates when 12 years of schooling have been reached or when the student turns 18. Above the age of 18, students have the right to continue schooling in order to complete their secondary education, either in a "*Gymnasium*" which terminates with the university entrance exam, or in a vocational school, which offers general and specialized education, usually accompanied by a vocational traineeship (Fig. 9.1).

Migrant children have the same rights and obligations as non-migrant children. They receive special support to develop German language skills, mostly via preparatory classes. From there, children can gradually switch to the regular classes as
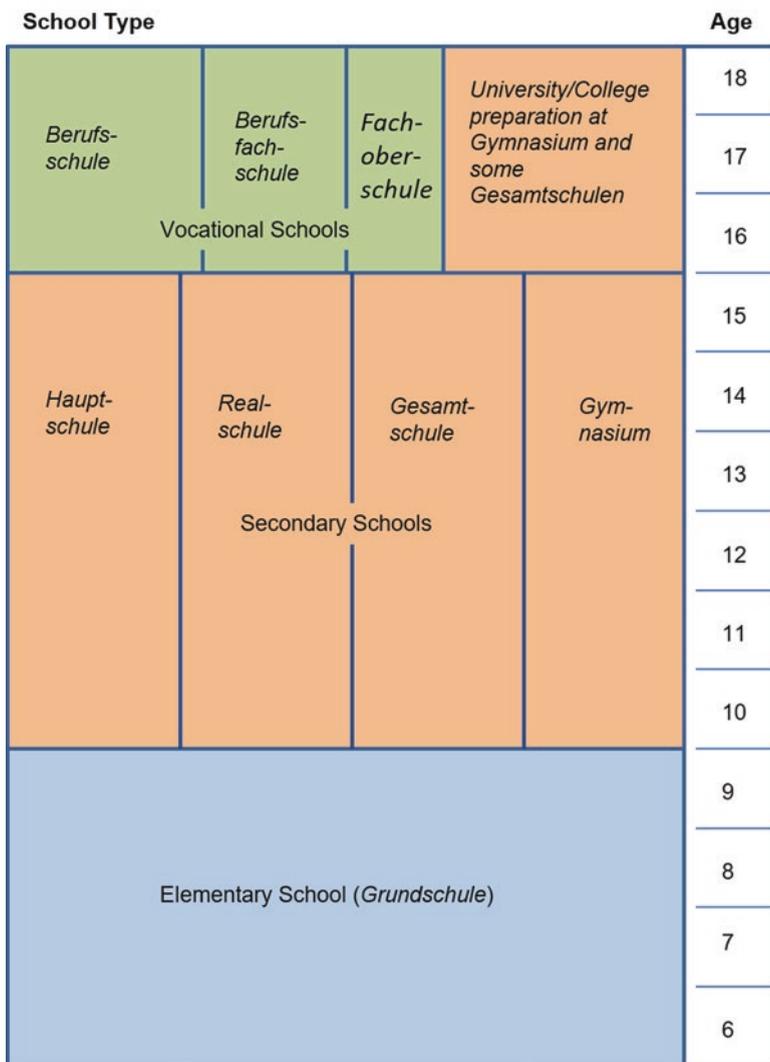
Fig. 9.1 Structure of the German educational system. (Source: HowtoGermany, at https://www.howtogermany.com/pages/germanschools.html)

soon as their language competencies are sufficient (Mercator-Institut 2015: 44ff). The success of this integration path is – among other factors – dependent on the educational age of migrant children. While children who arrive at elementary school age (6–9) have good opportunities to catch up, the situation of children who start at a later educational age is more difficult, as the German school system in most states starts with differentiated educational tracks at the age of 10 (see Fig. 9.1). Thus, most immigrant children at secondary school age are allocated to a secondary

school that prepares for a minor educational exam (age 15 or 16 – after 9 or 10 years of schooling) rather than being enrolled at secondary schools preparing for the university entrance exam (age 18, after 12–13 years of schooling). As a consequence, children who arrive at the ages of 15 or 16 – especially those with interrupted educational biographies – are unlikely to learn German <u>and</u> integrate into the regular classes until tenth grade, and thus often leave secondary school without a secondary certificate.

Preparatory classes at vocational schools focus on 16- to 18-year-old students, who are perceived to be too old to integrate in regular secondary school classes. The 1-year preparatory programmes at vocational schools serve two goals: (1) they provide full-time education so that minors can fulfil their compulsory school education; and (2) they not only offer intensive German lessons but also a first orientation in the German labour market system, for example vocational education programmes. A vocational apprenticeship provides training on the job on the basis of a work contract with a specific employer. Parallel to this, trainees receive part-time education in a vocational school in order to prepare for the Chamber of Commerce exams after the termination of their 2–3 year apprenticeship.

9.3.3   Education for Refugee Students – Quantitative Development and Qualitative Results

Regarding asylum-seeking children, federal education laws follow the EU Reception Directive 2013/33/EU (in particular Article 14 (2)), which determines that access to the educational system must be granted no later than 3 months after an application for international protection has been made. Also, minors must be offered preparatory and language courses. The implementation of this directive is handled differently in the German states. For pragmatic reasons, allocation to a school only starts after a minor has left the first reception centre and has been allocated to a municipality, where they live during the asylum application process (Mercator Institut 2015: 37).

After years of rather moderate immigration to Germany and declining numbers of immigrant children requiring preparatory education, immigration numbers started to increase in 2007, due to increasing inner-European mobility and the arrival of refugees. And then, in 2015, Germany had 2.14 million arrivals, among them around 890,000 asylum seekers. Regarded by age groups, children and young adults under 25 were the highest share: 42.9% of all immigrants, and 55.9% of all asylum seekers (those who submitted an asylum application) (BAMF 2016: 21f). This high increase of young immigrants resulted in a rapid expansion of preparatory classes. In the state of Saxony where our case study is located, the number of students in preparatory classes more than doubled from 3751 to 7531 during the winter term 2015–2016, and the number of preparatory classes increased from 290 at the beginning of the

school year to 469 in March 2016, of which 189 classes were located in elementary schools, 151 in secondary schools and 122 in vocational schools (Kelch 2016).

Between 2014 and 2018, a large amount of instantaneous research was carried out, delivering a first overview of major problems and issues at stake regarding the educational integration of asylum seeking students of higher age. A number of studies criticise the curricula for adolescent refugee students in vocational schools, which are mainly oriented towards language acquisition rather than general educational content, and thus leave the students ill prepared for vocational training or labour market integration (Gag and Schroeder 2014, Heinrichs et al. 2016, Paulsen et al. 2016, Vogel and Stock 2017). This is also reflected by labour market actors such as the Bavarian Industry Association, who assert that current preparatory training in vocational schools for refugee students is inadequate (vbw 2016: 242). A study from Hamburg shows how vocational schools struggle with unsuitable curricula for the vocational schooling of refugees and plea for educational approaches that are better connected to the social environment of the students (Gag and Schroeder 2014: 30).

One reason for those narrowed curricula is found in the organisation of foreigner education as such, which views preparatory language classes as a starting point, followed by stepwise integration into ordinary classes. However, as adolescent refugees can only be enrolled in schools for a limited time, due to age restrictions, they rarely reach the point of integration into ordinary classes with a regular curriculum. "While student interviews show that they appreciate the welcoming atmosphere and individualised attention in preparatory German classes, they also indicate that they miss 'real' school where they can learn subjects" (Vogel and Stock 2017: 24). Bauer and Schreyer (2016) therefore suggest a prolongation of educational opportunities above compulsory school age.

Several studies stress the significance of social contact among age peers with and without refugee backgrounds for integration success and overall well-being (Gurski and Rother 2018, Metzner et al. 2018). A study among refugee students in North Rhine-Westphalia showed that those students who were able to establish contacts with Germans outside the classroom had fewer difficulties integrating in class than those without contacts (Gurski and Rother 2018: 179). A study from a vocational school in Lower Saxony revealed that students who had continuous contact with German peers of the same age group and who were able to establish social bonds within their neighbourhood showed much higher life satisfaction (Behrensen 2007: 53).

Organisational issues are also touched upon in the recent studies, due to the multitude of actors in the field of asylum and education. Among other issues, long commuting distances from refugee accommodation facilities to schools (especially in rural regions), forced secondary mobility of refugee students resulting in re-allocation to other schools, as well as general uncertainties regarding residency and work permits for refugees, are mentioned as obstacles towards long-term integration. However, there is a great interest in integrating refugees in vocational programmes, notably in regions which are lacking a qualified labour force (Speer and Klaus 2015, Braun and Simons 2016, Scheiermann and Walther 2016). Furthermore, Heinrichs et al. (2016: 235) found problems with different cultural ideas as well as

racism and rejection, and stressed the important role of headteachers in paving the way towards systemic integration of refugee classes in the vocational schools.

Wrapping up this section, we can say that in Germany's educational integration there has been a traditional focus on language proficiency, based on a perception of a linguistically homogeneous nation state. Regarding the layout of the educational system, there is a large and sometimes confusing variety of school types, educational programmes and regulations, which are due to the federal organisation of the state. It is obvious that the rapid increase of refugees of educational age, notably those near adolescence, challenged the existing approaches of system integration, which only proved partly ready to cope with the number and the needs of the migrants.

While this overview of existing studies has highlighted general problems, our case study will give deeper insight into the complexity of approaches, practices, and perceptions of integration.

9.4   Case Study Background and Research Methodology

9.4.1   Case Study Background

Our case study was carried out in two vocational schools in the county of Erzgebirgskreis, a peripheral, mountainous area on the border with the Czech Republic. Due to its rural and mountainous features, the region is sparsely populated: 347,665 inhabitants live in an area of 1827.9 km^2. There are 61 municipalities, the largest being the county capital Annaberg-Buchholz with 20,426 inhabitants. There are six other towns with populations of between 11,000 and 18,000 inhabitants; the other municipalities are rather small, scattered settlements with poor public infrastructure, especially in terms of public transport. Like many other peripheral regions, the county of Erzgebirgskreis has suffered from population losses for decades. Especially younger adults leave the region in order to attend university or to settle in larger agglomerations, which are perceived as more attractive. However, the region is economically quite strong: it has a historic tradition of mining which laid the foundation for many other industrial sectors, such as manufacturing. In 2013, the county had 5000 small and medium-sized companies and 108,625 employees; unemployment is low, and in June 2016 there were more than 2600 open job positions. Regarding further demographic development of the county, there are serious concerns about the availability of a skilled labour force in the near future (Wirtschaftsförderung Erzgebirge 2014: 35). Accordingly, the recruitment of skilled workers, in particular in the context of vocational training, has a great significance for the future development of the region.

Due to population decline in the county and general restructuring processes following German re-unification, the structure of the public administration and the educational infrastructure has been reorganized several times. The county of

"Erzgebirgskreis" was formed in 2008 by the fusion of four former (and smaller) counties. Also the system of state schools was reorganized several times, as a reaction to declining student numbers, but also due to changes in the economic structure which translated into students' vocational choices. At the time of writing (2018), there are three vocational schools, which are each scattered over several locations (as they served as independent schools in former times). Our two case study schools operate at five locations at a distance of between 20 and 45 km from each other, which constitutes a significant burden for the daily organization of lessons.

While the migration balance of the German population in Erzgebirgskreis has been negative for years, the number of foreigners has shown net gains since 2013. Foreigners also contribute positively to the age balance: in 2015, 37% of the district's foreign population was younger than 25, and only 4% were 60 years or older. From 2014 to 2015, the number of foreign children under 15 years old and adolescents between 15 and 25 years old doubled, mainly due to the arrival of asylum seekers in the county.

The extraordinary dynamics of international immigration are also reflected in changes in the duration of residency: While in 2013, 16% of foreigners had resided less than 1 year in Erzgebirgskreis and 22% between 1 and 4 years, in 2015 these shares increased to 40.5% and 24.6%, respectively. Those dynamics already shed light on the major challenges regarding the organizational aspects of education. Furthermore, as data from February 2015 suggests, asylum seekers were widely distributed across the county and resided in 39 of the 61 municipalities. For refugees who attended classes at the vocational schools, this meant sometimes extraordinarily long and strenuous commutes on public buses.

9.4.2 Research Methodology

Our study took place throughout 2016 and mainly reflects the school year 2015–2016, which was strongly influenced by the large numbers of arrivals during the summer of 2015 and concomitant reactions. During our research, new preparatory classes were formed, new teachers were engaged, new problems emerged and a number of sometimes contradictory regulations came into force. Our study was commissioned by the State Ministry of Culture and aimed to evaluate the educational practices in the preparatory classes focusing on the process of teaching and studying German. As the former curricula for preparatory classes aimed at children and younger students, our evaluation was meant to bring about suggestions of how to adapt the curriculum to the needs of more adolescent students.

Our research sites were suggested by our contractors. Both vocational schools had large and scattered campuses and offered a large variety of educational and vocational degrees,[2] most of them as part-time classes. One school had 954 stu-

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[2] For example in bakery, gastronomy, metal construction, automotive electronics or sanitary installation.

dents, among them 53 asylum-seeking students in preparatory classes; the other had 1717, among them 73 asylum-seeking students, mainly from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Syria and Kosovo. During the year of our research, the number of asylum seeking students increased to 72 and 108, respectively, and there was a relatively high fluctuation among the students, due to changing statuses in the asylum application process, opening and closing of group accommodation facilities, or changing regulations that excluded students older than 18 from the lessons. One of the school campuses operated a boarding house for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers who attended the preparatory class on campus.

We started our research in February 2016 with field visits to both campuses and informal talks with the staff. Between February and June 2016 we carried out 11 expert interviews with the headteacher and teachers on both campuses, as well as six interviews with representatives of the school authority and other relevant stakeholders. For the expert interviews, we used an interview guideline that addressed the status quo of integration practices, success factors and difficulties, and left room for specific aspects that were of relevance for the interviewees. Furthermore, we attended lessons of the preparatory classes and a social event on campus and carried out participant observation, three group discussions and three guided interviews (in English and German) with the refugee students. Group discussions with the refugee students followed a participatory approach and were supported by visualizing tools in order to bridge language difficulties (see Fig. 9.2). During the sessions, the students were asked to evaluate their school programme with respect to structures, content, interaction with teachers and social aspects. Furthermore, we motivated them to thematise their future career aspirations, taking into account relevant framing factors such as status determination and secondary mobility for the purpose of family reunification. All interviews were taped and transcribed, and the informal talks and participant observations were documented in a research diary.

Our analysis followed the documentary method by Karl Mannheim, which has its foundations in the sociology of knowledge and praxeological approaches (Przyborski and Wohlrab-Sahr 2014). It aims to reconstruct collective orientations and the "modus operandi" of a specific field of action, which can be extracted during the interpretation process (Bohnsack et al. 2010). First, the topical sequences of each transcript were documented. In a second step, relevant passages for interpretation were selected. Those passages were reformulated in order to reveal the inherent meaning of what had been said. The next step entailed reflective interpretation, which aimed to uncover the action orientation embedded in the narration. In particular, this involved the explanation of the frameworks of orientations and habitus formations. One strategy of interpretation was to search for the limits and opportunities for action and to assess the potential for action from the perspective of the interviewees. By contrasting those action orientations and action potentials, collective orientations as well as diverging orientations and practices and their substantiation came to the fore.
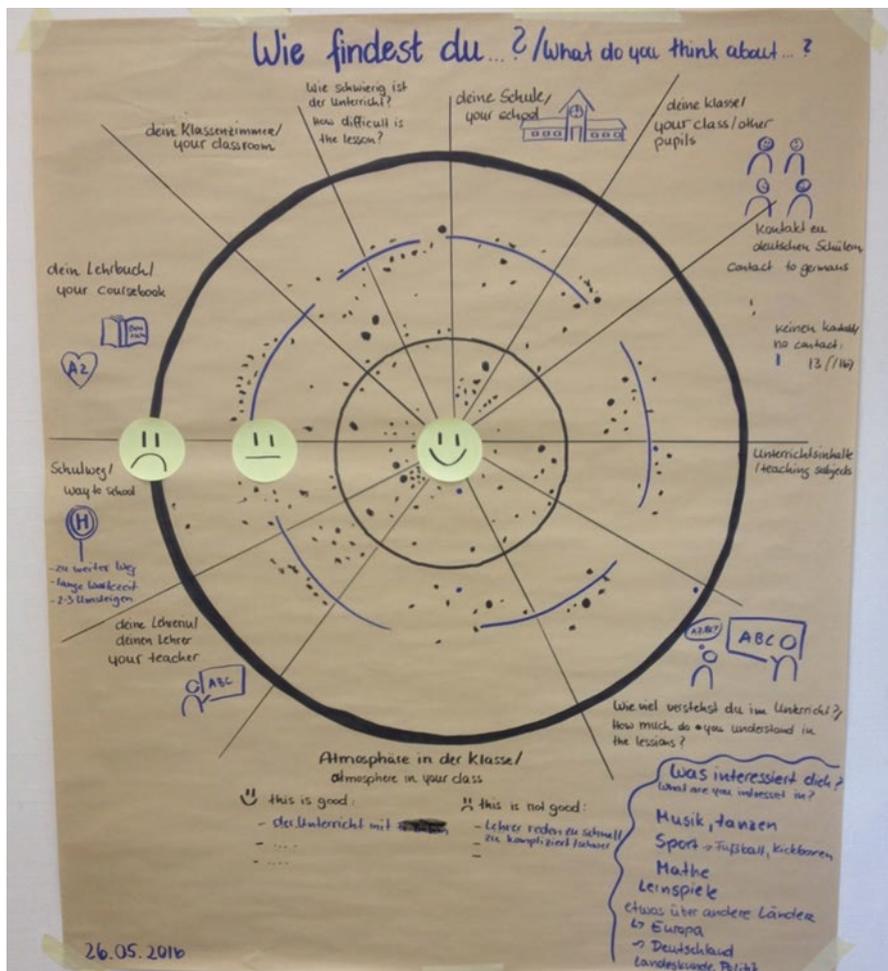
**Fig. 9.2** Visualization tool for in-class evaluation. (Source: author's photo)

9.5 Results

From the perspectives of the interviewed groups of actors, we can differentiate three perspectives on integration: headteachers and school authorities focus on organizational aspects, teachers concentrate on language and classroom situations, while the students highlight aspects of social integration on and off campus.

9.5.1 Integration as an Organizational Challenge

From an organizational point of view, the integration of asylum-seeking students in 2015 was a new coordination task for the respective schools and was, at the time of our study, still under development. From the perspective of the school authorities, the formation of those preparatory classes and their integration into the structure of the school was the main integration task

> because, integration, in my understanding, not only means participation of individual students at the regular lessons, but it means integrating a class within the school system. (Representative of Regional School Authority, interviewed 12/02/2016, lines 13–18)

The headteachers of the vocational schools mainly focused on material issues in the preparation of those new classes, such as buying school books and dictionaries, as well as special equipment for the practical lessons, for example safety goggles for the welding shop. Possible consequences for the existing staff and students, such as xenophobic reactions or conflicts about scarce resources, were barely considered. Thus, the preparations did not include the school as a whole. It was not considered to unite the staff for the task of refugee integration, and likewise the German students were not prepared for integrating their new peers.

Hence, the class teachers of preparatory classes reported being left alone with all integration issues that needed cooperation with the "regular" teachers. This concerned for example the stepwise integration of refugee students in the practical lessons of "regular" classes (which was often refused by the instructors due to scarce capacities and the priority for trainees who were preparing for exams), the participation of refugees in internships (which required some extra engagement in terms of work permits or insurance, due to varying statuses), or practical questions regarding physical education (gender issues or lack of sports clothes). As a consequence, while the organization of systems integration was perceived as the duty of the headteacher, the social integration of the refugee students relied on the individual engagement of the preparatory classes' teachers. They usually reached out to other individual teachers who they knew were responsive to their requests, whereas some other teachers refused to teach "foreigners" at all.

> Then I take the path of least resistance and approach those colleagues who I know will make the effort to integrate them [the refugee students], because that's not always easy. (preparatory class teacher, interviewed 08/02/2016, lines 613–615)

Some interviewees gave the impression that the preparatory classes' teachers and their work was perceived as marginal and not the subject of joint efforts.

With the end of the school year approaching, the question of future steps became more pressing for both school representatives and refugee students. While the students sometimes expressed very high educational goals and asked us researchers about possible pathways into university, teachers and representatives of the school

authority were less optimistic about their future perspectives. They anticipated that, due to a lack of German language proficiency and general knowledge and skills, students would need further educational support to achieve a vocational degree. A number of problems were caused by the regulations for labour market access: for most apprenticeships, a secondary school certificate and a German language certificate are obligatory, neither of which were offered in the preparatory classes. This was also criticized by one teacher, who anticipated

> that we are producing stockpiles, so to say: they have learned German, but then they cannot make anything out of it. (preparatory class teacher, interviewed 08/02/2016, lines 1251–1252)

Also regulations concerning the access to secondary education constituted a barrier for the continuation of refugee education: a number of orientation and preparatory programmes which were designed for teenagers without a secondary certificate are linked to the compulsory school age, which means that students above the age of 18 are not eligible for them. This also affects the preparatory classes. During our research, due to increasing refugee numbers and capacities lagging behind, this regulation was enforced and students turning 18 were sometimes not allowed to complete the one-year programme. Instead, they were recommended to enrol in a language course as part of other integration measures offered by various actors such as the labour agency or the Federal Agency for Migration and Refugees. Again, this regulation—which was enforced at the beginning of the second term of 2015–2016— was heavily criticized by the teachers in charge of the refugee students, as they saw their integration efforts as being in vain:

> There were students who just started in February, and they all had to leave…. They were told to look for regular integration classes. But they are only eligible for those classes when their asylum application is accepted. Those who are in the asylum procedure, or who only have a toleration status, are not eligible for those classes. (preparatory class teacher, interviewed 08/02/2016, lines 94–102)

Those asylum seekers who had sufficient knowledge of German after completing the preparatory class could look for an apprenticeship. At this point considerations of integration and the specifics of the region came to the fore. All interlocutors regarded the question of labour force development as essential for the further development of the regional economy. In this respect, the young asylum seekers can be regarded as a resource. At the same time, the integration of young migrants in education and the labour market is a central goal of the integration efforts. However, as the interviewees pointed out, this goal will only be achieved with great joint efforts from all relevant actors.

An actual example in this respect is the effort to introduce young people from the preparatory classes to the field of metalwork, since there is a strong demand for skilled workers in this area and accordingly a high motivation of the relevant actors to support the transition of the young asylum seekers into a dual education.

> We would like to attract them into metalwork, so that maybe one or two will later say they could imagine working in this field. Because that's what is needed in Erzgebirge: they are all very eager and are looking for apprentices in metal techniques–there is a very high demand. (headteacher, interviewed 04/02/2016, lines 593–597)

A problem could arise if educational certificates that are necessary to start an apprenticeship are missing, but this problem was perceived as solvable if chambers of commerce and employers cooperate (e.g. by easing the formal entry requirements into a dual education). From the point of view of our interlocutors, direct contacts between young people and employers are crucial, and the development of those contacts should be supported by mediating actors.

> Employer and apprentice have to find each other to make this work out. (representative of regional school authority, interviewed 12/02/2016, lines 214–217)

Theoretically, both vocational schools have broad networks in this respect, as they have contacts with most of the small and medium-sized firms in the region that take apprentices. However, our research revealed that neither the headteachers nor the teachers felt responsible for or perceived to have capacity to do this kind of mediating work, and there were no additional staff at the schools (such as social workers) who could take over this task.

9.5.2   Language Acquisition as a Basis for Social Integration

As elaborated above, language plays a key role in the integration process, not only to reach educational goals, but also as a means for everyday communication, participation and recognition. Thus, for refugee students and teachers, learning the German language is the most important goal, and sometimes the only one. The skill level of the students was described as heterogeneous, and this not only refers to German language skills, but also general skills and competences, which ranged between near university entrance certificate and illiteracy. This was a big challenge for the teachers, who needed to flexibly switch between the various skill levels, but it also imposed a burden on those students who were more advanced.

> You cannot speed up learning a new language. And they know it, they always say 'Step by step, slowly, slowly'. But some are learning quickly, and others more slowly. And those who learn easy, they are losing patience to listen to the others, who strive and want to speak, and they want to speak because they are faster. That's really challenging. (preparatory class teacher, interviewed 07/04/2016, lines 243–261)

A further problem is the fluctuation of participants in the preparatory classes, as students are continuously allocated to the classes throughout the year, and some have to withdraw from class during the year, due to changing asylum statuses or the changing allocation of refugee housing. In the teachers' perceptions, the goal to acquire enough German to start an apprenticeship after the end of the preparatory class will be rather difficult to achieve under these conditions.

The teachers also anticipated a lack of opportunities to meet and enter into social interaction with German peers or Germans in general.

> But how are they gonna do it? You don't go out in the street and ask: 'Do you want to have contact with me?' 'Contact' is the favourite word of some students. But this only works in natural everyday situations. That's why it's so important to get them into an apprenticeship, to get them into a job, because that's the only way it really works. Everything else is fake. (preparatory class teacher, interviewed 08/02/2016, lines 1212–1220)

However, the possibility to create opportunities for social interaction on campus were not used, and in some cases even restricted: The refugee students were educated separately to the German students, and also on campus there was a segregated situation, which culminated in different schedules for the breaks between lessons "to avoid conflicts", as one of the headteachers stated.

9.5.3 Challenges of Social Integration – The Students' Perspective

What is the view of the students on their language class? We addressed this question during group discussion, supported by a visualization tool (Fig. 9.2).

All students assessed their language understanding during lessons as very good, and all said they enjoyed the lessons. However, there was a shared desire to learn more than just German. The students would have also liked to take further subjects such as mathematics, biology or history in order to complete their education. They were interested in history, geography and the political system of Germany and regretted that these were not subjects in their lessons. Considering their language competences outside the classroom, many were dissatisfied. One student stated that he would not dare to approach German age peers due to his poor language proficiency. Ninety percent of the refugee students stated they never had any contact with German students, mainly due to the fact that they did not meet during classes. Many reported a feeling of isolation:

> One problem is that we are all from Afghanistan or other countries. We want to study German with Germans, because this is good for our progress. That's the only problem here, the rest is fine. (Student M., research diary of participant observation, 01/06/2016)

During our participant observation of a football match on campus, we asked the German students if they knew where the refugee team came from. No one identified them as fellow students from the same campus. This might be partly due to the specifics of a vocational school with mostly part-time students, so that there is no continuous presence of peers on campus. In any case, the segregated situation was not seen by the teachers or headteachers as a problem they should take care of.

As stated above, the possibility to conduct German conversations outside the classroom would strongly support language skills. Furthermore, everyday social contacts and participation opportunities for migrants are the basis for social integration and for them finding a place in their new surroundings. However, if we consider

the housing situation of the young students, it is clear that those opportunities are scarce. Some live with their families or in group accommodation in various municipalities of the county, while others live in the boarding house of the vocational school, directly on campus. Their daily life outside school is characterized by social isolation, reinforced by the fact that the public transport infrastructure is poor and there are no other means of transport for the students.

> I have students from O. which is one full hour from the bus station. But they live on the outskirts, so that they have to take one more train or bus for half an hour. (…) We have a group accommodation for minors in L., that's not that far from here, but the connection is really bad. From L. to P., then from P. to W., and so forth. They have to leave at 5.30 every morning. When I get up in the morning, I think 'poor boys, they are already on the road.' But still they arrive with a smile and are happy, that they can go to school. (preparatory class teacher, interviewed 08/02/2016, lines 339–359)

The distant accommodation not only makes the daily trip to school onerous, but generally impedes a self-determined life, in which the young people can orient themselves and interact with other young people. Also, the unresolved residence status and the sometimes unclear perspectives for long-term stay have a negative effect on social integration. Concerning the specific problems the asylum process imposes, there are no provisions in the rural area that are specific to this target group and their needs and interests. For example, there are neither lawyers working on asylum in the region, nor specialized counselling centres. In addition, the job centre is far away. Thus, many students plan to move to bigger towns or cities as soon as possible, as these offer more possibilities for employment, education and for social contacts with peers.

> When I talked to A., he told us he was looking forward to moving to S-town tomorrow. He doesn't like O-town, as he has no public transport ticket and is struck in the town. In S-town he will move in with a friend who is also from Syria. Here, in O-town, he is all alone. After moving to S-town, he will also be able to visit C-town more frequently, as it is much more accessible. He likes the town and he will get the opportunity to work in an Arabic restaurant. (research diary of participant observation, 01/06/2016)

A further obstacle to social integration in the region is xenophobia and racism, which affects the students directly. Students reported that people insulted them when riding on the public bus, and some even experienced physical attacks at their accommodation facilities. Some students perceive their classroom as a shelter, and they only go out in larger groups, because they fear being attacked. We were also told of rumours in the schools and of undifferentiated reports in the regional newspapers, which address and partly also problematize the presence of refugees in the vocational school. However, the school staff did not actively oppose these xenophobic activities. Those reactions and underlying attitudes of the local population were rather perceived as normal and unchangeable, as the following citation shows:

> I also do field trips with larger groups even though we are being recognized on the bus and on the train and sometimes we annoy people. The students don't do any harm, but if I am arriving with a group, and there are ten black students, who raise a lot of attention, then you experience just the normal life here, so sometimes you are harassed and shouted at. (preparatory class teacher, interviewed 08/02/2016, lines 930–935)

9.6   Discussion and Conclusion

The main aim of the research presented in this chapter was to investigate the role of the local in the field of educational integration in vocational schools in Germany. The significance of this field of research is highlighted with regards to the age structure of refugees, who are mainly younger than 25 and often have not finalized their education in their home countries. In order to find a way into the German labour market, not only language knowledge, but also knowledge about the specifics of the labour market and the German education system are necessary. From the perspective of state actors, vocational schools are a preferable environment in this respect, as they focus on the acquisition of practical skills, and are more easily accessible than academic education, given refugees' limited knowledge of German. With the choice of our case study, we also wanted to highlight the relevance of contextual factors, namely the geographical setting, the social and economic situation, and the history of the case study site, notably with respect to migration issues. Additionally, we wanted to highlight the connectivity of policies, practices and discourses in our field of research.

In our analysis, we were guided by research questions that focused on the very meaning and contextualization of the term "integration", as we assumed that the individual and collective framing of this term strongly influences concrete practices of integration. From our own understanding, we followed the general outlines of the term "integration" from social theory, which differentiates between systems and social integration with its main aspects of culturation, placement and interaction, but we also integrated the perspectives of transnational and post-migration approaches, which stress the intercultural and anti-racist aspects of immigrant incorporation.

Considering the interpretation of "integration" in the understanding of the main stakeholders in the field like headteachers and school authorities, we clearly identified the priority of systems integration, meaning the implementation of preparatory classes, based on the guidelines and regulations of the authorities. The authorities' engagement mainly entailed organizational tasks and showed a segmented understanding of integration as giving a formal frame in terms of physical settings (classrooms), devices (dictionaries etc.), personnel (teachers) and time (school schedule), rather than taking the perspective of the individual and his or her needs from a more holistic perspective. This interpretation and these practices can be comprehended from the professional role of the stakeholders as public servants in a segmented culture of planning, and corresponds to their general professional role. However, it hinders focussing on the long-term integration of the refugee students and possible integration paths, such as arranging internships or further pre-employment measures. The respondents did not feel responsible in this respect, but rather awaited necessary system adjustments. Such adjustments would come too late for the refugee students from 2015–2016.

The perspective of the teachers, on the other hand, is guided by their role as language teachers and pedagogical professionals. While they predominant focus on the organization of everyday teaching, they are aware of mismatches between the formal regulations and their application. They build up personal relationships with the students and thus also introduce the category of emotion to the topic of integration. However, they perceive their own agency as limited, which is due to their rather marginal position in the school boards on the one hand, and the specifics of the region on the other, as there are few experiences with foreigners in the area and parts of the population show strong signs of xenophobia.

The refugee students certainly have the most holistic view of integration, but the least amount of action autonomy, so they are barely able to stimulate change. For them, school is not just a place of learning, but constitutes the primary place of everyday integration through contact with their teachers and peers. At the same time, they cannot plan ahead in terms of time or space, as their future depends heavily on their asylum procedure, and repatriation or onward migration is possible at any time. Thus their classrooms and their relations to their teachers and peers are islands of stability in an otherwise uncertain future. In class, they aim to acquire knowledge which can be helpful in their future life. However, they are confronted with a system that is rather inflexible with respect to their peculiar situation.

What do these results mean in generalized terms? Based on the geographical and structural specifics of our case study, we have shown how the issue of refugee reception and integration is embedded into broader lines of conflict in a specific region or policy field and that the effectiveness of reception and integration measures is dependent on political culture in general.

The practices and policies we have found show the contradictions between a monolingual, sedentary culture of education and the supposed temporality of the stay of adolescent refugees. On the one hand, the refugees' provisional situation refers to their unclear asylum status (which was, at the time of our survey, subject to multiple re-regulations, which mostly meant aggravations for the asylum procedure) and, on the other hand, to the assumption that they will not stay put, following the predominant experience of the region, which is outmigration. Against this background, it is rather unlikely that further efforts will be made to ensure a more sustainable integration of the refugee students, even though the general conditions are rather favourable.

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Chapter 10
Municipal Housing Strategies for Refugees. Insights from Two Case Studies in Germany

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10.1 Introduction

Germany is the destination for many refugees from different parts of the world, where political or economic conflicts cause people to leave their home countries. More than one million refugees sought asylum in Germany in 2015 and 2016. Their integration is an essential political task, especially since further migration from conflict areas can be expected in the years to come.[1]

Regarding the accommodation of refugees, there are different regulations and competencies within the national administration during an asylum process. Arriving in Germany, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees is responsible for granting asylum or another protection status. However, the states (Bundesländer) are in charge of the accommodation and the social assistance of asylum seekers. In practice, the states partially leave this task to the municipalities. After the recognition of refugee status, refugees are allowed to move from municipal accommoda-

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tion into a private apartment (§ 53 Abs. 2 AsylG; see also Robert Bosch Stiftung 2016). However, due to the domicile requirement that aims at regulating the distribution of refugees within the federal territory and the federal states, refugees in North Rhine-Westphalia are not authorised to move from the municipality where they were registered to another municipality during the first three years after refugee status has been granted.[2]

In this chapter, we will analyse the conditions of accommodating refugees upon arrival and their transition from municipal accommodation to the housing market. In addition, we will explore how local policies shape the process of housing and consequently influence the opportunities for the integration of refugees. Furthermore, we will clarify how different spatial contexts affect the housing situation of refugees, assuming that there are different underlying conditions in larger cities compared to small and medium-sized towns. Whereas housing markets in thriving cities are subject to continued pressure, and refugees face tough competition from other low-income households, the underlying conditions are supposed to be more favourable in smaller towns.

In the following Sect. 10.2 we will highlight housing as a dimension of the integration process of refugees and integration policies that have been developed in the last years in Germany. Our methodological approach will then be described in Sect. 10.3. In Sect. 10.4, we will depict to what extent the municipalities had already dealt with the topic (accommodation of refugees) before immigration strongly increased. Furthermore, we will illustrate the experiences of municipal actors concerning accommodation upon arrival and refugees' transition to the housing market. In the conclusion (Sect. 10.5) we will elaborate and explain apparent differences and similarities in integration policies in the case study areas. Furthermore, we will depict some consequences of apparent policy gaps on the integration process of refugees at a local level.

10.2 Housing of Refugees as a Central Precondition for Integration

The housing situation is a central aspect in the integration process of migrants. In the following section, we will first reflect on the role of housing within concepts of integration as well as the role of the state in integration processes. Afterwards we will outline the housing policy in Germany. Focusing on refugees, we will refer to international studies on their housing situation and depict the conditions for their accommodation in Germany. We will then argue that housing strongly affects refugees' integration and that the preconditions for their integration differ significantly, depending on where they live.

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[2] This requirement does not apply to refugees who received their status before 6th August 2016, who are employed and earn a specified minimum income, who study or who pursue vocational training.

10.2.1   *Integration: Concept and Policy*

Integration is a contested concept that encompasses widely different meanings. However, structural integration, in terms of social positions within the housing and the labour market, plays a major role in classical as well as in more recent concepts of integration (Gestring 2014). The significance of structural integration is also reflected in political programmes in Germany (e.g. the National Integration Action Plan, *Nationaler Aktionsplan Integration*), which define the participation of migrants in society as one main objective (Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Migration, Flüchtlinge und Integration 2011). Accordingly, Gestring (2014) suggests an integration concept that focuses on migrants' access to the core areas of the host society, such as housing, work, education and health. He points out that integration is a process that involves migrants as well as society and the state.

States pursue integration policy e.g. through laws and the funding of programmes and provisions (Favell 2001: 351). However, policy does not easily translate into outcomes. Czaika and de Haas (2013) identify three policy gaps with regard to migration policy. Their notion of policy gaps can also be applied to integration policy. Firstly, they describe a gap ('discursive gap') between public policy discourses and actual policies on paper (e.g. laws, regulations and measures). Secondly, they identify a gap between policy documents and their implementation. This 'implementation gap' can be caused by constraints such as budgetary constraints. Moreover, it is particularly significant when policy implementation is based on subjective assessments (e.g. in the asylum process) that give leeway to the decision-makers. Thirdly, there is a gap between implementation and outcomes, i.e. whether and to what extent implemented policy documents have the intended effects. Structural factors, and policies not related to migration and integration, play a major role in this 'efficacy gap' (Czaika and de Haas 2013).

Integration policy shapes the living conditions of migrants at different administrative levels. In Germany, with its federal system of government, the federal level, state level and municipal level each have different responsibilities in regard to integration, according to their political competencies (Bommes 2009). The federal level has the power of legislation and can therefore regulate matters of immigration and integration. The state level is responsible, inter alia, for education. The municipalities implement integration policies that have been enacted at the federal or state level (e.g. accommodation of refugees). However, they can also develop local integration policies, such as integration guidelines (Filsinger 2009).

In this chapter, housing is considered as a central aspect in the integration process of refugees because it is a basic need that has to be addressed first when refugees arrive. In a long-term perspective, other aspects become crucial as well, such as language skills or networks. The importance of language skills for the integration process of migrants has been investigated in publications focussing on other groups of international migrants (e.g. Föbker and Imani 2017; Imani et al. 2014). In this book, the meaning of language skills will be discussed in Chap. 9 by Birgit Glorius and Anne-Christin Schondelmayer with regard to refugees.

10.2.2 Housing Structure and Policy in Germany

Germany's housing market is characterized by different submarkets. Condominiums are to be distinguished from rental apartments. In 2017, approximately 46% of households lived in owner-occupied buildings (Deutscher Bundestag 2017). Compared to other European countries this is rather low. Regional differences in the rate of residential property can be seen between urban and rural areas. In urban areas the share is only around 30%.

In 2011, of the approx. 40 million apartments in Germany, 22 million were rental apartments (Deutscher Bundestag 2017). In contrast to most other European countries, Germany's housing stock is characterized by a high percentage of private owners. 65% of the rentals are owned by private landlords. Only a small percentage of the rental housing stock (around 10%) is owned by municipalities. Another almost 10% are organized as cooperatives, while private companies offer 13% of all rental apartments.

Germany's housing policy has been characterized by the privatization of the municipal housing stock, the transfer of social housing from the federal government to the states as well as an emphasis on subsidizing low-income households instead of social housing in the past years (Pätzold 2017). Low-income households receive housing subsidies or are reimbursed for costs of housing. Investments in the fixed-price rental apartment stock have been rather low. Especially in Germany's major cities an increased demand in the housing market faces an unbalanced supply of apartments in the lower to mid-price segment. Social housing has become scarce due to the expiration of rent and occupancy control (Mietpreis- und Belegungsbindung). The reduction of such controlled apartments as well as the increase in prices for private housing has caused shortages in low-income households in growing major cities (Held and Waltersbacher 2015). To limit the rise in rent of re-letting in certain cities with shortages, the tool of a cap on rent increases (Mietpreisbremse) has been used for several years.

The current shortages in public subsidized housing elevate the risk of homelessness. Government statistics on this phenomenon throughout the whole of Germany do not exist. For 2016, the National German Association on the Assistance for Homeless People estimates that 860,000 people in Germany lack housing and that this number rose by about 150% since the increasing immigration of refugees. Homeless people are those who are permanently without housing and who live on the streets or in shelters, where their stay is limited. The number of people living on Germany's streets is estimated at 52,000 (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Wohnungslosenhilfe 2017).

All this shows that refugees put additional pressure on the demand in a very limited housing market segment.

10.2.3 Housing of Refugees

The housing situation of refugees differs significantly between countries as well as within groups of refugees, and is highly determined by their legal status (Murdie 2008). Studies from Europe, North America and Australia document that most

refugees start in transitional housing. There are great variations in the kind of provisional accommodation provided, as well as in the period of time that refugees are allowed or obliged to stay there. In a second step, refugees move to the rental market (e.g. Flatau et al. 2015; Fozdar and Hardley 2014; Francis and Hiebert 2014; Borevi and Bengtsson 2015; Murdie 2008). This transition proves difficult. Thus, friends, family and people of the same ethnic background as well as volunteers and staff in transitional housing play an important role as a source of information and support (Francis and Hiebert 2014; Murdie 2008).

A major problem in the search process is the low income of most households in a context of housing markets that offer only a limited amount of affordable rental housing. Further barriers arise when the locally available housing stock does not fit refugees' household structure that is comprised of large numbers of single refugees. In addition, large families often face difficulties in finding appropriate accommodation. The search and application process is further complicated by language problems and limited experience in the local rental market (BBSR 2017; Foroutan et al. 2017; Johansson 2016; Flatau et al. 2015; Fozdar and Hardley 2014; Francis and Hiebert 2014; Murdie 2008). In search of better accommodation, many refugee households move several times before they finally find appropriate housing (Ager and Strang 2008).

In Germany, with its federal system of government, newly arrived refugees are first allocated to the states (*Länder*) and then further allocated to municipalities (Aumüller 2018). In the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), where our study is based, the municipalities are obliged to accommodate asylum seekers (Flüchtlingsaufnahmegesetz NRW § 1). However, accommodation differs significantly between municipalities. The federal asylum law (Asylgesetz §53, 1) states that foreigners who have applied for asylum *should* be housed in group accommodation. This 'should' rule at the federal level gives leeway to the other administrative levels. Therefore, the type of accommodation provided very much depends on political opinion and structural constraints within the municipalities (Schammann and Kühn 2016). The debate on the pros and cons of group accommodation as compared to private apartments mainly refers to its size, location and quality (e.g. Aumüller 2018; BBSR 2017; Schammann and Kühn 2016).

After refugee status[3] is granted it is possible to move to a private dwelling (§ 53 Abs. 2 AsylG; see also Robert-Bosch-Stiftung 2016). Refugees are eligible for welfare benefits paid by the 'Jobcenter', which covers rental costs as long as they do not significantly exceed the local rents (Schammann and Kühn 2016). A representative survey, conducted in 2016, shows that 67% of refugees who had been granted

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[3] German law distinguishes different forms of protection (BAMF 2017): entitlement to asylum, refugee protection and subsidiary protection. The weakest form of protection, a national ban on deportation, does not allow a person to move out of group accommodation. Regulations vary between the *Länder* with some states defining statutory periods of stay in group accommodation. In any case, people with this form of protection first need to obtain an official approval from the municipal authority before they are allowed to move to a private dwelling (Schammann and Kühn 2016). Hence, the majority (55%) of this group is living in group accommodations (Baier and Siegert 2018).

protection status were living in private dwellings, whereas the majority (62%) of refugees still in the asylum process was living in group accommodation (Baier and Siegert 2018).

As in NRW the place of residence is, for the first three years, restricted to the municipality a refugee has been allocated to (cf. Sect. 10.1; Wiegandt 2017), the local housing market situation is a crucial factor in refugees' opportunities to rent a private apartment. As mentioned before, the social housing stock in Germany has been decreasing over the last decade (Prognos 2017). Consequently, in municipalities with tight housing markets, refugees might not be able to leave group accommodation even after refugee status is granted (Foroutan et al. 2017).

10.2.4 Housing as a Precondition for Integration

A successful move from municipal accommodation into the rental market can be interpreted as an indicator of progress in a refugee's integration process. Housing in turn affects refugees' access to other core areas of the host society. For example, living in group accommodation makes learning difficult (Aumüller et al. 2015), and being housed in remote accommodation centres without public transport complicates daily life and labour market access (Söhn et al. 2017, Baier and Siegert 2018). Moreover, the type and size of dwelling affects society's perception of refugees. For example, large group accommodation fosters negative attitudes towards refugees among local inhabitants (Aumüller et al. 2015). Establishing group accommodation in residential neighbourhoods often results in conflicts between the local administration and local inhabitants (Doomernik and Glorius 2016).

The living environment is the subject of a controversial debate around the effects of segregation on refugees' (and, more generally, migrants') integration. Two lines of argument can be distinguished—both of which refer to the social capital (Putnam 2000) that is created in everyday interaction in the living environment (Borevi and Bengtsson 2015). One is based on the meaning of social bonds with family and co-ethnic groups that supply (newly arrived) migrants with information and support. Proximity to family and people of the same ethnic background in a segregated area is viewed as promoting integration. The other line of argument refers to bridging social capital that connects migrants with the host society. It suggests that segregation obstructs contact between migrants and the host society and thus undermines integration (Häußermann and Siebel 2001). This argument is particularly strong in the political debate. However, empirical evidence to support this latter hypothesis, that spatial segregation has negative effects on migrants' integration, is scarce, at least in Germany (Dangschat and Alisch 2014).

As described above, there are major differences in municipal accommodation policies and practices. Furthermore, refugees' opportunities to rent their own apartment vary greatly between local housing markets. In contrast to many other studies investigating the national situation in general, our analysis considers the local context, which has been recognised as a crucial factor for the integration processes of

migrants (Aumüller and Bretl 2008; Glick Schiller and Çağlar 2011). The number of inhabitants, the local population structure (especially the size and number of ethnic communities), the structure of the local labour and housing market as well as the local policies around the admission of refugees are considered as highly relevant for integration (Aumüller et al. 2015). Given the dispersal system for refugees in Germany, we argue that refugees are confronted with significantly different initial conditions for their integration. In our paper we focus on local policies and practices regarding the housing of refugees and analyse how local integration policy is implemented against the backdrop of different local opportunities and constraints. Furthermore, we discuss to what extent the implemented policies have the desired effects.

10.3   Methods: A Comparative Analysis of Two Case Study Areas

Regarding this gap in research on a local level, we have chosen two different spatial contexts in North Rhine-Westphalia: a large city on the one hand, and small and medium-sized towns in one district on the other. The selection of two contrasting contexts aims to identify similarities and differences in integration politics as well as specific local opportunities and constraints for the integration of refugees (Tilly 1984; Pickvance 2005). Each of the local contexts is represented by a case study: the context of a large city by Cologne, and the context of small and medium-sized towns by the district of Heinsberg, which is located between the city of Düsseldorf and the city of Aachen, next to the border with the Netherlands.

With a population of 1.08 million as of 31/12/2016, *Cologne* is NRW's largest and Germany's fourth largest city. Cologne has positive net migration, with foreigners and people aged 18–20 years accounting for the largest share of immigrants. 19.3% of Cologne's population have a foreign nationality, and 18.5% are Germans with a migrant background (Stadt Köln 2017). Turkish passport holders make up the majority (22.5%) of all foreigners. People with Syrian, Iranian or Iraqi nationality account for 6.9% of all foreigners (Stadt Köln 2017). Cologne has an international character in many respects. There are a variety of migrant infrastructures that could facilitate the integration of refugees. As early as 2004, the council of the city of Cologne passed guidelines on the accommodation and support of refugees, which became a leading example for German municipalities (Stadt Köln 2004). In 2011, some "Guidelines to strengthen the Integrated Urban Society" (Stadt Köln 2011) were developed (cf. Sect. 10.4). At the beginning, the city's residents gave a warm welcome to the arriving refugees. However, the atmosphere changed not least because of sexual assaults committed mainly by migrants from North African countries on New Year's Eve 2015.

The district of *Heinsberg*, with a total of 260,000 inhabitants, encompasses 10 municipalities counting between 9000 and 44,000 inhabitants. Five of the municipalities are medium-sized towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants, whereas five

municipalities are small towns of less than 20,000 inhabitants. In total, the district of Heinsberg has a positive net migration that considerably rose in 2015. 14.7% of the population have a foreign nationality. The numbers vary between different municipalities, from 8.4% up to 38.8%. People from the nearby Netherlands and from Turkey dominate (IT.NRW 2017). In 2017, the district of Heinsberg hosted 3600 refugees dispersed almost proportionally among the ten municipalities. Due to the former recruitment of labour migrants in the mining sector, the local communities have many years of experience in the integration of foreigners from Muslim countries. In contrast to the city of Cologne, a guideline of integration was only introduced in 2014 (cf. Sect. 10.4). Although in most communities the atmosphere was welcoming, more reserved and rejecting reactions of the administration were reported in the media as well. Out of the ten cities and towns, we selected five for the fieldwork: the capital of the district, two towns that were mentioned as best practice examples in the media and two towns where issues between the municipality, residents and refugees were reported.[4] Therefore, when analysing the perspective of the district of Heinsberg we have to distinguish between the perspective of the district administration on the one hand, and the perspectives of the different municipal administrations on the other.

The aim of this paper – to understand the meaning of the local context and of local policies for the integration of refugees on the housing market – is reflected in our methodological approach. We have chosen a comparative case study in order to identify commonalities across the two cases despite the different contexts (Baxter 2010). The short characterisations of our case study areas given above already reveal the differences as well as the complexity of the cases that we will examine. We designed a multidimensional qualitative approach to consider documents as well as perspectives of local governmental and non-governmental organisations that are concerned with the situation of refugees. Therefore, we analysed existing guidelines and integration plans in order to highlight the extent to which refugees and their accommodation was already taken into consideration prior to the arrival of more than one million refugees in Germany. Moreover, in 2017, we conducted expert interviews with representatives from local governmental as well as non-governmental organisations that are more closely involved in the neighbourhood, like welfare or voluntary aid organisations. The representatives were chosen due to their responsibility for the accommodation and care of refugees (Table 10.1).

In these guided interviews, we explored the experts' daily work experience with regard to the integration of refugees, discussing their successes and failures in working with refugees as well as the most important needs of refugees. In our analysis, we will draw upon the interviews with institutions that are particularly engaged with the housing situation of refugees.

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[4] For reasons of data protection, the names of the towns are not mentioned in this paper, but entitled A-town, B-town, C-town, D-town and E-town. The names of urban neighbourhoods in the case study area of the city of Cologne are anonymised as well, as A-neighbourhood and B-neighbourhood.

Table 10.1 List of governmental and non-governmental interview partners

Institution	City of Cologne	District of Heinsberg
Governmental	Municipal Integration Centre	Integration Centre of the district of Heinsberg
	Refugees' Coordination Centre	Municipal Integration Centre of A-town[a]
	Department of Housing[a]	Municipal Administration of B-town[a]
	Municipal Integration Council	Municipal Administration of C-town[a]
	Integration Point	Municipal Administration of D-town[a]
	Chamber of Crafts	Integration Point of the district of Heinsberg
	Municipal Housing Company[a]	Job centre of the district of Heinsberg
	Relocation Coordination Centre[a]	
	Adult Education Centre	Adult Education Centre of the district of Heinsberg
	Primary school in the A-neighbourhood	
Non-governmental	Caritas (Christian welfare work)	Caritas of the district of Heinsberg (Christian welfare work)[a]
	In Via (Christian welfare work)	Diocese (Christian welfare work)
	Cologne Council of Refugees	
	Citizens' Initiative in the B-neighbourhood	Citizens' Initiative in D-town[a]
	Education Association in the B-neighbourhood	Citizens' Initiative in E-town[a]
	Tenants' Union of North Rhine-Westphalia[a]	

[a]Institutions concerned with the housing situation of refugees

In addition to document analysis and expert interviews, we organised two workshops during the research process to discuss our findings with the previously interviewed experts. Asking for feedback from the interviewees aimed at validating our results, broadening our understanding and updating our knowledge on crucial issues in the case study areas.

10.4 Housing and Integration from the Perspective of Local Experts

In 2015 and 2016, when approximately 1.2 million refugees applied for asylum in Germany, cities and districts such as Cologne and Heinsberg had to manage their accommodation (BAMF 2017). In some areas, it was an enormous challenge to meet the needs; in other areas, it did not cause major problems. In the following sections, the accommodation situation upon arrival and the transition from group accommodation into private apartments will be described and explained.

10.4.1   Accommodation upon Arrival

Regarding the guidelines on housing of refugees, the case study areas started with different bases. In 2003, the "Round Table for Refugee Matters" in Cologne developed a concept for the accommodation and support of refugees. The Council passed this concept as "Guidelines for the Accommodation and Support of Refugees" in 2004 (Stadt Köln 2004). The aim of the concept is to increase the public acceptance for refugees as well as to encourage a peaceful togetherness of all population groups in the urban society. As stated by the guidelines, assigned refugees should be accommodated in accordance with a three-stage model. New residents should initially live in a municipal reception centre. A residence time of maximum three months should give the municipality the opportunity to gain an overview of the situation and allocate people to group accommodation as soon as possible. According to the guidelines, group accommodation is characterised by self-contained dwellings and a limit of 80 people per building. However, in the political and societal integration discourse, group accommodation is viewed critically, due to the psychological stress for the residents, limited contact possibilities with the host society and rejection by the local population (Baier and Siegert 2018). Hence, after a maximum of three years, refugees should be placed in private rental apartments. Families should obtain an apartment in the same neighbourhood as the former group accommodation to avoid a change of daycare facility or school (Stadt Köln 2004).

Although the Municipality of Cologne was prepared, the Department of Housing in Cologne was overtaxed by the high amount of refugees coming into the city, especially between September 2015 and March 2016 when the number of refugees increased from 8003 to 12,431 (Stadt Köln 2018a). The capacity limit was reached rapidly and it is hardly surprising that the municipality could not abide by the guidelines. Avoiding homelessness was the priority, thus refugees were placed in sports halls, hotels, containers and lightweight-structure buildings during peak times. A representative of the city of Cologne admitted in their interview that although it had a strategy available, in practice, the administration was not prepared to accommodate the high number of refugees. This evidence indicates that an 'implementation gap' (Czaika and de Haas 2013) existed in the city, caused by the extraordinarily high influx of refugees that significantly exceeded the existing accommodation resources.

In response, the municipality devised a four-phase model for the placement of refugees in 2015. Above all this provided for the expansion of temporary accommodation. In order to return the sports halls to their original purpose, the municipality would build lightweight building constructions for up to 400 people (80 people per building). As accommodation intended to be temporary, albeit with more privacy, residential containers would be set up. Even though these containers were planned for a transition period, they are now considered as a lasting solution. Temporary accommodation also included hotels, in which rooms are usually occupied by several people. As permanent buildings, group accommodation would be extended with quick-build housing units. In order to achieve greater flexibility in

capacity utilisation, the accommodation would be rented out to students as long as it was not needed for refugees. Finally, the construction of regular apartments formed the last phase of this model.

Despite this model, the last of the 27 sports halls used for the accommodation of asylum seekers could only be cleared in June 2017, and in March 2018, 3872 out of 9674 asylum seekers were living in emergency shelters, lightweight-structure buildings and hotels (representative of the Department of Housing, city of Cologne). The figures clearly show that a residence time in emergency accommodation of maximum three months, which is set out in the guidelines, could not be met (Ottersbach and Wiedemann 2017).

In 2016, the Municipality of Cologne devised minimum standards for the accommodation and support of refugees, including structural and social conditions (Stadt Köln 2016a, b). Especially people with a particular vulnerability (e.g. refugees with disabilities, pregnant women, unaccompanied minors) should be placed in alternative accommodation. However, according to an employee of Caritas Cologne, the agreed-upon minimum standards were not met. During peak times, the needs of refugees with special vulnerabilities were not taken into consideration when placing them in sports halls or other group accommodation without proper psychological care. Hence, the emergency placement was described as *"chaotic"* and *"lacking occupancy management"* (interview with a representative of the Cologne Council of Refugees). This points to another implementation gap.

Referring to the aforementioned guidelines, it can be concluded that they were helpful in the beginning since group accommodation already existed (although not sufficient). However, the guidelines have subsequently served little purpose since the housing market situation has hampered the aim of accommodating the extraordinarily high numbers of refugees in apartments. Nonetheless the guidelines reflect a consensus of the local actors on the preferable accommodation of refugees.

In contrast to Cologne, the integration guideline of the district of Heinsberg, which was passed in 2015, does not deal with the issue of accommodating refugees, although the accommodation of refugees is a municipal obligation (Flüchtlingsaufnahmegesetz NRW §1; Stadt Köln 2011; Kreis Heinsberg 2014). This is due to the fact that the communities in the district of Heinsberg had only been affected to a minor extent by the influx of refugees before. Accordingly, the issue of their accommodation was not a matter of urgency for years and the strong increase in immigration in 2015 and 2016 was not foreseeable for local actors. This indicates that an implementation gap also existed in the district of Heinsberg. In the district, 3600 refugees were living in apartments and group accommodation in 2017. Since the guideline does not deal with the issue of accommodation, each municipality pursued its own strategy to house the refugees. Our interviewees mainly emphasized their efforts to accommodate the refugees as decentralized as possible in order to avoid conflicts and obstacles to their integration. This refers to the social and political discourses regarding the negative consequences of segregated housing on integration processes. According to Aumüller (2018), municipalities can draw on different, flexible scopes regarding the provision of housing. If municipalities possess land and apartments or cooperate with public housing

Table 10.2 Numbers of refugees in group accommodation and apartments (data from the municipalities)

Municipality	Refugees in total	Refugees in group accommodation	Refugees in apartments
A-town (Jan 2018)	821	53	768
B-town (Dec 2016)	684	n.s.	n.s.
C-town (Nov 2017)	614	173	441
D-town (Dec 2016)	379	n.s.	n.s.
E-town (Mar 2018)	123	110	13

companies, their opportunities for action increase and the dependence on private providers falls. Smaller municipalities usually have better opportunities for decentralised housing of asylum seekers than large cities (Aumüller 2018). The different strategies of the municipalities in the district of Heinsberg encompass a broad spectrum. Only one municipality needed to set up emergency shelters (sports hall, commercial hall); the others were able to use group accommodation, containers, or even individual apartments. The number of refugees in group accommodation and apartments varies from municipality to municipality (Table 10.2). Whereas in E-town nearly 90% of the refugees are accommodated in group accommodation, only 6.4% of the refugees in A-town live in such accommodation. In the municipalities of A-town and B-town a sufficient amount of municipal as well as private apartments were vacant in winter 2016–2017. This shows the different possibilities of emergency accommodation within one district. Some municipalities needed to arrange group accommodation while others were able to use residential vacancies. An expert from B-town stresses the possibility of renting apartments to refugees: *"In the meantime, we have rented up to 80 apartments; I was surprised that it was even possible to rent so many, but it was possible."* However, another expert from the district of Heinsberg admits that many of these apartments were of a low quality and were overoccupied. In contrast to Cologne, the mediation of private apartments seems to have a greater significance in the district of Heinsberg.

In 2016, the Refugee Council of the district, founded by charitable organisations and the Municipal Integration Centre, agreed to take greater account of the housing needs of particularly vulnerable women and children. In contrast to Cologne, the municipalities of the district mostly arranged accommodation for people with special vulnerabilities or special groups (e.g. families in apartments, single mothers with children in their own corridor, single men in their own group accommodation). Nevertheless, there were also cases of single women being placed next to single men, again showing an existing gap between planning and implementation.

When setting up group accommodation its location is a major issue for a municipality, neighbours and the refugees themselves. An expert from D-town refers to phone calls from residents *"who are not delighted about the accommodation, especially about the size of accommodation"*. He also relates to some incidents when young male asylum seekers have followed young women from the neighbourhood. In Cologne, neighbours express concern regarding the construction of group

accommodation, since they fear the devaluation of their properties and a growing competition for childcare facilities (Stoldt 2014).

Regarding group accommodation locations in small towns, some experts of the district of Heinsberg emphasise the difficulties of access to public transport and other infrastructure, such as language and integration courses or supermarkets. A former barrack, a group accommodation in E-town, is located at the edge of the town within a forest. There is no direct bus connection so the refugees need to walk 20–30 min to the next shopping facility and bus stop. Such isolated dwellings that cause a spatial segregation of refugees were not found in Cologne.

Other issues, in both case study areas, are a noisy environment, small space and a lack of privacy in certain emergency and group accommodation facilities, which has negative effects on social atmosphere and well-being. Moreover, refugees attending a language class or school find it difficult to concentrate on their homework. People of diverse backgrounds are forced to live together in a confined space. Different religions and nationalities may lead to social tensions and conflicts (Christ et al. 2017). According to Aumüller et al. (2015), the consequences of this prevalent confined space and lack of privacy may be psychosocial disorders. Regarding emergency accommodation, an expert from Caritas Cologne stresses that there are *"women who cannot take off their headscarf, since there is no private room."* According to Christ et al. (2017), not only women and children but also men do not feel safe in group accommodation. This is also related to shared showers, which do not offer sufficient protection, since they are not lockable.

In summary, there are considerable differences regarding the accommodation situation upon arrival between and within our two case study areas. While many refugees arriving in Cologne in 2015–2016 had to be placed in emergency shelters or temporary accommodation, many refugees arriving in Heinsberg, especially families, were housed in private or municipal apartments from the beginning. In the following section, we will focus on the transition from municipal accommodation to the rental market.

10.4.2   Transition to the Housing Market

The Cologne guidelines for accommodation of refugees and the expert interviews in Cologne and Heinsberg have shown that in both case study areas the public policy discourse considers living in a private home as the long-term goal of housing policy for recognised refugees. After refugee status is granted, it is possible to move to a private dwelling (see Sect. 10.2.3).

Since some municipalities in the district of Heinsberg received many offers from private landlords, they could rent these apartments and use them for the accommodation of refugees. Some municipalities in Heinsberg are now transferring the rental agreements from the municipality to the refugees themselves, if the landlords agree. Thus, at least some families in the district of Heinsberg can stay in their first dwelling and do not need to move to another apartment after receiving their status. For the

refugees this solution allows a very smooth transition to the rental market (BBSR 2017). For the municipalities this solution is attractive since they can reduce additional expenses like incidental and clean-up costs.

10.4.2.1 Search for New Housing

Despite the fact that the public policy discourse in both case study areas aims at refugees' accommodation in rented apartments, our interviewees in both case study areas mostly describe the implementation of this policy as very difficult to almost impossible. They name several factors as decisive:

Landlords' Reservations Experts in the city of Cologne and in the district of Heinsberg state that landlords' reservations about refugees (due to legal status, source of income, country of origin, religion) are a severe barrier to transition in the housing market (see also Flatau et al. 2015; Murdie 2008). In both case study areas, the willingness especially of private landlords to accept refugees as tenants has decreased. Some experts assume that this development is strongly influenced by the media discourse about the sexual assaults in Cologne on New Year's Eve 2015.

Shortage of Affordable Housing/Supply Does Not Meet Demand In both case study areas the above-average demand for affordable housing is not matched by a corresponding supply. Rents of vacant accommodation often exceed the limits set by the Jobcenter (see also BBSR 2017). The housing market in Cologne has been tight for many years, and the increased immigration of refugees has reinforced this situation. There is a strong demand for affordable housing, not only from refugees but also from students and households with lower incomes. The lowest rents are demanded for apartments in high-rise buildings and older, unrenovated apartment buildings, partly on the outskirts (KSK Immobilien 2018). This results in neighbourhoods with a strong influx of refugees. Often these are areas that already had a higher proportion of foreigners (see Stadt Köln 2018b).

In contrast, the housing market in the district of Heinsberg was rather relaxed at the beginning of the increased immigration of refugees. In some municipalities, sufficient municipal as well as private apartments were vacant. However, these reserves have now been widely used up by the municipalities that rented them for the accommodation of newly arriving refugees. Hence, there are hardly any apartments left for refugees to move into after leaving group accommodation. Additionally, the apartment sizes often do not meet the demand. While in Cologne, especially families with several children looking for dwellings with more than three rooms face problems in finding new accommodation, in the district of Heinsberg, this mostly applies to young male refugees looking for single-person apartments. In the interviews, the experts point out that moving to a shared flat could be a solution for these young men. However, after living for several months in group accommodation, many refugees desperately want to live on their own and have privacy again. In addition, some landlords have even more reservations about letting their apartments as shared flats.

Language Barriers/Lacking Information About Search Techniques Some refugees do not (yet) have sufficient language skills and information about the best way to search for an apartment (see also Foroutan et al. 2017; Fozdar and Hardley 2014; Francis and Hiebert 2014; Baier and Siegert 2018).

Territorial Restrictions Due to the introduction of the domicile requirement in NRW, refugees facing problems in finding an affordable apartment in their municipality are not allowed to move to municipalities with less pressure on their housing markets. Some interviewees in the district of Heinsberg evaluate this critically. They point out that refugees living in the small municipalities are restricted in their search, as housing offers, integration offers (e.g. integration courses) as well as job opportunities are limited there. Experts in the city of Cologne refer to the fact that the domicile requirement prevents families with several children from searching outside the city limits, where large apartments are more affordable.

It becomes clear that the difficulty of actually achieving and implementing the desired goals (e.g. refugees' transition to the housing market) is due to an interaction of various factors, including refugees' limited economic and cultural resources, the limited number of locally available apartments, and the conflicting interests of potential landlords. Accordingly, solutions must also be found at various levels, e.g. housing construction, financial resources for the municipalities, and campaigns against discrimination. Furthermore, the example of the domicile requirement shows that the implementation of measures can have ambivalent consequences. For example, the domicile requirement enables cities and municipalities to better plan the integration infrastructures they need. At the same time it represents a severe barrier to the housing market integration of many refugees, as their search radius is significantly reduced.

10.4.2.2   Strategies to Face Housing Shortage

Our findings show two different ways of how governmental and non-governmental organisations in the city of Cologne and in the district of Heinsberg try to face the housing shortage.

Mediation of Vacant Apartments In both case study areas, refugees receive support in their search for accommodation from different actors. Often there is a need for basic information about housing as well as support in finding a suitable apartment, contacting the landlord and signing the lease. Hence, in some communities voluntary initiatives, welfare organisations, housing companies as well as municipal administration staff are involved and are ideally in close contact. This is the 'municipal leeway' in implementing compulsory tasks (e.g. accommodation of refugees, see Sect. 10.2.1; Schammann and Kühn 2016) when some municipalities initiate the establishment of voluntary tasks (e.g. support in finding housing). However, if the refugees' integration into the housing market is not

important to municipal politicians, this may also have an impact on the commitment of the administrative staff, as an expert in the district of Heinsberg stated:

> If the man at the top does not want to [support refugees' integration], it has an effect further down. There are social welfare office managers or employees in social welfare offices who euphorically helped me one year ago, (…) today they shrug their shoulders.

An important institution in the city of Cologne is the Relocation Coordination Centre, developed by the Municipality of Cologne, the Cologne Council of Refugees, the German Red Cross and Caritas in 2011 (Ottersbach and Wiedemann 2017). This Centre aims to help refugees in their search for apartments in order to enable a move out of municipal group accommodation. Social workers from the Department of Housing provide access to the project. They use criteria such as special vulnerability, asylum status and 'positive social prognosis' to select those refugees who will be supported. However, these criteria are in some cases incomprehensible for affected persons (BBSR 2017). According to the Relocation Centre, 842 people (237 families) were mediated into private living space in 2016. However, there is a waiting list of up to 3600 parties. This clearly shows that against the background of tight housing markets in large cities, municipal support measures to find housing for refugees (or other needy/vulnerable groups) are only of limited effectiveness (efficacy gap; Czaika and de Haas 2013).

Since 2015, the Relocation Coordination Centre has cooperated with the Municipal Housing Company, which has committed to providing 150 apartments per year for refugee accommodation (BBSR 2017). However, since this housing company mainly has apartments with two or three rooms in its stock, the demand from families with several children as well as single-person households can hardly be satisfied. Additionally, the refugees are only one group of several (vulnerable) groups seeking affordable housing. A representative of a municipal housing company observed increasing competition:

> The refugee organisations are always only one part of the demand and we must take care of as many interests as possible. And, of course, there are one or two organisations for homeless people that say, after the refugees have arrived, the homeless are left out.

New Constructions The second way to tackle the housing shortage is by new constructions. Since new conditions for financing subsidised housing were introduced at the state level in 2015, construction activity is increasing. This refers to the fact that not only traditional integration policies influence local integration processes but also policies not usually seen as integration policies, like housing policy (Czaika and de Haas 2013).

In the district of Heinsberg, representatives of different municipalities point out that there is far too little public housing. However, at the time of our interviews only one municipality had decided to invest in the construction of new housing for refugee families. By settling refugees with children in declining villages, a representative of B-town hoped to prevent the closure of primary schools:

> We have deliberately chosen these locations. In [village name] it is not possible to maintain a two-track primary school and in [village name] even the closure of the primary school will be imminent if we cannot place more children. Of course, this works relatively well with the accommodation for refugees.

This project is a good example of the efforts made by declining localities to mitigate some negative consequences of decline through the permanent integration of refugees.

In Cologne, as in some other places, the Municipal Housing Agency is investing in the construction of new housing. In 2017, they aimed to build 350 housing units. According to the Department of Housing, approx. 1000 publicly subsidized residential units are constructed annually. However, although the conditions for the financing of subsidised housing have been optimised, private investors are still more likely to focus their construction on single−/multi-family homes as well as condominiums in the upscale price segment, so predominantly expensive residential property is emerging. The municipality has tried to prevent this via new guidelines for developers. In 2013, a building land model (Kooperatives Baulandmodell) was passed, which obliges investors to develop at least 30% of a housing project as subsidised apartments. Additionally, the municipality does not sell municipal real estate to the highest bidder any more, but rather rates on the basis of an evaluation matrix (Stadt Köln 2016c). The new guideline identifies the "best concept" according to factors such as the planned number of subsidised apartments (Hendorf 2017). Hence the winning bidder is not necessarily the one with the highest bid, but rather the one that best fulfils and implements the requirements of the municipality (Attenberger 2016). These measures are examples of how the public and political discourse on the importance of affordable housing for social integration, which has intensified in recent years, is reflected in municipal housing policy approaches.

10.5   Conclusion: "Integration Only Starts When People Live in an Apartment"

To conclude, we will elaborate and explain apparent similarities and differences concerning the accommodation and integration of refugees into the regular housing market of our case study areas.

The legal framework conditions were the same in both case study areas because of national laws and laws at the federal state level that aim at regulating the distribution and reception of refugees. In principle, these laws standardise structural conditions of the integration of refugees to a high degree (e.g. the obligation to accommodate refugees, the amount of welfare benefits given to refugees). Nevertheless, we could identify differences among local strategies and policies and the underlying contextual conditions.

Firstly, this concerns the very different relevance of the topic before 2015 in the two case study areas, not least because of the different experiences with the immigration and integration of refugees. Many years before the long summer of migration, there was a political and social discussion in Cologne about the accommodation and integration of refugees. Hence, the city was prepared in a more comprehensive way, since it had developed policy documents and implemented measures for the accommodation and integration of refugees. However, the fast increase of refugees greatly exceeded existing possibilities to accommodate them according to the guidelines. With regard to the policy gaps (Czaika and de Haas 2013) that were emphasised in Sect. 10.2.1, in the city of Cologne we found evidence of an existing implementation gap and an efficacy gap. In response to the fact that the previously developed guidelines could not be implemented, new policy papers were developed which were adapted to the changed realities. However, the general policy discourse, namely the goal of decentralised accommodation in apartments, was not questioned.

In contrast to the city of Cologne, the accommodation and integration of refugees in the district of Heinsberg before 2015 was not a relevant political or social topic. Hence, the district lacked any kind of guideline with regard to refugee immigration. We consider this situation as an implementation gap, since the municipalities were not sufficiently prepared to fulfil their obligations. Against this background, the communities within the district had to develop different accommodation strategies spontaneously, sometimes under great time pressure. Although policy papers on "good accommodation practices for refugees" did not exist in the district, measures were often influenced by superordinated policy discourses concerning negative effects of mass accommodation and targeted at decentralised housing of refugees.

When comparing housing strategies for refugees within the district of Heinsberg, the municipalities show a big variation. Some of the investigated municipalities had large facilities at their disposal where they could easily accommodate a high number of refugees. In contrast, municipalities that could not draw on apparently "simple solutions" had to develop other strategies.

This points to a second aspect of the very different starting positions in the two case study areas, namely the situation on the housing market. While the housing market in Cologne was already tense before 2015 and the first accommodation of the refugees took place in sport halls, hotels and containers, the situation in most municipalities in the district of Heinsberg was initially calm. Accordingly, refugees were often placed in rented apartments upon arrival, and accommodation in large group accommodation was mainly avoided. However, the offer of vacant apartments in the district of Heinsberg was in most cases exhausted after accommodating the refugees upon arrival. Meanwhile, demand in the low-price segment exceeds supply not only in the city of Cologne but also in the district of Heinsberg. Accordingly, the transition into the housing market is now proving difficult in both case study areas. In fact, this is the case not only in our case study areas, but nationwide. The demand for affordable housing has increased further due to the number of refugees searching on local housing markets (Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Wohnungslosenhilfe 2017).

With regard to the subject of integration, one representative of a welfare organisation stated: *"Integration only starts when people live in an apartment"*. Our study has shown that the central actors in both case study areas share this view and are trying to achieve long-term housing for refugees. However, our study has also shown that the transition into the housing market has become problematic in both case study areas. Hence, in many cases integration processes have not yet started although refugees arrived years ago because many of them are still living in group accommodation, which affects not only the well-being but also the ability to learn the new language. Especially the large-scale facilities that are located in the local periphery turned out to be a constraint for the integration of refugees. A few municipalities created an isolated and spatially segregated situation for the refugees. In these isolated and segregated large-scale facilities refugees suffer disadvantages in reaching everyday life infrastructure, language courses and workplaces. Furthermore, these locations neither allow the development of bridging ties to the host society nor the development of bonding ties to possibly existing local ethnic communities.

In terms of the generalisation and transferability of the results of the two case study areas, it must be emphasized that our findings cannot be applied to all large German cities and small towns. In particular, the political situation, the housing market situation, the migrant history as well as the social acceptance in former West and East Germany (Glorius and Schondelmayer 2017) differ greatly, so that the transferability of our results is limited to former West German communities.

However, we can state that a similar situation as in Cologne can be transferred to other prosperous west German cities, since these too are characterised by a tight housing market and can look back on decades of immigration (also of refugees). Accordingly, the pressure to act is comparable and similar difficulties are to be expected for the transition into the housing market (Friedrichs et al. 2017), although the concrete strategies for dealing with the exceptionally high immigration of the years 2015–2016 may have differed (e.g. with regard to the type of accommodation). The results from the district of Heinsberg also show that different strategies have been developed in small and medium-sized towns and that large differences may even exist in neighbouring communities within one district. The transition into the housing market may be easier in peripheral small and medium-sized towns, due to less competition on the market, and less dependence on measures to support the transition. At the same time, we expect that access to housing in these areas will also largely depend on local discourses and policies for integrating refugees.

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Chapter 11
Arenas of Volunteering: Experiences, Practices and Conflicts of Voluntary Refugee Relief

Annika Hoppe-Seyler

11.1 Introduction[1]

Two key terms dominated media reports in Germany in the summer and early autumn of 2015: firstly, 'refugee crisis' (see for example Mattissek and Reuber 2016; Fleischmann and Steinhilper 2017; Luft 2016)[2] discrediting the huge number of incoming refugees, and secondly, the appreciative term 'welcome culture' (Mattissek and Reuber 2016; Sutter 2017).[3] Some authors even speak of a 'summer of welcome' (e.g. Karakayali and Kleist 2016: 2) to describe people's response to this 'refugee crisis' which manifested itself in a sudden increase in voluntary aid for refugees (Youkhana and Sutter 2017). Smaller and larger relief projects have emerged in many places in Germany and have occurred across a broad range of social classes, age and income groups, religious affiliations, and family statuses (Karakayali and Kleist 2016). A wide variety of aid services have been offered, communicated, and organised by individuals, loose, non-institutionalised groups and small or large associations, schools, churches, and municipalities (Karakayali and Kleist 2016). These have primarily been focused on providing practical and

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[1] This chapter presents the first results of an ongoing study that is part of a doctoral thesis. I would like to thank the Hanns-Seidel Foundation for supporting this project.

[2] For a comprehensive analysis of the media discourses between 2015 and 2016, see Mattissek and Reuber (2016).

[3] Mutz and Wolff (2018: 12) explain this term as follows: 'During the increasing migration of refugees and a more intensive examination of the subject of flight and migration, "welcome culture" is […] now being taken up particularly in the media public and in so-called mood studies, to describe a positive attitude towards foreigners.'

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direct care for the refugees themselves: language teaching, translation activities, practical assistance, and the delivery of donations have been the main practices of volunteers (Karakayali and Kleist 2016; Sutter 2017). This focus on the needs and difficulties of affected migrants is reflected in the numerous academic publications that address this topic. These deal with questions such as 'What refugees need' (Bendel 2016) or 'What is really important: Insights into the life situation of refugees' (Schiefer 2017). Research has focused on refugees and asks for their intentions and regionally specific attitudes to stay in certain places (Brücker et al. 2016; ongoing project from Haug et al.).

In contrast, research on the volunteers, who are often some of the first people to develop close contact with the refugees, is increasing only slowly, even though in a statistical survey by the Social Science Institute of the Protestant Church in Germany of more than 1000 respondents, conducted at the end of August 2016, over 75% said they could imagine a personal involvement in refugee relief (Ahrens 2017). Moreover, a recent study conducted by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs concludes that 19% of the German population are still providing active refugee assistance or helping in some other way (BMFSFJ 2017). Studies that have focused on volunteers and the practice of voluntary aid for refugees have mostly delivered a view 'from the outside' and have dealt with the challenges and possibilities of organising volunteer work and the interaction between voluntary and full-time positions (Karakayali and Kleist 2015, 2016; Hamann et al. 2016; Liebenberg et al. 2016; Speth and Becker 2016; Ahrens 2015, 2017; BMFSFJ 2017). A lack of research into the local practices of refugee accommodation and the relevant processes and dynamics of negotiation can be identified. In particular, geographical and ethnographic approaches to such practices, and the perspective of volunteers, are still very rarely found (exceptions include Sutter 2017; Fleischmann and Steinhilper 2017; Karakayali 2017). It is therefore important to focus more closely on practices of volunteering at a local level. In this context, the experience of volunteers must be considered, which, according to the theoretical assumption of this paper, arise and are imparted in and through the execution of practices. In order to display the internal dynamics and tensions in the field of volunteering it is necessary to regard the emerging (or 'breaking') practices of voluntary refugee relief. Furthermore, the associated, socially framed, and locally developed horizons of experience must be combined with an examination of the significance of local and communal contexts for these practices. What is of particular interest is how specific practices develop in this fluid field of voluntary refugee relief and how subjects[4] become significant in this context. I argue that emotions play an important role in voluntary refugee relief and that therefore a conceptual approach that can grasp emotionality is necessary (Karakayali 2017; Youkhana and Sutter 2017; Fleischmann and Steinhilper 2017). Moreover, the spatial characteristics of voluntary refugee relief must also be taken into account, as these play an essential role in local configurations.

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[4] In line with the pragmatist perspective discussed in more detail later, the present work assumes that subjects are not constituted as fixed, coherent units but are to be thought of as constantly evolving and 'changing'. On this processual presentation of the emergence of subjects, see Sect. 11.6 and Dewey (1995).

Therefore, the paper is structured as follows. First, it compiles and analyses contemporary research concerning voluntary refugee relief in Germany. It then gives insights into the local field of research and provides some relevant context of volunteering in the Bavarian city studied. After statements concerning methodology, empirical examples show the relevance of a theoretically underpinned consideration of experience, especially in its emotional and spatial dimensions. With the help of the pragmatist concept of experience, both the development of practices and the emergence of conflicts and ruptures within voluntary work can be explained. Especially regarding conflicts with the administrative and bureaucratic asylum system, the emergence of the voluntary subject—whether political or decidedly unpolitical—becomes relevant.

11.2 Contemporary Research Concerning Voluntary Work in Germany

Even though research projects focusing on voluntary refugee relief increased in 2016 and 2017, the number of such projects is still relatively modest (Mutz and Wolff 2018). A number of large-scale studies (Karakayali and Kleist 2015, 2016; Hamann et al. 2016; Liebenberg et al. 2016; Speth and Becker 2016; Ahrens 2015, 2017; BMFSFJ 2017) have come to the following concordant conclusions on volunteers, their activities, and their forms of organisation: Since 2015, 55% of Germany's population has provided refugee assistance in one way or another, and 19% are currently still active (BMFSFJ 2017). Most of the volunteers are female, but there is a more equal distribution in terms of age and working status (Karakayali and Kleist 2016). Membership of a religious organisation is also roughly the same as the national average, whereas there is a slight overproportion of volunteers who are migrants. Involvement is seen more in very large cities, although an increase in voluntary work in rural areas and small towns and cities can be observed. The engagement was characterised in its beginning by spontaneity, a proactive character, and a high degree of initiative (ibd.). However, many of the initiatives underwent increasing professionalisation and formalisation after an informal start-up phase (Hamann et al. 2016). On average, refugee helpers currently spend around five-and-a-half hours per week on their activities (BMFSFJ 2017), and nearly a quarter stated that they were active for more than ten hours per week (Karakayali and Kleist 2016). Especially in coordination, a high number of hours of volunteer work is invested (Hamann et al. 2016). Nevertheless, despite these high workloads, over three quarters of participants were satisfied with their activities (Karakayali and Kleist 2016). The areas of activity focus on counselling, accompaniment, German language lessons, leisure activities, collection and distribution of donations, and coordination of activities (Hamann et al. 2016; BMFSFJ 2017). Most of the studies stressed that it was especially the first phase, the admission of refugees, that would not have been possible without the help of actively engaged people, and that the various assistance groups have meanwhile become an 'indispensable part of a liberal and helpful

society' (Speth and Becker 2016: 6). On a smaller scale, Liebenberg et al. (2016) present a local example of voluntary refugee relief and illustrate that, apart from general structural recommendations, each region and city offers its own approaches and challenges. In analogy to Hamann et al. (2016), Liebenberg et al. draw attention to the effects of voluntary refugee relief that go beyond direct aid: they recognize in it an important stabilising factor of municipal democracy and a building block against right-wing agitation (Liebenberg et al. 2016).

Regarding the motives of volunteers, the BMFSFJ study (2017: 26) gives the top three reasons as 'because I basically want to help others', 'because I enjoy it', and 'because I am convinced that it's important for Germany that the refugees are well integrated'. These statements show that emotional and political aspects play an important role in becoming a volunteer. Karakayali and Kleist (2016) see high political awareness amongst those involved in voluntary work since 2015 as they stated that they want to help shape society, at least on a small scale, through their activities. A research team from the University of Applied Sciences in Munich found volunteers being motivated by a socially oriented humanism and not for religious reasons (Mutz et al. 2015; Mutz and Wolff 2018). In addition to the desire to make up for social deficits and to make it easier for refugees to integrate, they also identify self-referential motives of the volunteers, such as the wish for recognition, being needed, and widening personal horizons; all statements indicate a great relevance of (positive) emotions for voluntary work.

Recently, a few works from sociologists and anthropologists have focused on the role of emotions in the context of voluntary refugee relief (Karakayali 2017; Sutter 2017) and the political aspects of volunteer work (Fleischmann and Steinhilper 2017). Sutter specifically speaks of emotional practices, which, according to his observations, play the central role in civil society engagement for refugees. Performative practices, media representations and the interaction with materialities enable an emotionalization of engagement and can explain how the surveyed volunteers use emotions to act politically. The close connection between voluntary refugee relief and emotional experiences is also the central aspect of this paper.

In summary, it can be concluded that the socio-politically relevant connection between voluntary refugee relief, its emotional and spatial dimensions, and the way in which people become politically involved and committed is largely unexplored. Only very few studies have researched this area in great depth and a theoretical framework is almost completely missing. Accordingly, I will present a notion of how individuals become subjects (as volunteers) in local fields of practice, assuming that these processes are grounded in experience. In the following section, I will present some of the contexts relevant for these experiences in order to provide a basis for introducing the empirical and theoretical considerations.
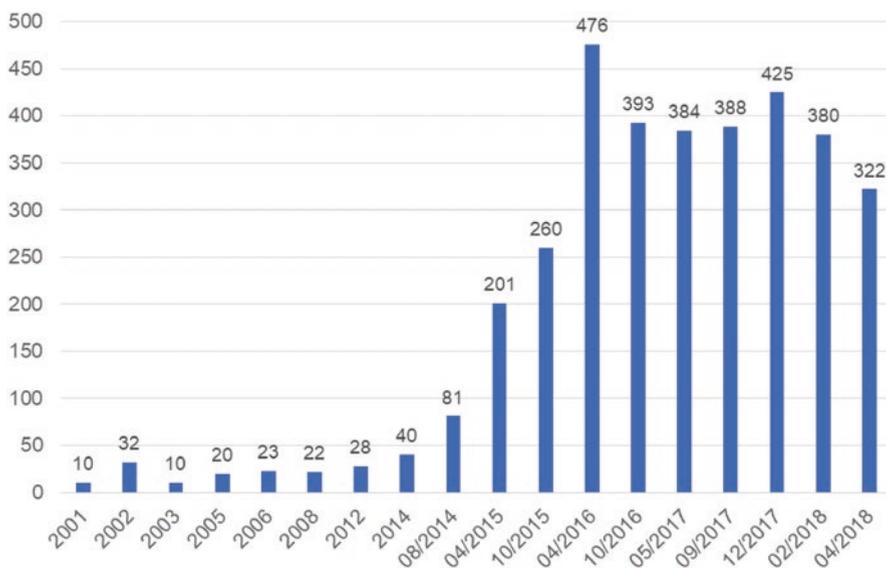
Fig. 11.1 Development of membership numbers. (Source: Membership administration of the organisation: own compilation)

11.3 The Local Context of Voluntary Refugee Relief

At the beginning of the research project in spring 2014, the decisive role that volunteers would play in the Bavarian city in the coming months and years could not yet be predicted. I was based in a local organisation for voluntary refugee relief, which was founded in 2002 and was well established in urban society. Through its long-lasting activities, members of the organisation had built up various connections with other actors relevant for the refugee work, and partly personal relations with representatives of the city administration. Therefore, the association appeared as an ideal door-opener to gain insight into the local conditions of voluntary refugee relief. Figure 11.1 illustrates the rapid increase in membership in the following years.

Since the membership lists were not consistently maintained until the end of 2014, the previous years are estimates based on participation in irregular exchange meetings (with the exception of 2002, where an exact figure is available). It becomes apparent that especially between the surveys in autumn 2014 and spring 2015, and between October 2015 and April 2016, there was a strong increase in the number of volunteer refugee helpers. The second increase reflects the development referred to as the "Summer of Welcome"[5] which in autumn 2015, following the temporary suspension of the Dublin Regulation by German Chancellor Angela

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[5] Karakayali and Kleist (2015, 2016).

Merkel,[6] led to great attention to refugee relief in many places. The significantly increased number of members already in April 2015 can be traced back to a special incidence in the investigated city that occurred at the beginning of September 2014. Back then, the government of Middle Franconia gave the city administration two days to create an emergency admission facility for up to 300 refugees. This was achieved by the immediate closure of a local open-air swimming pool, on whose parking lot an infrastructure (sanitary facilities and sleeping accommodation, which was primarily tents) was set up, drawing on the capacities of the civil protection and social services. The following months were stressful and a burden on everyone involved, especially the refugees (who at times threatened to go on hunger strike because they no longer wanted to wait for their registration at the responsible initial reception facility), but also the municipal and charity workers and the many volunteers. Most of the volunteers were very spontaneously involved and mainly helped with the direct care and support of the refugees. The joint coping with this situation by volunteers and staff members resulted in a first wave of entries into the organisation and for many, even several years later, constitutes a positive experience.

There are no official figures regarding the further development of the refugees accommodated in the city area. A personal inquiry to the city revealed a rather vague picture of steadily growing numbers of refugees. According to this, the number of people with a refugee background more than quadrupled from approx. 500 at the end of 2014 to approx. 2300 in 2018. At the same time, the local organisation also grew as shown in Fig. 11.1. For the organisation, which had previously grown rather unplanned, this rapid increase of members initially meant a significant rise in workload in terms of organisation. At the same time, little political-administrative support was wanted and possible. For in addition to the generally accepted picture of relatively regulation-free voluntary work, which may and should exist independently of state institutions and controls, municipal and state authorities were overstrained by the very rapid increase in the number of asylum seekers in 2015.

The heavy workload took months but hardly ever led to volunteers terminating their involvement. Instead, various restructuring processes took place within the organisation, so that the tasks could be distributed more evenly. Those volunteers who were very dissatisfied with providing 40 to 60 hours of direct support and assistance a week reduced their activities rather than giving up their commitment completely. Many volunteers reported that they suffered exhaustion and overwork. On the sidelines of an event on the subject of "Protection from Burnout", a volunteer told me analogously: 'I already had that [occupational burnout]. […] I lost ten kilo. But I'm alright now' and then turned to an asylum seeker with whom she had agreed to practice German. Similar stories have been told often, especially since the noticeable reduction of reallocations to the city. Moreover, they explain why the decline

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[6] The statements of Chancellor Angela Merkel that "Asylum knows no upper limit" and "We can do it" led to a temporarily suspension of the Dublin Regulation on 31 August 2015 and thus enabled hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers who had not yet applied for asylum in their respective EU entry country to do so in Germany (Mushaben 2018: 14; Luft 2016: 68).

in the number of members of the organisation is relatively moderate compared to the previous increase. In particular, the latest drop in numbers is due to the fact that at certain intervals the list of members is cleaned up to remove those who no longer respond to member queries. However, it cannot be ruled out that these persons may nevertheless continue to help individual refugees or families outside the structure of the association, as I have been told several times in personal conversations. Such observations show that voluntary refugee aid, despite its often spontaneous character and with few or no institutionalised practices, tends towards a certain regularity and continuity of commitment.

This persistence of voluntary practices despite the sometimes burdensome contexts can be theoretically framed and made understandable with the pragmatist concept of experience. Experiences are conceived as embedded in social conditions and lead to a complex interplay of practical action, emotional experience, and intellectual reflection. This theoretical framework can grasp the emotional and strongly practice-oriented research field of 'refugee care' as arenas of volunteering. It points out how subjects emerge, are challenged and reconfigured in regard to various practical, emotional, and physical experiences. In Sects. 11.5 and 11.6 I provide a more detailed conceptualisation of the relevant concepts of 'experience', 'arenas of volunteering', and 'becoming a subject' based on empirical insights. However, some methodological considerations will be explained first.

11.4   Methodological Considerations

How do you explore experiences that, by their very nature, not only concern intellectual knowledge but have both practical and emotional components? The perspective of this paper assumes that situationally made experiences can either be observed in practical realisation, in other words while they are actually taking place, or can be interrogated in conversations as they can be intellectually reflected. The emotional dimension of experiences becomes visible with both methods: it can be observed in its bodily 'suffering' and becomes intersubjectively intelligible through communication.[7] To capture practical doings and intellectual reflections of volunteers as well as those of the researcher, this work is based on the grounded theory methodology (Geiselhart et al. 2012; Wagenseil 2014; Strauss and Corbin 1996), which corresponds to Dewey's understanding of research as a reciprocal process (Volbers 2015). This process is guided by 'the basic principles of openness and the method of permanent comparison' (Geiselhart et al. 2012: 85). Thus, the aims and guidelines of the research only emerge during the empirical process and need to be constantly reflected upon; moreover, the theory developed from this process can and must refer

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[7] This translation of bodily experience into conventionalized language always leaves an untranslatable remnant which contains a certain amount of uncertainty and the possibility of failure. Due to limited space this cannot be expanded upon here, but several authors have discussed this to a larger extent (e.g. Berwing 2012; Hetzel 2008).

to the data and be measured against it. This close connection between theory and empiricism in the sense of grounded theory is also reflected in the structure of the paper.

The methods used in this study are mainly qualitative, open interviews and ethnographic studies through participatory observation in the form of action research[8] (Chatterton et al. 2010; Brambilla 2012). Since the author of the article is herself active in several helper groups as well as at the organizational level of the investigated association, a deep and quite comprehensive insight into the structures, procedures, and negotiation processes was possible. Much of the data collected so far has been generated from observing various meetings and communication processes between volunteers and other people involved in the field of refugee relief. These include volunteer group meetings and working group meetings of the organisation for refugee relief, meetings with representatives of various interest groups (e.g. workers' welfare organisations, the city administration, or school representatives), public speeches, and panel discussions on the topic of refugees, round tables, and board meetings, but also everyday email correspondence, play groups with refugee children or joint leisure activities. In several interview phases between 2014 and 2017, more than 40 qualitative interviews were conducted with volunteers, full-time workers, refugees and city authorities. These came about through personal contacts and the snowball principle. The data pool also includes transcripts of various meetings and discussion forums, flyers, legislative texts, images, and audio recordings of the observations, as well as personal reflections on my own position in the research process, in the form of field diary entries. In the following sections, extracts of the empirical data are combined with theoretical considerations in order to gain a deeper understanding of the observed situations. Since the presented project is currently still being implemented and its methodology is designed for a cyclical research process with increasing 'saturation', only preliminary results can be presented here.

11.5   Experiences, Emotions and Emerging Practices

The following interview extract is a typical example of how a volunteer got engaged in refugee relief:

> Then these containers came into my residential area and then, then somehow, yes, it was, not because I wanted to become a member of the association, or something like that, but I went by there several times a day and then I just, uh… in the bike basket I had street crayons and Frisbees and a jump rope and I was just there and we painted. […] I'm kind of like that, I was in the neighbourhood, I drove by and I volunteered at the trade union and did youth work there, in my Frankfurt time, so I know that I have a connection to it … and, yeah, and the kids, of course, the kids used to see my dog, and then they wanted to pet the dog and that was kinda, yeah, sweet (Volunteer, Interview 06, translated by author).

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[8] For further examples regarding the implementation of participatory research, see Chaps. 9 and 12.

The dog plays an important role and was often mentioned in the further course of the interview. The practical doings of playing with the kids and letting them pet the dog is inseparably connected with accompanying emotions of kindness and joy. The statement: 'and that was kinda, yeah, sweet' clearly displays such positive feelings. The spatial proximity intertwined with previous experiences with volunteer work initially led to sporadic interactions. These moments are reported being full of emotions, whereby private interests mix with public concerns, so that the volunteer develops further commitment. This calls for an approach that can take the emotional dimension of experiences into account. I therefore adopt the pragmatist philosophy of practice developed by John Dewey.[9]

11.5.1   The Pragmatist Concept of Experience

Dewey's focus was on the events of here and now. His goal was to redirect the philosophy of his time to practice and human experience. He saw experience as an emotionally charged, experimental, and creative process of exploring and acquiring the world (Cutchin 2008; Morgan 2014). Experiences are not only constitutional conditions of the social, material, geographical, political and historical contexts (i.e. the respective situation) but are also individually possessed as they are processed by human organisms. By means of conjoint dealings and associations, experiences intertwine individuals with their communities (McCormack 2010). 'Associated or joint activity is a condition of the creation of a community. But association itself is physical and organic, while communal life is moral, that is emotionally, intellectually, consciously sustained' (Dewey 1995: 151). Therefore, experiences are never to be understood as something purely individual (as mere one-experience making), but also as a social experience, only possible in the community and with the surrounding world.

Three aspects play a role in the process of making an experience and becoming experienced: experiences are (a) made 'practically and physically', (b) emotionally lived through, and (c) intellectually reflected upon and classified with reference to existing knowledge (McCormack 2010; Cutchin 2008). This perspective focuses on the intervening of emotions, practices, and knowledge of the research field and make it accessible for analysis. Thus, the approach chosen here can connect with debates on affects and emotions (Davidson et al. 2007; Smith et al. 2009, 2010; Schurr and Strüver 2016) and can add practical examples of socially relevant empirical research. Following the process perspective of many affective theories, which understand affects as relational and emerging phenomena, Dewey's view of experience-based emotionalities can be added. In his terms, affects and emotions must be understood as processed (and above all communicated) by individu-

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[9] For a first overview of Dewey's life and work, see http://dewey.pragmatism.org/

als, but they are not inherent in them as intrinsic properties (Dewey 1995).[10] Instead, the concept of experience sees emotionalities as inherent in social practice. Emotions are 'supra-individual' but Dewey's particular contribution is that he does not only see the interpersonal dimension but also points out how emotions are lived through by individuals and how they contribute to societal development. Therefore, when they are researched and analysed, they cannot be detached from the singular situations, but rather must be viewed in context, with all accompanying social, material, and historical dimensions.

In the context of refugee relief, the consideration of the lived experiences shows that the motivation to engage in voluntary work and to continue with it is mainly based on emotions rather than intellectual reasons. Often, and with pleasure, volunteers report about small success experiences. A volunteer was uncertain 'whether we could check on the BAMF[11] in any way concerning the progress of the asylum application'. Nevertheless, she familiarized herself with the administrative procedures and submitted a corresponding request. She was not just a little surprised when 'only three weeks after this letter he [the asylum applicant] had his recognition. For THREE years. [Pause] And of course everyone was like 'WHAAAT, you can do that?!?"' (Volunteer, Interview 07, translated by author). The pleasant surprise of success and the appreciation of refugees and other volunteers made her visibly proud. With the same pride, another volunteer spoke about a flat she found after a long search for a family of five. Another volunteer explained the relief he felt as a church asylum, usually combined with an extremely high expenditure of time, finally led to a positive result for the person being hosted and cared for. Often, volunteers discuss pleasant experiences: nice afternoons in an accommodation facility, kind and tasty dinner invitations, or playful encounters with the refugees' children. Such reports are widely shared and the emotional character of different situations is often highlighted.

News easily spread through the network structure of the organisation. Rumours about troubles circulate fast between different helper circles, coordinators and board members due to regular meetings and intensive and fast email traffic. Problems are discussed quickly and supporters are found, so that in most cases rapid solutions are possible. Accordingly, positive experiences take place frequently. And even in frustrating or hopeless cases, in which for example anger arises about refugees, other volunteers, the operators of the accommodation facility, the government or the bureaucratic system, support from other volunteers or full-time staff often mitigates negative feelings. This confirms, especially in retrospect, the corresponding prac-

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[10] On this issue, Dewey (1995) asserts that feelings are indeed experienced by complex and active living beings, but they are not their own in an incorporated, physical sense. He writes: 'The qualities [feelings] were never in the organism; they were always qualities of interactions involving both non-organic things and organisms.' (249). It is only through language/communication that these qualities of interactions, i.e. the feelings, can become signs of objective differences, give meaning, report, and prophesy. 'With language they [sensitivities, feelings, qualities] are clearly differentiated and identified. They are then >>objectified<<; [...]' (249).

[11] Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, which is responsible for deciding on asylum applications.

tices and leads to continuous commitment. A detailed observation of existing voluntary practices must therefore take place with special attention to the emotional components in order to be able to understand how these emerged and why they have been consolidated.

The next section will link such emotionalities to spatial settings, collective memories and personal biographical experiences.

11.5.2   Material and Spatial Conditions of Volunteering

'I went by there several times a day; I was in the neighbourhood'. This quotation indicates the connection that experience creates between an individual and its environment. According to Dewey, the individual transacts with the socio-material arrangements of space and thus becomes a socially and spatially situated subject. This central concept of 'transactions' needs some further clarification: 'Transaction is distinct from interaction which implies communication between two fully formed organisms. In transactions, the environment and organism are co-constituted' (Bridge 2008: 1580). According to Dewey the concept of transactions describes how, in everyday life situations, there are no fixed, fully developed subjects and objects that interact with each other; instead, all organisms realise just one of the possibilities of themselves in a specific situation as they establish relationships with one another (Geiselhart 2019). At the same time, the environment also becomes fixed in a way that facilitates the actual situation. Situations are always direct, immediate, new and different on every single occasion. Therefore, with transactions the organisms undergo different states of relatedness and thus different subjectivities (Bridge 2008). Accordingly, individuals only become a subject in situations.

Dewey names 'situations' as those moments and spatial localizations in which an over-individualized experiencing takes place (McCormack 2010; Morgan 2014). In order to emphasize the singularity of these situations and their transactional co-constituting character, the term 'arenas of volunteering' will be used below. One can conceptualize these processes of negotiation in the arenas of volunteering as based on overlapping, experience-based, and path-dependent worldviews that must be explored, negotiated, and conveyed at the local level (Bridge 2008; Cutchin 2008; Steiner 2014). The singular arenas of volunteering can therefore be thought of as situated and temporarily fixed negotiation spaces in which the participants are established as voluntary subjects and in which different experiences can be made, lived, and communicated (see also Massey 1994; Cutchin 2008; Jupp 2008; Conradson 2003). Spaces are conceived as intersections of heterogeneous lines of experience: on the one hand, they are only produced as significant in the social process of experiencing; and on the other hand, they make experiences understandable and comprehensible in the first place, whereby experiences are always also spatialized and materialized through them (Cutchin 2008; Bridge 2008). In the arenas of voluntary work, people meet each other with differing experience-based ideas about voluntary refugee relief in general, as well as about its actual practices and implementations.

The general material conditions of arenas of volunteering are characterised by a particularly high degree of fluidity and instability. This is largely due to the structure of voluntary relief for refugees. At least in its local organisational form, the investigated association does not have facilities of its own. Instead, external properties are used for the various meetings such as assistance or board meetings, information evenings or further training, consulting hours, German courses, and meetings with refugees, municipal employees or representatives of other organisations. These facilities include, for example, rooms in community centres, neighbourhood houses, schools, church parish halls, or the city hall, rooms in shared accommodation (for refugees) or of private individuals; even outdoor public places or theatres and cinemas are sometimes used. While not exhaustive, this list illustrates the diversity of the possible places in which volunteer refugee helpers meet. Some examples can serve to highlight the relation between different facilities and voluntary refugee relief practices.

A positive connotation with any 'arena of volunteering' due to its physical location in a familiar neighbourhood seems to clearly promote commitment and willingness to become a volunteer (see also Jupp 2008). For example, one volunteer told me:

> The containers, which are now used as shared accommodation facilities for refugees, were formerly used as temporary rooms for my daughter's kindergarten. Therefore, I knew the place and never felt uncomfortable when I walked by or in it. So, I thought I could help there, as I already knew a lot about the rooms (Volunteer, Interview 23, translated by author).

The interviewee felt familiar with the premises, she knew how it felt to go inside, to move things around in that place, to show people around, and to deliver collected donations to the accommodation facilities. She felt secure, the material objects were familiar, and thus she felt confident that she could support the refugees appropriately. Positive emotions create self-efficacy.

However, many of the structures used for refugee relief were originally intended for the local population. Refugee accommodation can be found in schools or gymnasiums which are then temporarily unusable for their original purpose. This fact is often exploited by the media and can be heard from administrators in charge:

> So, for example the one in Wilhelm Street now with us in the city or the one in Main Street,[12] it's a good thing that there is no one in there anymore, because these are not good places for living, and I told the government I would leave them on standby, because … because what happens when the numbers start to rise again, then we're back to gymnasiums and that's the worst thing, um […] in these other accommodation facilities we'll at least have, uh, partitioned *compartments*, yes, they're not rooms because there's no ceiling over them, but at least compartments (Mayor, Interview 11, translated by author).

These examples also illustrate the path dependency of arenas based on previous experiences. While in the first example, positively connoted experiences led to the containers being perceived as a safe, comfortable place, statements in the latter quote refer to a very tense and negative context. This took place in the late summer

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[12] Both large collective accommodation facilities, locations anonymized.

of 2015, when the Bavarian town was forced to accommodate a surplus of 100 refugees per week. The accommodation in various school gymnasiums provided a very tense atmosphere for the city's staff, refugees, volunteers, and the local population. The clearly negative evaluation of this period is reflected in the words 'that's the worst thing'.

The collective coping with this situation (as well as with the provisional tent camp in a swimming pool parking lot mentioned above) is recalled and emphasized repeatedly even several years later, for example on public occasions (such as a reception for volunteers, or the honouring of individual representatives of voluntary organisations), or at volunteer events (annual meetings, helper meetings) and in personal conversations. The evaluation of these experiences is thus quite ambivalent and straining, as recalling past feelings of stress and fear of an escalatory situation at that time mix with relief and pride in coping. This influences contemporary practices of dealing with current shared accommodation facilities and the way in which people interact, perceive, and argue in the various negotiating situations (e.g. city leaders and the state government, municipal employees and volunteers, or volunteers and refugees in the accommodation facilities concerned).

11.5.3 The Contribution of Idiosyncratic Biographies

In addition, experiences that at first sight have no direct relation (either spatially or temporally) to current situations can influence the practices and emotional experiences of voluntary subjects. This is illustrated in the following example:

> I was abroad, did some voluntary work in an African country. When I first arrived, I felt very lonely and insecure. I was helpless cos I didn't understand the language and didn't know the country. But I was welcomed warmly and everyone was so kind. I was very grateful. So, when I was back in Germany, I thought: like it was for me back there, it's the same now for all the refugees who come to this country (Volunteer, Interview 22, translated by author).

The fact that the interviewed woman thought about her experiences abroad and transferred her experience in anticipation of the refugees' perspective—assuming they must feel the same or even worse than she did—created empathy and a readiness to engage in personal relationships with refugees. So, this led to her voluntary action for refugees in the current time and place and influenced her present experiences. Similarly, many people have experiences that they feel allow them to relate to the refugees' situations. In the statement above, the volunteer told me about going on a trip, arriving in a different place, meeting new people, fighting tooth and nail to communicate, doing voluntary work, taking pictures, etc. All these practical doings were accompanied by emotions: being nervous, excited, and curious; feeling insecure and lonely, then welcomed and happy. This generates the wish to recreate her altogether positive experiences for refugees. Similar motives are expressed by several volunteers and show that the consideration of current volunteer practices must always take into account their interdependence with past experiences and arenas.

11.6   Conflicts, Ruptures and the Examination of Political Voluntary Subjects

While the concept of experience with its emphasis on the emotional dimension can explain the emergence of practices, on the one hand, it can simultaneously help to understand their ruptures on the other. The previous examples have shown that individuals who become 'refugee helpers' come with different experiences and then transact accordingly. In Dewey's approach, the individual is not to be understood as an autonomous actor, but as the 'place' where all the different and complex information of a situation is brought together. Based on individual dispositions and habits, this information is processed in order to develop subjectivity as an attitude within the given situation. This is a permanent process whereby the subject is always in the process of becoming (Geiselhart 2019). In its constant development and change, the voluntary subject also has to deal with unpleasant, challenging and even conflicting situations.

Several interviewees mentioned experiences that were particularly frustrating and hard. Some were annoyed with other volunteers or refugees who had not acted according to their expectations. For example, one volunteer reported disappointedly that a family she had cared for had not invited her since she found an apartment for them, though they had had very intensive contact before. She told me:

> So that was a friendship for me, which I then brought back to the voluntary level. [Because] they have since moved out, I thought to myself, well, they will certainly invite me for coffee, but they have already lived there for two months and I have not heard a thing. So I think, ok, it was just, so, this was in any case not a long-term friendship (Volunteer, Interview 07, translated by author).

Much more frequently, frustration is derived from conflicts with the bureaucratic levels of the asylum procedure and the corresponding administrative offices. Once a woman spontaneously said to me 'I wouldn't do it again!'— 'it' meaning her voluntary help for refugees. This happened in a completely private situation where her frustration about the immigration authorities who refused to allow a young man from Azerbaijan to work boiled over. 'I just don't get it; it's like they want us volunteers to give up', she concluded, enraged.

Conflicts among volunteers are especially burdensome as they directly affect the working atmosphere. For example, one volunteer felt unfairly treated and not sufficiently supported by the board in forwarding her requests for help, and so complained to other volunteers, as well as to full-time and municipal employees. Another was annoyed that the notes she hung up in the accommodation facility were always disappearing. She was sure that another volunteer was responsible even though she couldn't prove it. Such conflicts are often staged in digital spaces where no physical confrontation is necessary. In these cases, the conflicts can be carried out with changed transaction partners, and do not necessarily have to be resolved. Such conflicts often circle around opinions of how best to assist refugees or what alternative methods of action and self-initiatives are suitable.

However, conflicts in voluntary refugee work rarely cause volunteers to quit. Much more frequently, a change in practices can be observed, for example through a reduction in working hours, a move to another field of activity or a new composition of certain boards. When volunteers terminate their commitment entirely it is often due to changes and ruptures in other realms of their life. Some find new jobs, others move to another town, or their family situation changes. However, a major issue discussed in conflicting situations is the question of to what extent voluntary refugee work is political or even activism.

Fleischmann and Steinhilper (2017) argue that volunteering for refugees should not be understood as unpolitical, as often claimed by media or volunteers themselves. Even if they correctly discuss the forms of political subjectivation that take place and draw attention to the transformative potentials that result from it, they neglect the individual experiences and reflections of volunteers. Most volunteers are well aware of the politicization of 'their' field of activity and address and reflect on it in different ways.

It can be confirmed that many volunteers clearly reject politicization, as the following quote shows:

> [audible inhalation] From my experience, it's possible to be totally non-political, um … yes, because I don't really care […]. You can stay out of it. That's possible. […] That doesn't mean for me that I agree, but I *do not want* to get involved in politics; that was my premise from the beginning (Volunteer, Interview 07, translated by author).

Others regard themselves as unpolitical but recognize the political attributions within the arenas of volunteering and address them through reflection:

> I would still describe myself as not being politically active, but … yes, it's just that it's a little bit political when you just say I don't agree with what everyone says—we can't [help] everybody and there are too many and so on (Volunteer, Interview 02, translated by author).

And finally, a comparatively small number of respondents see themselves as being politically active in their practices, even though the transition to politically institutionalized arenas is usually absent. Since 2015 the researched association has had its own working group on politics. This working group addresses issues of local and national migration and integration policy. However, from currently more than 300 registered members, only five are in this group. Communal and integration politics have an ambivalent aftertaste, as one volunteer stated: 'Actually, I see it as something political; definitely […] it's a political statement to get involved on a voluntary basis.' The volunteer then reported that she once joined a meeting of activists against right-wing radicalism. 'That was actually too political for me […] [laughs] that was too much for me … politically negative in the sense that politics often … it's unfortunately often just talk' (Volunteer, Interview 05, translated by author). The volunteer differentiated between politics in terms of negotiating on a theoretical basis and being political in one's practical doings and commitments. She also explained that she did not feel comfortable amongst the professional politicians who joined those activities.

Many volunteers insisted that they are not politically motivated or politically active, at least at the programmatic level, and they sometimes even clearly distinguished themselves from 'integration politics'. The field of voluntary refugee relief involves very different political concepts and understandings. This creates numerous tensions against the background of the strong processes of politicization in the fields of refugee care, integration, and migration. Conflicts arise around the question of the 'right' or 'necessary' degree of political activity of volunteer refugee helpers. Volunteers, who are unpolitical in their self-perception, therefore move and act in a highly politicized field. These tensions have decisive influences on the dynamics of voluntary organisations as they often provoke internal conflicts. In meetings or informal discussions, political programmatic questions are frequently raised and discussed.

11.7 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with an established relief organisation for refugee help in a mid-sized Bavarian city and offers insights from the perspective of the pragmatist philosophy of praxis. The empirical data is interpreted with the help of the concept of experience, understood as a situational and supra-individual form of practical doings, emotional live-through, and intellectual reflection.

A close look at the spatial and material conditions, collective memories, idiosyncratic biographies and major lines of conflict revealed how volunteers emerge differently as subjects. It became clear that 'being a volunteer' becomes effective in particular through the personal relationships people establish through transactions amongst each other and with refugees. Furthermore, the path dependency and situational dependence of volunteers' experiences in and through their practices was illustrated. The emotionally pleasant and sometimes ambivalent moments were the ones that bound the volunteers to their work and the organisation. The negotiating spaces of voluntary refugee relief can be described as fluid and unstable and have great impact on the experiences of volunteers.

It was possible to show the contestation of volunteers induced by the increasing politicization of 'their' field of activity and to provide valuable new insights into the 'conflicting nature of volunteering' due to this politicization. As Kurt Lewin argues, "the so-called minority problems are in reality problems of the majority" (Lewin 1953: 295), meaning that experiences at the grassroots level of voluntary refugee relief reflect and concern processes of refugee integration as a whole. It is essential to see that for many volunteers, their work only becomes meaningful through experiences of togetherness and through the lived relationships. However, these are often prevented or hindered by the administrative side. Moreover, volunteers increasingly feel they are being used as service providers for the aim of maintaining the current asylum system, which pursues political interests they cannot share. Political authorities have made volunteer activities much more time-consuming and frustrating due to stricter laws. Simultaneously the current culture of appreciation only honours

volunteers for their activities but not for their personal commitment and emotional engagement. Yet the willingness to help and integrate refugees relies on the latter, not on formalities or duties, or on praise from management or full-time staff. The commitment of volunteers should be supported wisely by promoting existing relationships. Furthermore, cooperation between volunteers and administrative bodies should be experienced as a common interest in a shared goal.

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Chapter 12
Local Innovation in the Reception of Asylum Seekers in the Netherlands: Plan Einstein as an Example of Multi-level and Multi-sector Collaboration

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12.1 Introduction: Asylum Reception as a Multi-level Governance Issue

Asylum seeker reception in Europe has proven a 'wicked issue' (Rittel and Webber 1973), whereby policy actors identify the problem in different ways and existing policy solutions have so far failed to resolve the challenges. This became particularly clear during the 2015–2016 European 'refugee crisis' when various political and administrative problems with asylum reception were apparent. Agreement about the nature of the problem and desirability of solutions was difficult to reach at European and national levels of government, while achieving consensus and constructing partnership-based modes of multilevel governance between different tiers proved difficult.

In the Dutch context, as well as other European countries, there is considerable debate about the number of asylum seekers that should be admitted, as well as how the reception of such asylum seekers should take shape. This issue has been the basis of discussion for at least 30 years, while the most important arguments have not changed fundamentally (Geuijen 2004). On the one hand, there is a view that the human rights of refugees must be protected; that refugees have the right to protection from persecution and that they have civil, political and economic rights, such as the right to freedom of expression, the right to housing, to work and to health care. On the other hand, there is the view that national interests must be protected. This relates firstly to the field of economy and social security (costs of welfare, education

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etc.); secondly in relation to the socio-cultural field (especially around potential threats to national identity); and thirdly in the area of security (both related to general crime and more recently to terrorism). The contrasting arguments can be found in many variants in discussions on asylum that have taken place in the past three decades.

Second, in terms of content and governance, there is an impasse on the national level. The asylum problem is blamed repeatedly on the European Union, on migrant smugglers, as well as on asylum seekers themselves, some of whom are perceived as 'abusing' the asylum system. Politicians seem compelled to express the feelings of 'the regular (angry) Dutch citizen' and to leave the burden of receiving asylum seekers to those countries in Europe where asylum seekers first arrive: mostly in Italy and Greece. Within the Netherlands, we also see that asylum policies at the national level have increasingly been stripped down to a depoliticized, managerial approach to asylum reception. The Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA) organizes asylum seekers' centers, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) organizes the asylum procedure, while the Repatriation and Departure Service (DT & V) organizes return and expulsions. At the same time, the asylum debate at the national level is at an impasse: there are polarized political debates in the House of Representatives and responsibilities are shifted to the European level, but on this level of governance, actors are even further away from reaching consensus.

Within this governance context, problems related to asylum reception are thereby, by default arriving at the local level. The poor socio-economic integration of refugees implies, among other things, pressure on municipalities: of having to pay for benefits, as well as solve shortages within the local social housing rental market. Problems in achieving returns lead to undocumented people living on the streets in municipalities, who then face obligations to provide 'bed-bath-bread' provisions for them. Dissatisfaction and protest in neighbourhoods where these problems manifest are also directed against the administration of municipalities, who must address local tensions. Yet in many ways, their hands are tied because of the 'scale mismatch' (Castells 2008) between the arenas in which the concrete problems are felt (the local level) and the place where these problems are discussed and managed (the national level).

The 'refugee crisis' of 2015–2016 exacerbated some of these problems related to asylum reception on the local level. However, as we explain in this chapter, this moment also opened up a window of opportunity (Kingdon 1984) for experimenting with new forms of asylum reception. At the national level, large policy frameworks for asylum reception are still being developed, but this created possibilities for discretion in the implementation of integration and asylum policies, which had been increasingly left to local authorities. Already before the refugee crisis, local governments had sought to take the initiative in shaping processes of asylum seeker reception and integration in their own ways, in what is termed as the 'local turn' in integration policies (Bak Jørgensen 2012; Scholten 2013). Across Europe, cities have been assuming a pioneering role, and some of these locally developed policy initiatives are subsequently transferred to the national level (Dekker et al. 2015). In

this way, during the refugee crisis, the development of local solutions was not only a necessity, but also an opportunity that was taken by cities in various European countries.

This chapter discusses a specific policy initiative that was developed within such contexts in the Dutch city of Utrecht: the Utrecht Refugee Launchpad. This asylum centre is known colloquially as *Plan Einstein*, in reference to both the inspirational spirit of its namesake and its location along the Einsteindreef, a busy road in the neighborhood of Overvecht in the North of the city. Applying the concepts of multilevel governance and experimental governance, this chapter analyzes how it was possible that this initiative was able to be realized at this location and at this time. Besides the political-administrative vacuum at the European and national level of governance, and the urgency of the refugee crisis as a window of opportunity, the analysis also addresses how this local solution came about through manoeuvring by key actors of the initiative within its multilevel context.[1]

12.2 Methodology

The chapter provides a case study of Plan Einstein as an exemplar of the type of local experiments with asylum reception which have started at several locations in the Netherlands – just as elsewhere in Europe and beyond – around the time of the European refugee crisis. In the deprived district of Overvecht in Utrecht, in late 2016, an office building was converted into an asylum seeker centre. At this location, 400 asylum seekers were expected to live together with 38 local youths. Various social activities and learning opportunities were provided to connect asylum seekers/refugees and local residents socially and professionally at the centre, as well as to help them generate new business ideas. The project sought to develop participants' 'futureproof' skills that would be of benefit to them irrespective of whether their future was in the Netherlands or elsewhere. Challenging the national approach to reception, characterised by the motto to provide 'austere but humane' reception (Adviescommissie Vreemdelingenzaken 2013), this initiative aimed to diminish the common experience of reception as a time of limbo, boredom and passivity, to foster more self-determination among participants, and to repair asylum seekers' 'broken narratives'.[2] Through living and learning close to each other, all participants were expected to build relationships, gain skills, and ultimately benefit from better prospects and wellbeing, with the programme acting as a 'launchpad' to further success.

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[1] This chapter is an extended and refined version of an earlier version that was published in Dutch (Geuijen et al. 2017). It also draws upon the project interim report (Oliver et al. 2018).

[2] Repairing 'broken narratives' refers to the ways in which individuals, through telling their stories of traumatic events (including illness or injury) are able to engage in 'narrative reconstruction'. These concepts are used in narrative research especially in the fields of sociology of health and illness (Hydén and Brockmere 2008).

This case study is based on two types of data: first, an analysis of documents that was undertaken during the second half of 2017, including several versions of the plans and the subsidy application that formed the basis for Plan Einstein. Second, in the autumn of 2017 interviews were held with the involved partners of Plan Einstein and meetings, presentations and other activities were observed. This strand of the research is part of a larger research and evaluation of Plan Einstein led by Roehampton[3] University, London and the University of Oxford (Oliver et al. 2018). Other components include monitoring of participation in courses and activities, observations of these courses and activities, interviews with asylum seekers, local residents, stakeholders and with young people living with Plan Einstein and a survey among local residents and young people living in the centre. While the analysis presented in this chapter has been member-checked by several involved partners, we cannot make definitive evaluative claims about this project before it finishes in late 2018 and the final evaluation is completed.

12.3   Plan Einstein: A Local Experiment

Plan Einstein advanced a new concept: an experimental form of asylum shelter that aimed to support asylum seekers in their preparations for the future, wherever they may be. That future might be in the Netherlands after being granted a residence permit, but might also in the country of origin, after rejection of the asylum application, or in a third country, after migrating on. The concept is framed around two pillars: firstly, 'co-learning' and secondly, 'co-living' of asylum seekers with local residents of Overvecht.

The co-learning pillar was filled with a variety of activities: The teaching of English language in classes, as well as instruction in entrepreneurship via courses and coaching. These occurred in a so-called 'incubator': a space where people who want to start a business could work on the design thereof, and where peer-to-peer coaching was available by more experienced entrepreneurs. All courses and coaching were conducted in English, on the basis that the English language can be used anywhere in the world. In the project proposal the courses and activities were called 'future proof', referring to how they prepared people for a future anywhere within or outside of the Netherlands. All activities were designed to be accessible to all asylum seekers from their first day in the asylum seekers reception center (asielzoekerscentrum AZC), supporting an aim that they could use their waiting time during the asylum procedure more meaningfully. The development activities would also provide a valuable addition to their curriculum vitae, so that they could be both better prepared for integration in the Netherlands following the granting of a

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[3] From 2019, replaced in the partnership with University College London, following the Principal Investigator's move to a different institution.

residence permit, or would be better prepared for onward migration or return to their country of origin if their asylum request was rejected.

The courses were not only accessible to the 400 asylum seekers living in the reception center, but were also open to local residents to encourage mutual contact and co-learning. In addition, housing for local youngsters was created in one wing of the asylum seekers' center, where studios were provided for rental by 38 young people. Youngsters were recruited to live there and had to demonstrate how they had in some way or another, a relationship with the neighbourhood of Overvecht. In setting this criteria, the project set out to pacify the often expressed objection from local residents that asylum seekers receive all sorts of facilities while local residents do not. By offering both courses and housing opportunities to asylum seekers and local residents, it would also mean that they could come into contact with each other more easily, with an expectation is that this would lead to more mutual understanding.

12.4   Responding to Local Problems of Asylum Reception in the Netherlands

The concept of Plan Einstein was developed to provide an answer to the most important problems that traditional asylum reception in the Netherlands was confronting. As with other places in the world, the arrival of large numbers of refugees through (forced) migration poses both immediate and longer-term problems in the Netherlands. In particular, the integration of many refugees into the labor market and housing market has proved difficult. Research into refugees who received a residence permit in the Netherlands in the 1990s shows that 20 years later only one third of them between the ages of 15 and 64 have a paid job (Engbersen et al. 2015). The prospect has not improved for recent groups: one and a half years after receiving a residence permit, 90% of the 18–64 year old Syrian and Eritrean refugees receive social benefits (CBS 2016). Moving on from the reception center (AZC) to housing on the regular housing market is also difficult for some groups, so many refugees with a residence permit stay unnecessarily long in asylum seekers' centers, compounding the problems of the phase of asylum determination.

In addition, there are problems with deporting rejected asylum seekers to their country of origin. Many asylum seekers take up all possible opportunities for legal procedures, in order to challenge rejected applications and avoid expulsion. Some of the asylum seekers who have been rejected disappear from the asylum reception location without giving notice of where they are going; in policy terms: they leave 'with unknown destination'. In 2017 there were more than 9000 of these individuals, in 2016 about 8000 (Dienst Terugkeer and Vertrek 2018). Many subsequently reside without documents in the Netherlands or in another European country

(Leerkes et al. 2014). Other rejected asylum seekers on the other hand end up in detention for foreigners or in family reception locations with a view to deportation; in these cases however, it may be still very is difficult to deport people when they refuse to cooperate in obtaining the correct identity and travel documents through their national embassies.

A third problematic consequence of asylum migration for the Netherlands concerns the physical location where asylum reception take concrete shape. It is common that when neighbourhoods are given notice that a (large) asylum seeker center will be established, residents react negatively and protests have occurred. Such responses happened in several places in the Netherlands, including in the neighbourhood of Overvecht in Utrecht. National media reported on some of the community meetings held to provide information about the soon to be established AZCs (NOS 2016). Research shows that 90% of the Dutch would object to the arrival of a large AZC with 500 asylum seekers in the district or municipality and 50% of the Dutch object even to the a smaller AZC with 50 asylum seekers (Lubbers et al. 2006). In such contexts, we find that even individual housing cannot proceed in some instances, because safety can be jeopardized as a result of threats or worse.

A fourth and final problem with asylum reception in the Netherlands concerns the length and nature of time asylum seekers have to spend in the AZCs. Asylum seekers often stay in reception places for a long period of time, where they can only do limited types of activities. For example, they cannot formally learn Dutch and only work under specific conditions. Stress and uncertainty characterize their lives, which consists mainly of waiting for the outcome of the asylum procedure, followed by procedures for achieving family reunification and getting housing (often, as in the case of Utrecht, in a saturated local market). Their accommodation involves sharing a room with four or five others, and a kitchen and sanitation with more people provoking mutual tensions, quarrels and sometimes even violent incidents. Asylum seekers mostly have only few contacts outside of the reception center and loneliness is common (Engbersen et al. 2015; Adviescommissie voor Vreemdelingenzaken 2013).

The intention of the Plan Einstein experiment was that asylum seekers would integrate better into the Netherlands after admission and that there would therefore be fewer problems with labour market participation, in turn diminishing pressure on the municipal social benefits system. It was also the expected that rejected asylum seekers who would have gained better skills through the programme would object less to returning to their country of origin since they would feel somewhat facilitated to build a new life there. In principle, they might feel less inclined to cling to legal procedures in which they would have little chance of receiving a staying permit anyway. Plan Einstein was also intended as a response to strained relations between asylum seekers' centers and the neighborhood, namely by linking direct benefits to the neighborhood to the asylum reception centre, both in the form of training opportunities and living opportunities. And finally, Plan Einstein was intended to make the life of asylum seekers less difficult during the reception phase by making it possible to spend their time in a meaningful way while developing a future perspective. This would be through facilitating contacts both with young

people living in one wing of the center and with people outside the center, helping to reduce isolation and loneliness.

12.5 Shifts in the Plan

Plan Einstein is one of several local experiments to address local problems concerning asylum reception and to give substance to the national (and European) policy vacuum. However, being an experiment meant that Plan Einstein also had to adjust to changes in the context. Since the moment in early 2016 when Plan Einstein was designed as an emergency centre, the picture of increased asylum applications across Europe during the so-called 'refugee crisis' has changed dramatically. Particularly following the EU-Turkey 'refugee deal' in March 2016, the numbers of asylum applications in the Netherlands fell significantly. Indeed just as Plan Einstein was being developed in late 2016 and throughout 2017, the COA was closing down some emergency and reception centres and reducing occupancy in some other existing newly opened centres (Swai 2018).

From the outset of the project therefore, the U-RLP project team had to adapt to changing circumstances, including an ongoing delay and uncertainty around the arrival of asylum seekers to the centre. Early on in the project, from February 2017, rather than operating to full capacity, 40 young, male asylum seekers were placed at the centre. Following multiple delays, 350 asylum seekers arrived in August 2017. The delays created some challenges for partners in the early days of the project, who were seeking to fill classes and fulfil their obligations to the project plan. Plan Einstein also had to adapt its initial conception as an emergency centre which anticipated that asylum seekers would go there immediately after arriving in the Netherlands and access courses and activities 'from day one'. The initial plan included short-term courses of 8 weeks as it was assumed that asylum seekers would be living in Plan Einstein only for relatively short time-periods. In reality, rather than starting at Plan Einstein on day one, those arriving at the centre were more diverse, including individuals and families who were at different stages of the asylum procedure, and therefore had already lived in multiple other centres. As a result, some individuals were moving quickly through the centre into resettlement, only remaining for a matter of days rather than staying for any longer period as expected, while others were staying much longer. Data from COA (through a private data request from the research team in October 2018) indicate that more than half of the people living in the residence center in fact had already obtained some type of residence permit when living at the centre, be it asylum related or through family reunification. These people already knew they would stay in the Netherlands so their aspirations were oriented to integration, including learning to speak Dutch, getting to know Dutch society and norms, as well as building a network.

The 'futureproof' approach of Plan Einstein (with activities in English) therefore needed some consideration as a result of the changes. The programme showed adaptability by allowing participants to follow courses at different levels, thus

allowing participants to progress over longer periods of time, and by offering different elements of the business incubator program offered by a local social enterprise (Social Impact Factory SIF) as a follow up. The programme was also able to meet diverging needs of participants by situating the U-RLP offer within the broader, complementary integration facilities already operating within the city, for example offering the Dutch Taalcafé (Language café) organized by *Welkom in Utrecht* in the centre's incubator space. The courses were adapted practically too to accommodate some difference in languages, with one class for mixed participants in English, one class with English-Arabic translation attended by asylum seekers only and some further translations brought in. There was also more emphasis on developing highly *individualized* matching and coaching activities (by SIF) to connect refugees to appropriate Dutch employers. Learning from the project suggests that flexibility and agility in response is vital, where providing different programs for different groups might be necessary to offer a truly futureproof programme.

An emerging challenge at the time of writing is that the project was committed to close at the pre-set date of November 2018, but suddenly faced the closure of the AZC prematurely in September 2018, due to operational reasons by COA. In the months preceding the closure, the outlook of certain stakeholders was – understandably – also changing. For example, the youngsters living at the premises were already looking for other housing options, and some project partners also shifted their focus towards transferability of the program to the other AZC in the city. During this time, there were inevitably some tensions around how to manage withdrawing an intervention that a range of beneficiaries have committed to and profited from (including the asylum seekers, youngsters and the neighbourhood).

12.6   The Realization of Plan Einstein

Plan Einstein was conceived initially by local civil servants in Utrecht, who had been working on this theme for 15 years in the city and elsewhere in the Netherlands. In doing so, they had been collaborating for some time with NGOs on these issues, including the Dutch Council for Refugees, the largest representative of asylum seekers and refugees in the Netherlands. The officials had also exchanged ideas and interesting examples with colleagues in other cities nationally and internationally for some time and were looking for opportunities to come to a 'solution' for the various problems in asylum reception.

In a way therefore, the 'refugee crisis' was perceived at the time by the Utrecht civil servants as a window of opportunity (Kingdon 1984) in which Winston Churchill's well known adage applied: 'Never let a good crisis go to waste.' The preceding years had enabled them already to develop ideas about innovation in asylum reception and enter into partnerships with NGOs. They also saw, in responses to the crisis, that there was growing public support for asylum seekers, and this might be harnessed within an innovation. Indeed, while in some quarters, the public in the Netherlands and in Utrecht were hostile to asylum seekers in this period,

locally there were also signs of an emerging welcoming culture. This is evident in spontaneous initiatives such as *Welcome in Utrecht,*[4] the *Catching Cultures* Orchestra,[5] and restaurant *Syr.*[6] During this moment, the Dutch Council for Refugees received more applications from new volunteers than were employable.

The local civil servants worked closely together with the highest ranking civil servant within local government. He gave them a personal assignment at the beginning of the 'refugee crisis' to develop an innovative approach through which Utrecht could take its part in asylum reception. Given this mandate, the local civil servants built partnerships with a range of NGOs, SMEs and Universities to develop a new approach, experimenting and trialling different solutions through collaborative innovation, as well as involving multiple stakeholders in learning and development.

The partnership included:

- The City of Utrecht;
- the Dutch Refugee Council (VluchtelingenWerk West en Midden-Nederland, VWWMN[7]) an NGO tasked with asylum-seeker support and brokering;
- *Socius Wonen*, a housing company with a track record in creating and facilitating community living;
- Utrecht University's Centre for Entrepreneurship: a research institute to teach entrepreneurship;
- The People's University (*VolksUniversiteit*): an education institute, to provide English courses from basic level up to Cambridge Advanced English.
- Social Impact Factory, a foundation stimulating social entrepreneurship, to coach participants in developing business ideas.
- Roehampton and Oxford Universities, UK higher education institutions, to conduct an independent evaluation and share learning through international knowledge exchange.

In this way, a multisector alliance was created that jointly developed a concrete plan and sought broader support and funding for the action. Following a competitive process, the plan was co-financed through the Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) programme, a funding scheme designed to provide urban areas throughout the European Union with resources to experiment and test new and unproven solutions to solve urban challenges. This fund was created to contribute to the European urban agenda, an agenda which had already received a strong impetus under the Dutch presidency. It offered a different way of working, since the usual format for funding regional or local initiatives by the European Regional Development Fund was through dividing the budgets among the different EU countries, for decisions to be made at the national level. At the time therefore, subsidy applications from cities had to be

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[4] https://welkominutrecht.nu/en/

[5] https://catchingculturesorchestra.nl/

[6] http://restaurantsyr.nl/en/

[7] The regional arm of the Dutch Refugee Council, although from this point in the report the national abbreviation of VWN is used as this is how it is referred to colloquially.

submitted to national departments. Local officials had been lobbying for years to change this method of distribution, since they preferred for regional and local parties themselves to be able to apply for this type of EU subsidy instead of having to go through the national departments. Under the UIA funding arrangements, this now had become possible while the timing gave the Utrecht alliance the opportunity to apply directly for an EU budget without the Ministry of Justice and Security acting as gatekeeper. According to a number of stakeholders, this has made it possible for an experimental project such as Plan Einstein to receive a large EU subsidy.

Obtaining the UIA subsidy was also decisive for ameliorating financial objections from the city council. With available co-financing, different partners and stakeholders could find different strengths in the plan. The mayor, the aldermen and the City council – with a majority of D66 (liberals) and GroenLinks (green-liberals) – were sensitive to the argument that the problems in the Overvecht district could also be reduced by this initiative. The neighbourhood has high rates of unemployment and in comparison to other neighbourhoods, more residents cope with personal and social problems including in relation to health, nuisance, crime and poverty.[8] Plan Einstein could become a vibrant center that could benefit the neighborhood, while yet for these local politicians, it also offered a more humane approach to the reception of asylum seekers.

Support was also harnessed at the highest levels in local politics. The alderman politically responsible for the project (GroenLinks – green liberals) in particular felt strongly involved because the project was aimed at marginalized people: both asylum seekers and people from Overvecht. He took pride in the projection of Utrecht as a human rights city and 'inclusive city' and conveyed this in presentations that he regularly gave on the project, both in Utrecht and in the rest of the Netherlands and abroad. The Mayor (VVD – conservatives) was, by contrast, more interested in the entrepreneurial side of Plan Einstein, yet equally his enthusiasm also contributed to the acceptance of this type of project within his own party at local and national level.

In a similar way, the project was able to appeal to the multiple partners, who had different interests and values, because the local officials emphasized different aspects of Plan Einstein for them. For the Overvecht district – and especially neighborhood organizations – it was important that Plan Einstein offered opportunities for courses and accommodation for young people. This would be expected to help reduce the existing tensions between different groups in the neighborhood. As noted earlier, following the announcement that there would be an asylum seekers' center in Overvecht, there had been heated meetings in the district where residents expressed strong negative reactions to the plan. They felt that there were more than enough problems in Overvecht: high unemployment, low education, a prostitution zone, people from many different cultural backgrounds, with different languages and/or different living rhythms, who have little contact with each other, but who had to live in close proximity to each other in cramped high-rise flats. The neighborhood organizations, such as the district office, were initially negative about the plans to

[8] https://utrecht.buurtmonitor.nl/

establish an AZC in Overvecht. This was particularly because Overvecht had for 10 years been under the so-called 'power district' approach, which meant extra investments were made in the neighbourhood. Just when it was expected that things would start improving in the neighbourhood, this was potentially to be endangered by the establishment of an asylum seekers reception center. In response, a 'neighbourhood sounding board group' was set up immediately after the announcement of the establishment of the asylum seekers reception center. People from the district were able to express their opinions regularly and were in turn informed of developments surrounding the AZC. A so-called 'neighbourhood safety group' was also created, in which the municipality, police and COA listened weekly to possible safety and nuisance complaints from the neighborhood.

On the other hand, the interests of NGOs such as the Dutch Council for Refugees were very different. They had been lobbying for a long time to facilitate more meaningful ways for asylum seekers to spend the waiting time during an asylum procedure. In their opinion this was important in itself, but it was also relevant to help prepare for better integration afterwards. For them Plan Einstein was an opportunity to contribute to these goals and they therefore immediately enthusiastically joined the preparation team from the start. Also *Welcome in Utrecht* – an NGO that was founded during the 'refugee crisis' of 2015–2016 – saw in Plan Einstein a hub from which it was possible to make the lives of asylum seekers less difficult and to bring about more social interaction.

For other groups, again the project meant different things. The local social business community Plan Einstein provided opportunities to guide new businesses and establish links between (social) entrepreneurs and refugees through peer-to-peer coaching by Utrecht entrepreneurs. At the same time it might strengthen their 'movement' and represented an opportunity to diversify their local business network. For the knowledge institutes involved, Plan Einstein represented an opportunity to valorise their knowledge, which has recently become an increasingly important objective for universities. The *Volksuniversiteit* saw an opportunity to spread its knowledge and skills to a new target group: asylum seekers with different levels of English. The Universities of Oxford and Roehampton were interested in finding out how such an initiative might have positive effects, and were therefore motivated to evaluate this project for a number of years.

12.7 Manoeuvring Multi-level and Multi-sector Collaboration

As we have outlined above, the 'refugee crisis' of 2015–2016 opened a window of opportunity for the realization of the local initiative Plan Einstein. In summary, already before the crisis, as we have explained, there were various problems concerning asylum reception that were felt mainly at local level. In addition, a policy vacuum arose at national (and European) level. Due to the 'refugee crisis', the

theme of asylum reception suddenly also attracted the attention of new parties, such as social entrepreneurs and knowledge institutes that wanted to use their knowledge, skills and network for this theme. Asylum seekers became in some ways 'the talk of the day' and because the national government and also the local government were confronted with enormous (time) pressure to host asylum seekers, this theme was high on the agenda, first in the form of emergency relief, but later also in the form of more structural care. This was the case too in Utrecht, where the topic received attention from the green-liberal majority in the city council. And finally, as asylum seekers suddenly became much more important for the 'urban agenda', it became possible to apply for a subsidy from a recently established EU fund. In this way the crisis offered opportunities and the moment and opportunity was seized by local officials, in collaboration with the network they had built up.

That the crisis actually offered these opportunities was not accidental. The Plan Einstein alliance was able to acquire support and legitimacy as a result of two developments in the context of broader public governance trends: the increase of multilevel and multisector collaboration (Sorensen and Torfing 2011) and a trend of experimentalist governance (Sabel and Zeitlin 2011). These were the waves on which the initiators could sail and which they could use to credibly embed their arguments and perspectives.

First, with reference to the broad development of multilevel (vertical) cooperation and multisector (horizontal, public-private) networks, the political scientist Benjamin Barber writes in his book 'If Mayors Ruled the World: Dysfunctional Nations, Rising Cities' (2013) that such partnerships are becoming increasingly important, because national states alone cannot solve the major transnational problems they face today. According to him, they are too ideologically driven and focused on protecting national interests. This is not a problem when dealing with national policy issues such as housing or education, but the stance is unhelpful in solving transnational challenges such as climate change (see also Bulkeley and Betsill 2005) or refugee issues. Barber states that city governments are better placed to engage with these topics, because they are more pragmatic and inclined to cooperate with other cities and with many different partners, including private parties and international and supranational organizations (such as the EU). In order to make this possible, co-production and co-creation with citizens are becoming more and more generally accepted ways to develop meaningful plans and practices.

In line with these trends, various policy domains have been decentralized to cities in recent years, with cities taking and receiving opportunities for their own interpretations of what to do. In integration policy, cities sometimes choose an interpretation that deviates to a greater or lesser extent from the national policy, and is sometimes in conflict with it (Dekker et al. 2015). This is called 'decoupling' of national and local policy, or also the 'local turn' in integration policies (Bak Jørgensen 2012; Scholten 2013). Plan Einstein can be interpreted as an example of this broader development, because it is an 'urban' project that deviates from the national policy on asylum reception. Plan Einstein was conceived and implemented in a dominantly restrictive national context, which it chose manoeuvre within, not to confront directly, in order to achieve most success. The initiators chose this

strategy as the most effective way of making this experiment acceptable. If it would be too confrontational, it might become vetoed. By manoeuvring cautiously the developers created space for the experiment, as we explain below.

The first aspect the initiators manoeuvred was around the national political choice to maintain and strictly manage large scale asylum seekers reception centers. Plan Einstein was created as an 'add on' to a regular large scale reception centre in which about 400 asylum seekers were living under the 'normal' living conditions in AZCs. The COA agency decided who was able live in the reception centre, for how long and when they would have to move on again. Asylum seekers had to live in similar circumstances as in all other AZCs, which were known to impact their lives negatively: sharing rooms and facilities, having to report weekly, experiencing little privacy, having physical barriers around the premises and security guards at the entrance of the building and having to abide to strict internal regulations etc. So while Plan Einstein intended to enhance the wellbeing of asylum seekers and improve neighbourhood relations by providing opportunities for co-learning and co-living, it had to accept that these goals would be influenced by the conditions asylum seekers had to live in.

The second aspect of the national context Plan Einstein had to manoeuvre were national political sensitivities around the integration of asylum seekers. Aspects that directly fed into integration, such as Dutch language classes are prohibited, in order to more easily facilitate the deportation of asylum seekers after the rejection of their asylum claim. For this reason Plan Einstein developed the 'future proof' approach in its education: for example by teaching all course in English. In reality, it transpired that many asylum seekers who lived in the AZC complex of Plan Einstein would receive a residence permit after having gone through the asylum application process, because many of the came from Syria and Eritrea: countries to which hardly anybody would be deported. In this case, asylum seekers might have benefitted too from learning Dutch and preparing for jobs in the Netherlands, as most of them expressed a desire to do.

The third aspect in which Plan Einstein manoeuvered its political context was by designing and implementing a project that would benefit the neighbourhood as well as the asylum seekers. As public opinion was partly welcoming and partly negative towards asylum seekers the initiators of Plan Einstein decided that providing tangible benefits to the neighbourhood (housing for youngsters, free education) might positively impact politics and public opinion on refugees by showing that good relations between asylum seekers and the neighbourhood 'can be done'.

In this sense, we see Plan Einstein as an example of the local turn, but not to the extent of complete decoupling: the initiators of the project worked within the national political and administrative context instead of against it.

The European funding of the project also helped to bypass local and national objections to the Plan, since with financing available, there was not too much risk involved. As a result, the Ministry of Justice and Security did not stop the urban experiment of Plan Einstein, and in the most recent coalition agreement (2017: 55), the government explicitly created 'municipal experimental space' concerning the integration of refugees. Urban experiments provide positive opportunities for testing

things out, but they circumvent the danger that the policy must be adopted whole-sale immediately. This also helps explain why the implementation agency COA took advantage of this opportunity by enabling collaboration with this experiment, wherein the local AZC organization was closely involved with Plan Einstein, but not one of the partners. The partners of Plan Einstein could therefore exploit the trend of multilevel and multisector collaboration, and were able to present Plan Einstein as an example of this kind of widely supported cooperation processes.

The development of Plan Einstein can also be understood from another perspective, being the trend of experimental governance (Sabel and Zeitlin 2011). In experimentalist governance, it is recognized that top-down blueprint thinking in policy no longer fits in a time when problems have become extremely complex and contexts are highly variable. In the case of unruly policy controversies, such as the climate crisis and the asylum issue, adaptiveness, flexibility and innovation are required (Scholten 2013; Sengers et al. 2016). This is increasingly being organized through multilevel and multi-sector collaboration, so-called collaborative innovation (Sørensen and Torfing 2011) with an 'innovation orientation' penetrating throughout the public sector. Plan Einstein is also based on this experimental approach: initially a plan was developed, including the key aspect that, during the course of its implementation, it was expected that choices were adjusted or reconsidered if there was reason to do so. In this sense, it was experiment as learning by doing.

12.8   Conclusions

Plan Einstein was intended as a way to tackle the problems that had arisen in the existing asylum reception in the Netherlands. The plan tried to find a balance between protecting refugees on the one hand and protecting national economic, socio-cultural and security interests on the other. This concept was developed in the context of a scale mismatch, where management and the debate of the issue was taking place traditionally at national level, but the problems were felt at the local level. There was, as a result something of an impasse. These contexts help explain why the Plan Einstein initiators opted for an urban experiment, which might ultimately also then work to influence national policy. In this experiment, partners from public, private and social sectors worked together (multisector) and they did this simultaneously on multiple levels of government (multilevel).

Above we have explained why it is precisely at this time and in this place that policy entrepreneurs (Kingdon 1984) succeeded in bringing about such an experiment. A number of aspects proved to be crucial in the process. Firstly, it was linking already well-developed alternatives to suddenly emerging problems: local officials had worked together with others for years on developing their ideas about alternative forms of asylum reception. Due to the 'refugee crisis', chaos had arisen and in the short term, local emergency relief had to be arranged. Parties were open to all good suggestions in this context and therefore were open also to this proposal. A second crucial aspect was the establishment of public-private partnerships that were

an extension of, and built on, existing alliances between the municipal partners and NGOs. This enabled the creation of a partnership in which some of the partners already knew each other, trusted each other and were able to build on earlier methods. At the same time, new partners were brought in who could introduce innovation: new ideas, perspectives, knowledge and skills. The broad objectives of the project made it possible for various partners to emphasize and prioritize different parts of the experiment. Thirdly, the availability of European funding for the project was an important driver and helped to refute financial concerns.

On a theoretical level, we can interpret the creation of local experiments in the recalcitrant policy controversy regarding asylum reception on the basis of concepts of experimental governance and multilevel governance. Urban experiments are part of these larger developments in policy: it is widely accepted that innovation takes place through experiments and that cities and local alliances have a greater role now that it appears that national states are not capable of answering these kinds of issues on their own. However we need to nuance conclusions which would indicate that this is an example of 'decoupling' between different levels of integration governance. Constraints in the national context proved to be crucial factors, influencing what the experiment was able to establish. These constraints result in local policy entrepreneurs creating space by manoeuvring within the national context, nibbling at structural constraints: neither openly fighting national government and its agencies, nor ignoring them.

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Chapter 13
Conclusion

Jeroen Doomernik and Birgit Glorius

13.1 The View

The first section of the book highlights the effects of a fundamental mismatch between the logics underlying the mobility of refugees and those determining the ambition and capabilities of states to govern such mobility. This tension arises on several levels of governance; the European, the national as well as the sub-national. As the Italian example (Semprebon and Pelacani, Chap. 2) demonstrates, asylum seeking migrants desire certain destinations over others. Preferences may for instance result from the presence of relatives in a particular place or the reputation of a country as being generous or having well-organized reception structures. As a result, it is not surprising that there is considerable transit migration in the countries along the European Union's external borders, such as the Italian case shows. This transit-migration is by policy makers commonly referred to as "secondary movement" for reasons of a different logic, one that follows from the structure of the Common European Asylum System: the first country of arrival is responsible for an asylum request and the reception of the applicant. Until recently (i.e. in the aftermath of the 'refugee crisis') this principle tended to be loosely applied by the Southern member states allowing for considerable onward migration. Not fully applying the rules served the national interest while reducing burdens to the asylum system. Obviously fuller effectuation of the principle serves the interests of the majority of member states while reducing their "burden" but inevitably reduces the

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possibilities for refugees to cross into another member state. On a lower scale, this creates stresses as well: the numbers of refugees that require reception grows and the nature of the reception changes too. People in transit turn into people who remain, albeit unwillingly. Certain localities in border regions thus unexpectedly face the need to integrate refugees into their housing and labor markets. Like between states, they maybe tempted to shift the presumed or actual burden onto neighboring localities or regions. These processes in turn may considerably impact local civic support and find translation in politics on all levels. In other words, decisions and actions on any given level resonate between the other levels of governance.

Whereas in Southern Europe refugee reception tends to be loosely organized, further north the traditional welfare states tend to take more control. Their desire to make and keep populations "legible" (Scott 1998) in order to (among other goals) both care for and control them (see Agier 2011 for examples from Africa), together with the expected benefits of the economies of scale this leads to the establishment of large asylum seeker accommodations. Kreichauf (Chap. 3) and Göler (Chap. 4) extensively demonstrate how this results in holding facilities for hundreds of asylum seekers who are in the process of status determination. Oftentimes, these facilities (or camps, as both Göler and Kreichauf refer to them) are at geographically isolated locations thus reducing interaction with wider society. And even when their location is not isolated by their distance (literally or practically by lack of transportation) they are so by the presence of obvious demarcations such as fences, walls and gates, as well as the presence of security staff. Since such facility needs not to be integrated in its environment and the location thus does not matter, Göler, while referring to the work of Auge (1995), conceptualizes them as "non-places". Unavoidably then, this leads to a sense of alienation among those who are meant to reside there. Likewise, the geographical distance and the demarcations of the camp render the residents as aliens and effectively underline their otherness in the eyes of the resident population. This effect is possibly more consequential than the alienation of the asylum seekers per se. Normally the duration of their residency is brief and will be followed by further integration or (attempts at) deportation. The physical structure of the "camp" is likely to be more permanent and so are its signifying and hence political consequences. Kreichauf (Chap. 3) finds this to be an explicit goal of recent Danish politics and refers to the process as one of "campization".

Kreichauf (ibd.) furthermore describes how the Danish government introduced conditionality in refugee protection, a trend seen elsewhere in Europe as well. Whereas earlier on recognition of a refugee status meant full acceptance and fast-track integration, nowadays society's membership can be made conditional on the fulfillment of integration requirements, oftentimes based on the refugee's acceptance or better still embracement of society's core values. Duyvendak and Tonkens (2016) refer to this as the "culturalization of citizenship". Failing to pass exams that test the adaptation to the national "culture", virtues and skills may result in less favorable treatment by the state. It could and probably should be argued that this trend towards 'conditionality' is at odds with the spirit of Chap. 4 of the Geneva Convention, which stipulates that refugees should be granted the most favourable treatment allotted to other non-citizens.

Once asylum seekers have been identified by the authorities as eligible for protection, which either results in a refugee status, subsidiary protection (usually because returning the asylum seeker would expose them to severe risks) or some other residence status, their housing, integration into the labour market or into education becomes the next concern. As several contributions to this volume show, it matters where one ends up. It also matters whether the sequence just mentioned (arrival, temporary accommodation and asylum adjudication, acceptance and (only then) steps towards further integration) are strictly adhered to or not, and how much time lapses before it is complete.

The precise location in which asylum seeking migrants who received a residence status start their integration process is of considerable consequence even though the wider, i.e. national, setting, in terms of resources, regulations and political climate, is of considerable significance as well. Obviously, it is at the local level that personal interactions take place and experiences are made, where refugees find work or not, go to school and receive training. And, as Ponzo and Pogliano (Chap. 6) show, the framing of refugee integration as a policy and political issue is also very much done locally. In line with the finding of Geuijen et al. (Chap. 12) and Doomernik and Ardon (2018), local policy makers tend to the view that integrating refugees (and other migrants) functions best when dealt with in a pragmatic, i.e. non-ideological, manner. Pogliano and Ponzo (Chap. 6) provide two local case studies that demonstrate how local policy communities are most effective in achieving their aim, if this is clearly defined in practical, pragmatic terms and not fraught by ideological differences of opinion. This then allows for the definition of a clear policy frame, which is easily and consistently conveyed to local media who subsequently reproduce, and by doing so, strengthen support for the policy frame. And conversely, policy communities not united around pragmatism fail to convey a strong and clear frame and thus generate less support through the local media. Not in all countries local media are equally prominent, but the gist of their argument could well be generalizable.

In spite of local governments' usual benevolent intentions towards refugees, formal rules do not always allow equal support to all of them. Ravn et al. (Chap. 7) make this concrete by the example of young refugees who turn 18. Once they formally have become adults, a different support regime applies to them and they lose access to facilities that are typically geared towards minors. The support gap this results in is being bridged by a coalition of local actors (civil society as well as municipal) who then are faced with the need to differentiate between those who are most likely to benefit from extra resources (translated into access to housing and training) and those who are less so. In the Antwerp case, on which Ravn et al. base their discussion, this discretion results in striking a balance between more or less deservingness. A paradoxical outcome is that those who are socially or psychologically most disadvantaged are least likely to receive support.

Geuijen et al. (Chap. 12) present the case of the Einstein-plan in the Dutch city of Utrecht. It is the story of a local government, with a notable role for activist civil servants, which viewed the "asylum crisis" as an opportunity for increasing its role in refugee integration and offering an innovative approach. Dutch asylum policies

are highly centralized which leaves little agency for the local level. The authors, referring to the work of Castells (2008), show how this easily leads to "scales mismatch" while problems manifest themselves in other locations and to other actors than those placed at the (higher) scale where these are the subjects of policy making. This observation is surely valid beyond the city of Utrecht and the Netherlands.

Asylum seekers tend to be moved between reception centers throughout the country before they are finally resettled in a municipality according to a distribution procedure. Depending on the availability of housing, which is usually scarce, this can take much longer than the actual adjudication process. Only once this resettlement has been realized can integration actually commence. In Utrecht (and elsewhere) this was viewed as inefficient. Rather the integration process should be allowed to start from the moment of arrival; i.e. already before the outcome of the asylum request is known. Moreover, the Utrecht approach aims to keep these asylum seekers as permanent residents (unless their request is rejected). Even though looking for employment is illegal for anyone without a residence permit, at least social integration is made easier by this approach, which accommodates asylum seekers, refugees and young locals in a single venue. This latter element appeared to be essential: when Dutch public discourse is negative about receiving (more) asylum seekers this tends to be about scarce resources, notably social housing, that are unequally handed out to refugees. The Einstein project found its public support by explicitly including local interests. Moreover, funding necessary for the project was found by going beyond the national level, i.e. by a subsidy from the European Regional Development's Fund (Urban Innovative Action). The mismatch between scales thus appears to have resulted in creative innovations which would fit under the broad heading of "experimentalist governance", modes of policy development through channels other than those of traditional hierarchical architectures and their bureaucratic inhabitants when these are no longer adequate to cope with present day issues, notably those that are related to or result from European policy harmonisation and integration.

Reflecting on Simonovit's piece on Hungary (Chap. 8), it would appear in few European countries refugee protection is as emotionally charged, and in a negative manner, as it is in Hungary. As is hard to ignore, the country's government is very outspoken on the matter and refuses to implement the EU's Common European Asylum System in as far as this would result in the acceptance and integration of refugees. As Simonovits (ibd.) notices, this refusal finds significant support in the Hungarian population. She also finds, this support seems to a considerable extent based on irrational fears for migrants in general. Causality in the relationship between public opinion and political rhetoric may be a difficult issue, but the Hungarian government appears to be quite willing to heighten and exploit such fears instead of offering reasoned arguments for political action. Aside from challenges this creates for the future of joint European asylum and refugee policies, the other burning question is how state level positions play out on the local level. Can cities still be pragmatic forces for integration in spite of those? And are local governments willing to be more receptive in the first place?

Many of the chapters in this volume show or at least are suggestive of a local turn in asylum policies and notably in authority over refugee reception, to bring these in line with local political concerns and lessen scale mismatches. This would be fitting in a trend towards a gradual federalization of asylum and refugee policies in a Common European Asylum System, which would allow local governments to ask for resources from the European level instead of, or in addition to, the national one. From a multi-level governance perspective one could suggest this then to become a new vertical division of labour and competences. The Austrian case study by Müller and Rosenberger (Chap. 5), however, seems to suggest something else: the division of tasks and authority can also oscillate with the tide of political expediency and need for stress relief. Under the pressure of high arrival rates, national government may have no alternative but to enlist municipal support. Municipalities recognize this as an opportunity to increase their authority and act accordingly (see also Geuijen et al. in Chap. 12). Once stress on the system receded and Austrian national elections brought to power a government with a right-wing migration agenda, the governance of asylum is being retrenched to the national level and replaced by a 'campization' model (cf. Kreichauf in Chap. 3). A dynamic process along scales of governance may well offer an alternative perspective on the evolution of national and European responses to unexpectedly large numbers of asylum seekers.

Adam et al. (Chap. 10) go into the importance of housing as a prerequisite for integration. As we already discussed in relation to refugee camps, social and geographical distance are severe and obvious impediments to integration. In these cases, this may be the intended consequence. However, once asylum seekers have been accepted, this would be counterproductive. Yet, peripheral housing is often easiest available, whereas at desirable locations prices are likely to be high, social rental sectors to be small, and competition therefore severe. This is definitely the case in the Western part of Germany, where the authors did two case studies. They find that even when a city (here Cologne) has well-developed housing policies for refugees, scarcity in times of high inflows is unavoidable if this city is also a generally desired location for people to move to. Given the overall urbanization trend this is likely to result in social-economic segregation in general and that of newly arrived refugees in particular. Indeed Adam et al. find that refugees thus live in group accommodations for a prolonged period of time, which keeps them from developing the bonding and bridging ties that are vital to the integration process.

Studying the integration of young adult refugees who ended up in Germany's sparsely populated eastern periphery, Glorius and Schondelmayer (Chap. 9) found that stakeholders tend to have varying ideas about what should be achieved in order for integration to have been accomplished. School administrators, for instance, tend to understand integration as formal inclusion into the (educational) system without showing much interest in the general well-being of their pupils. This results in mismatches between what the system offers and requires of students and the needs of those students themselves. Teachers, who actually interact with these students try to close the resulting gaps. Here the local setting is of crucial importance as it to varying extents limits and determines the scope of their interventions. The case study area is a remote rural area with long commuting times, little educational

opportunities, lack of diversity and a skeptical or downright hostile social environment. Moreover, the resulting general trend of out-migration was projected by stakeholders on the refugees' futures too. In other words: this regional case again underscores the importance of the understanding of a complicated interplay of local effects on the integration process, be they positive or negative.

Going through the collection of chapters, more or less explicitly the vital role of civil society actors becomes apparent. Its role is complementary to those of governmental institutions, it functions to build bridges and to fill policy gaps. In a Bavarian-based case study, Hoppe-Seyler (Chap. 11) focuses on volunteers, whose involvement, notably when the "asylum crisis" was at its peak, has been widely noted. Interestingly, these volunteers appear not so much driven by ideological motives but by the desire to engage in new social relations with each other and refugees, and helping in pragmatic ways. It appears many want to stay clear of the wider politics of asylum and integration and are simply motivated to do what seems necessary on an interpersonal level. At the same time they cannot escape the fact that those issues have become politically highly charged. Here Germany offers a very explicit example of a more general trend: it moved from the almost euphoric moment of Chancellor Merkel's open-door approach and Germans greeting asylum seekers with flowers and gifts when arriving by train in 2015 to the general elections of 2017 which showed meanwhile considerable support for the right-wing "Alternative for Germany"/"Alternative für Deutschland" (AfD) with its anti-refugee agenda had developed, as well as the overall much more critical appreciation in the media of what actually had happened since 2015. Here on the local level, individuals are touched by the failed implementation of the Common European Asylum System, which otherwise would have put much less pressure on Germany's integration capacities and thus might have resulted in smaller electoral support for the AfD.

13.2   Further Research

This volume merely offers a flavour of what the local consequences were of the 2015 'refugee crisis' and its aftermath. It is a story with many protagonists, each with its own narrative and plot development, leading to as yet unknown endings (if we assume there exists such a thing in real life world). In order to better understand the storylines, explain their dynamics and chart their likely futures, the highlights of the present collection of studies suggests the following obvious lines of inquiry:

It has been amply demonstrated that refugee integration happens and is governed first and foremost at the local level, by local actors. These local actors act in the wider settings and are constrained and/or supported by higher levels of governance. They also organize horizontally with likeminded partners and as such engage in vertical relationships. The latter processes deserve more study, in terms of quantity and in a more systematic study of local governance of refugee integration.

As a method, it seems to pay to adopt a perspective that puts the local experience central: "looking up from below" should help better understand how gaps between

politics, policies, laws, mandates, on all governance levels, as well as scale mismatches translate into local realities.

We would suggest there is considerable skepticism in certain member states about the fundamental need to protect refugees, about the feasibility of refugee integration, and about the social, cultural and economic benefits to be gained from accepting refugees. The Hungarian case is a clear one in point but more overall as well national governments appear less inclined towards a positive take on these issues, as is exemplified by the "campization" trend we observed. We already suggested this could have considerable direct impact on the refugee integration process but also have a signifying effect on local communities and society at large. These effects merit more attention.

Housing is a crucial element of refugee integration. This is so for the obvious reason that decent housing is a pre-condition for integration in all other societal areas. Additionally, the location of housing has consequences for the outcome of this wider integration process: e.g. distance to work has an effect on employment and income, which in turn has effects on educational outcomes, and the social setting may deeply effect people's well-being. Since housing is such a basic need, its availability or rather lack thereof also deeply affects resident populations. Further study of local housing markets and social housing schemes are thus highly relevant for a proper appreciation of refugee integration in its widest meaning.

We assume national skepticism to result in local political responses and grass-root opposition. In terms of multi-level governance this may result in decoupling (Scholten and Penninx 2016) and independent policy making efforts, implicitly or explicitly opposing national policies. All through Europe cities become vocally in favor of refugee reception, not least in those states where the national take on offering asylum is skeptical or downright negative, in line with the sanctuary city movement in the United States. Interesting and innovative findings on political mobilization and their effectiveness in multi-level settings could be expected from systematic trans-Atlantic comparisons.

Whereas the concept of multi-level governance offers a suitable frame for a transatlantic comparison of federal arrangements, for the EU as such the question would rather be how within the formal framework, and by making use of its strengths and resources, "experimentalist governance" offers durable remedies for the failings of the current Common European Asylum System. Experimentalist governance may offer flexibility and establish new relationships between actors when pre-conceived policy methods do not deliver what local actors (and possibly also the member states) require in order to reach their policy goals (Sabel and Zeitlin 2012). In effect, Europeanization may well fundamentally reconfigure the role of the local, and notably the city, in the asylum policy domain.

Lastly, because refugee admission normally is a national affair and a lengthy process, refugee integration from a policy perspective is conceptualized as a process taking place outside, or next to, wider social dynamics. We saw that local policy makers and civil society actors tend to oppose such a separation and favor a mainstreaming approach. More case studies could help identify the conditions under which this leads to particular outcomes.

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