Inland School of Business and Social Sciences

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An Ethnographic Public Service Study
on Refugee Integration in Norway

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Sammendrag

Gjennom denne studien har jeg fulgt arbeidet med integrering av flyktninger i fire kommuner i distrikts-Norge. Studie har hatt som mål å forstå hvordan kommunene jobber med integrering, og gjennom etnografisk feltarbeid har jeg fulgt ansatte i de offentlige tjenestene og bosatte flyktninger i deres hverdag.

Integrering av flyktninger har vært et betent tema i norsk offentlig debatt over de siste 20 til 30 årene, der staten, kommuner, frivillige organisasjoner og privatpersoner stadig har forsøkt å løse problemet. Til tross for tjenesteutvikling i arbeidet med integrering av innvandrere og flyktninger, samt pågående diskusjoner om integrering, har man fremdeles ikke kommet frem til et entydig svar. Integrering kan med andre ord late til å være et uløselig problem.

I dette studiet har jeg tatt i bruk teoretiske innfallsvinkler fra nyere tjenesteforskning for å studere kommunenes arbeid med implementering av introduksjonsloven. Introduksjonsloven ble introdusert i 2003/2004, og er et omfattende tjenestetilbud rettet mot nyankomne flyktninger med behov for kvalifisering. Loven, representert ved introduksjonsprogram som tilbys bosatte flyktninger og deres familiegjenforente, er et heltids- og helårsprogram som har som mål å hjelpe bosatte flyktninger med behov for grunnleggende kvalifisering. Gjennom programmet er målet å forberede nyankomne flyktninger til å bli deltakende borgere i Norge, og skattebetalere.

For å studere dette har jeg brukt offentlig tjenestelogikk (public service logic) som teoretisk innfallsvinkel, og rammet inn dette analytiske verktøyet med bidrag fra forskning på kronglete problemer (wicked problems). Slike problemer er karakterisert av sin uløselighet, der tjenester som tilbys med mål om å løse dette er basert på en artikulering av noe jeg har kalt et problem-løsningskompleks. Slike komplekser gjenspeiler hvordan alle problemer blir definert med utgangspunkt i en mulig løsning: problemet og løsningen er dermed to sider av samme mynt.

Studiet følger integreringsprosessene i norske kommuner fra synspunktet til bosatte flyktninger så vel som ansatte i de offentlige tjenestene, og søker å kaste lys over hvordan flyktningeintegrering arbeides med og oppfattes fra disse ulike perspektivene. Gjennom studie argumenterer jeg for at kommunalt arbeid med flyktninger krever kontinuerlig tilpasningsarbeid, som fanges gjennom konseptet bricolage, der både ansatte og flyktninger tilknyttet tjenestene utsettes for stadig internt og eksternt drevne endringer som påvirker tjenesteprosessen – og flyktningenes verdiskapning.

Abstract

In this study, I examine refugee integration efforts in four rural municipalities in Norway. The aim of the study was to understand how these municipalities work with refugee integration. Through ethnographic fieldwork, I followed public service employees and settled refugees in their everyday lives.

Refugee integration has been a pressing topic in Norwegian public debate over the past 20 to 30 years, and the state, municipalities, voluntary organisations, and private individuals have persistently tried to solve the problem. Despite service innovation in the work of integrating immigrants and refugees and ongoing discussions regarding what integration should look like and how it should be achieved, no consensus has yet emerged. In other words, refugee integration is a complex social problem for which there does not appear to be a finite answer or solution.

In this study, I use theoretical approaches from recent service research to examine the municipalities' work in implementing the Introduction Act, which was enacted by Norway's Storting in 2003–2004 and is a comprehensive service offering aimed at newly arrived refugees in need of basic qualifications. The act, operationalised through introductory programmes offered to settled refugees establishes a full-time, year-long programme that aims to help resident refugees in need of basic qualification.

To study this work, I use public service logic (PSL) as a theoretical tool, framing the analytical approach with contributions from research on wicked problems and other social science concepts. Wicked problems are characterized by their insolvability, and the services offered with the aim of alleviating such problems are based on an articulation of a problem-solution complex. Such complexes reflect how all problems are defined around a possible solution: the problem and the solution are thus two sides of the same coin.

This study examines refugee integration processes in Norwegian municipalities from the viewpoints of both settled refugees and public service employees. In doing so, it seeks to shed light on how refugee integration is conducted and perceived from these different perspectives. Through this study, I argue that municipal work with refugees requires constant adjustment. The nature of this work is captured through the concept of bricolage, where both employees and refugees associated with the services are exposed to persistent internally and externally driven changes that affect the service process – and refugees' value creation.

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Prelude

On a comfortably warm morning in early June, I joined two employees from the Varmdal Refugee Administration and Adult Education Centre outside a railway station that had been shut down many years earlier. A minibus equipped with an enclosed trailer had been pre-ordered to take us to Gardermoen International Airport, where we were going to pick up two families. The families had been accepted as resettlement refugees to Norway through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The municipality had been notified some ten days in advance when the leader of the local refugee administration received an e-mail from the country's Directorate for Diversity and Immigration (*Direktoratet for mangfold og integrering*, or IMDi) during lunch. In late November, the municipality had been notified that it would be asked to settle ten refugees during 2018, and they had been awaiting further information ever since. On one occasion, the municipality had been asked to settle a family with several physical challenges, but the employees at the time did not believe they would be able to take care of these individuals appropriately: it probably would have been better if they were settled in a larger city, it was said. When the request to settle the families finally came in mid-May, the actual date was still not set, and the employees at the service expressed hope that the refugees would be settled before the summer holidays. This hope was communicated as a request to IMDi, as the settling process during the holiday would cause administrative and logistical challenges.

After boarding the minibus, we left the onetime train station at 7:30 to start our three-hour journey to the airport, where we would meet the newest residents of Varmdal municipality. One of the two employees, a woman working at the adult education centre who spoke Arabic, had been part of earlier teams picking up families at the airport. The other employee and I were rookies and perhaps a bit more excited. On the bus, which obviously also included a driver who I believe had not yet been part of such a mission, one of the employees distributed documents containing pictures, names, and some background information about the two families. As we would be meeting these people for the first time, none of us really knew what they looked like.

When we finally approached the airport, the driver became uncertain as to the best route to reach arrivals parking in front of the airport. After a wrong turn and some confusion, he finally managed to sneak into the taxi lot in front of the arrivals terminal by driving in immediately after another car. Later, we found out that there was a 100 NOK fee to enter the area but, still happily unaware, the driver and I exchanged phone numbers, and the rest of us proceeded into the airport. As it is Norway' main international airport, all three of us had been there before and

could quickly find our way to the arrivals area. Although frowned upon for obvious reasons, a mild case of racial profiling ensued in our endeavour to locate the two families. While some people were of no interest due to their Nordic or other Western phenotypes, others – like women with hijabs – were subject to closer investigation. The employee who had some experience in these procedures told us that the family would probably be guided by a functionary of some sort, so our senses were not on high alert. Several other people were also at the gate, either families waiting for friends or relatives they had presumably not seen in a long time or private drivers expecting clients. A moment of envy struck me as I realised the drivers could wait for people to come to them rather than the other way around.

'Elvesrud Municipality!' a man suddenly called out, after an hour or so had passed. The two employees with me did not seem to notice, so I said that I thought they were referring to Varmdal Municipality, in which Elvesrud is a small town. Gazing towards the location of the sound, we saw a group of people and a literal tonne of luggage, if not more. As we approached the man, one of the employees asked him if he meant Varmdal, which he apparently did. Initially, I stayed in the background to let the people employed by the municipality do their job. The group included more than the 11 people we were sent to pick up, and some confusion arose regarding who would be coming with us. It did not appear that any other municipalities were waiting for 'their' people. After the right families had been found, I stepped into the situation, greeted some of them, and asked if I could help with the luggage. While waiting, I had kept in touch with the driver – who had to move his minibus twice during our short hour apart – and I therefore knew where we were going. Conveniently, he had ended up where we first left him after arguing with two different airport functionaries. I pointed in the right direction, and two of the children from one family headed towards a set of large revolving doors with their trolleys. Although such doors can be challenging to pass through even without luggage, the children got ready for the task of passing through with their trolleys and succeeded with ease. The rest of the group soon followed, and we started loading the trailer with luggage. Even though the trailer had seemed excessively large when we left Varmdal, it was soon full; finally, we could head back.

As on our trip to the airport, I sat up front next to the driver, who soon told me we had to stop within an hour and a half. Due to the trouble he had run into at the airport, he had only been able to take 15 minutes of his mandatory 45-minute break: by law, drivers of heavy vehicles must take a break of that length after 4.5 hours of driving. During the ride from the airport to the yet-to-be decided pit stop where the driver could take his break, the conversation in the back of the minibus largely revolved around mundane topics, such as where the closest city was and how far

it was, while others quickly fell asleep. For a while, the driver had a location he hoped to reach before he would have to stop, but upon realising he would not reach it, we decided to stop at a petrol station along the highway. After attempting to describe the reason why we had to stop to people who had just arrived from a place where similar regulations were presumably non-existent, we got out of the minibus while the driver took his regulated rest.

Although less scenic than his preferred location, the stop gave all of us some time to get acquainted. I started talking – or rather communicating – with one of the fathers and his son, who expressed through some words I understood that he had worked as a barber. That is, he said 'barber' and gesticulated cutting hair with his hands.

'So how is my hair?', I asked him in Norwegian. I had already realised that we had no common language and found it superfluous to ask in English. In an attempt to communicate, I pretended to have a pair of scissors in my hand and pointed to my hair. 'Good? Bad?'

He inspected my hair closely as I bent my head towards him, before replying 'bad'.

The father, his son, and I all laughed and walked towards the petrol station. Despite its being Ramadan, the travellers told the employee who spoke Arabic that they were not observing the fast because of their journey – something that was seemingly permitted by religious doctrine. Thirsty after the flight and subsequent minibus ride, they went inside the station to get some water. With no valid currency, they were not able to buy it, but they found some tap water inside the station. After hydrating, we went back outside, and I continued my effort to communicate with the father and son through the universal language of being willing to try.

'Sadiq' something, the father said repeatedly to my confusion. When I finally understood that he was trying to say 'friend', I offered the Norwegian translation of the word: *venn*. Yes, we were now friends! At that point, I started feeling a bit conflicted about my role as a researcher and not an employee in the service, as my presence in the municipality would only be temporary. Waiting for the driver, we had to kill some time and chitchat about whatever topics arose.

The employee who did not speak Arabic said that the families had now come to a new culture. 'Women also have to work, not only men. Society depends on both genders working', the employee said. The new arrivals nodded their heads when the message was translated into Arabic, but I felt a bit awkward for some reason. As we got back to the minibus, the families became impatient and wanted to keep driving. I had a feeling that no one but I understood the legal restraints on the driver.

Finally, the driver returned and got into the bus, closely followed by the rest of the group. 'Is everyone here?', someone asked. They were, and we continued through the forest and hills towards our first destination. During the ride, I tried to imagine what it would be like seeing the country for the first time and reminisced about the times I have been abroad for longer or shorter durations.

'How much longer?', the father asked me in a way that I finally understood after a period of intense bewilderment.

'30 minutes', I told the Arabic-speaking employee who passed on the message. As we approached Varmdal, I told them to look to the right so that they could see the signpost of the municipality. Twenty minutes or so later, we arrived at the house where the first family would stay.

Although this was an unusually warm day in early June, one of the children indicated that he found the weather a bit cold. The families got out to inspect their new dwelling, followed closely by the two municipal employees. While some moved inside, I went to open the top of the trailer containing the baggage. Two of the boys from the family whose house we had now reached initiated an efficient procedure of unpacking their luggage. The driver expressed some concern over whether we had packed the trailer in accordance with where the families were to get off. Trying to remember how we packed at the airport, I told him that luck was probably on our side, and, as it turned out, the large black bags we had loaded last did in fact belong to the family that was getting off first.

Inside, the families had already done a quick inspection of the premises when I entered. I had been to the house the day before to help mount curtain holders in two of the rooms and observe the process of preparing a house for settlement. The house had been abandoned in a rather poor state, and the employee I joined had spent a lot of time preparing it for its new residents. She told me that the house had been rather dirty and contained some equipment that indicated that it had been inhabited by elderly people when she first got there. Not interested in cleaning the house herself, she had the municipality hire a company to clean it for its new residents. The house had two floors and a cellar where the bathroom and toilet were located and was – in the terms of a real estate agent – 'filled with potential'. In the living room, the two employees gave the parents a prepaid debit card and asked them if they were acquainted with its use: they were. Confident that they would survive the day, the two employees told the family that they had bought groceries so that they could cook a meal and that they would be back the next day at a certain time with more

information. 'If there is anything else for now, you can talk to your neighbours. They are also Syrian!', one employee said.

Leaving the first house, we drove 20 minutes to reach the second, which was located a 15-minute walk outside the village of Elvesrud. Once again, we all got out of the vehicle, and two of the employees along with most of the remaining family, except for one son, went into the house. I remained outside with the son and once again opened the top of the trailer to unload their luggage. As at the first house, the neighbours peeked out their door to see what was happening. I had also visited this house a day in advance and met one of the boys from the neighbouring home.

'Are you moving in?', he had asked me.

'No, but there are some people coming in tomorrow', I answered.

It was evident that the two children were curious about each other when we finally arrived. After unloading the luggage, I asked the boy if he had said hello to his new neighbour. He said he had, but having been outside the whole time, I knew he had not. The driver got out of the minibus and noticed a bicycle with a chain that had fallen off. The two boys gathered around him, in the peculiar way men are inclined to watch things being fixed, as he reattached the chain. Still not exchanging a word, the new child got on the bike once it was ready to use while his neighbour went to get his own bike. Finally talking, the two boys started cycling around the yard and were soon accompanied by their respective sisters, who went to the trampoline to talk. As it turned out, this newly arrived family's neighbours were also Syrian or at least spoke Arabic.

Once again going inside after a while outside, I saw that the settled family had inspected their house and its interior. The children had received backpacks and school necessities. I found the parents and the two employees in the doorway as the final messages of the day were being communicated. There was food in the fridge, and had they used debit cards before? Yes.

'Alright', the employees said. 'We will come by tomorrow at noon, OK? If there are any more questions, your first and second neighbours are also from Syria!' The mother of the family smiled in a certain way. Perhaps this place was not that strange after all?

We left the two families in the minibus at around 4:00 in the afternoon. I asked the Arabic-speaking employee what the families thought of their new houses. Referring only to the second

family, she said they were semi-pleased: the house was not what they had expected, but it was better than the first family's house.

Chapter 1: Introduction

> *Bassam: In the third year of high school, the war started, so I travelled to Aleppo to study engineering at a university. But then there was the war. Aleppo – everyone has heard about Aleppo. So I had to go back to my city after studying for one year. It was dangerous to be in a big city like Damascus. After a year, I went to Homs and finished my degree. Then, I wanted to continue my studies.*
>
> *Me: Was that your plan the whole time – to continue?*
>
> *Bassam: Yes, exactly. But I was summoned for the army, and I had to leave Syria.*

The UNHCR has estimated that approximately 1.4 million people needed to be resettled in 2020 (UNHCR, 2019, p. 11). This projection includes only a fraction of the 68.5 million people who were estimated to be forcefully displaced in 2017, which translates to one out of 110 people in the world displaced (UNHCR, 2017, p. 4).

The issue of refugee migration is increasing in significance throughout the world due to from a combination of domestic turmoil and a failure on the part of the international community to come up with coordinated, viable solutions. Consequently, refugee migration is frequently mentioned alongside climate change as one of the biggest challenges of our time (Noordegraaf, Douglas, Geuijen, & Van Der Steen, 2019, p. 292). While inherently global, refugee migration and climate change are also inextricably local phenomena: both the origins and future solutions of these problems will have to be implemented in localities throughout the world rather than at the macro level of the globe as a whole.

In this study, I present and analyse how refugee migration and integration was manifested in four rural municipalities in Norway. Through two fieldwork projects conducted in 2018 that lasted a total of seven months, I followed people settled as refugees, municipal public service organisations (PSOs), employees, and auxiliary services in their daily operations. The study revolves around the local implementation of the Norwegian government's main policy tool of refugee integration: The Introduction Programme for Newly Arrived Immigrants ('introduction programme' below). Through ethnographic fieldwork, interviews, and document studies, I have aimed to capture the subjective experiences of refugee integration as a process through which people try to re-establish themselves and the processes through which a government works to integrate people who have been settled through particular schemes.

Overall, the study seeks to identify the relations between value creation in service, wicked problems, and public innovation in the context of refugee integration. To achieve this aim, I develop an analytical approach based on a combination of interrelated theories: public service logic (PSL) (Grönroos, 2019; Osborne, 2018; Skålén, Karlsson, Engen, & Magnusson, 2018; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020), theories on wicked problems (Daviter, 2017; Rittel & Webber, 1973), and public service innovation (Fuglsang, 2010; Skålén et al., 2018; Witell et al., 2017). These three different analytical components provide complementary approaches to studying refugee integration. PSL serves as an overarching theory that provides a basic analytical language for and understanding of the service process. A key characteristic of PSL is how the users, or service recipients, are placed at the centre of attention in public service provision; it has thus been argued that it is the service recipients rather than the PSOs who create value through service encounters (Osborne, 2018). The concept of wicked problems is similarly used to frame how public services are designed and provided, holding that such problems consist of creating problem-solution complexes that reduce complicated social issues into actionable pieces by defining such problems in ways that suggest they can be 'solved' (Daviter, 2017). Public service innovation in this study is primarily explored through the bricolage concept (Fuglsang, 2010; Witell et al., 2017), as I have studied how municipal PSOs provided and adjusted their services to accommodate the needs of their service recipients while complying with their legislative mandate as PSOs. Bricolage as the core innovation concept thus serves as a way to understand how local PSOs work to facilitate beneficial value creation for their service recipients within set judicial and resource restrictions.

The perception of value being created by service recipients, rather than by PSOs, is central to PSL and has influenced this study in important ways. In the following, I situate this study in relation to PSL and provide a brief description of its core concepts and assumptions. PSL is further substantiated in the next chapter.

Public Service Logic

PSL was initially introduced as a paradigm shift in public administration by placing the service user/recipient at the centre of attention (Osborne, Radnor, & Nasi, 2012). 'By adopting a public service-dominant approach to public services delivery', Osborne and colleagues argue 'both the citizen and user are situated as essential stakeholders of the public policy and public service delivery processes and their engagement in these processes adds value to both' (Osborne et al., 2012, p. 145).

PSL represents a shift from what has been termed a goods-dominant logic towards a service (-dominant) logic. The distinction between goods- and service-dominant thinking alters the role of the service recipient, or user, in service exchange, as goods-dominant paradigms have situated service recipients as consumers (Osborne et al., 2012, p. 138). While it has been argued that goods-dominant thinking perceives the organisation or firm as the creator of value that is subsequently consumed by a user, service-dominant approaches holds that value is realised in use by these same users (Skålén, Gummerus, von Koskull, & Magnusson, 2015, p. 137).

The public aspect of PSL has highlighted differences in the relations between service providers and recipients in public and private services. For example, scholars have argued how the importance of repeat customers is crucial in the private sector, while in 'the public sector, a returning "customer" may be a sign of service failure' (Eriksson, Andersson, Hellström, Gadolin, & Lifvergren, 2019, pp. 293-294). Following the initial developments of PSL by Osborne and colleagues (Osborne, 2018; Osborne et al., 2012; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020), PSL has evolved through the inclusion of concepts and terms from service-dominant logic and service logic. In this study, I have been particularly influenced by the strand of PSL research that draws on the service logic literature of Grönroos and colleagues (Grönroos, 2019; Skålén et al., 2018).

Three concepts are at the centre of PSL as inspired by service logic: value facilitation, value co-creation, and value creation. In an early article by Grönroos and Voima (Grönroos & Voima, 2013), these three concepts – all of which constitute a type of resource integration – are connected to three spheres: the providers' sphere (value facilitation), the joint sphere (value co-creation), and the recipients' sphere (value creation). Resource integration in the context of service logic theory refers to how actors integrate tangible and intangible resources in the process of value co-creation (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 702).

PROVIDERS' SPHERE

Value facilitation through service offerings

JOINT SPHERE

Value co-creation through resource integration

RECIPIENTS' SPHERE
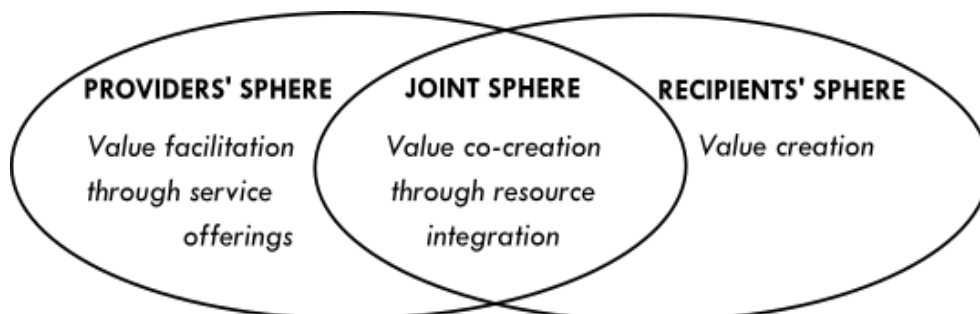
Value creation

Figure 1: Value co-creation and the three spheres; model adapted from (Grönroos & Voima, 2013, p. 141).

The distinction between types and spheres of resource integration is implemented in PSL through the argument that PSOs cannot create value for their recipients but 'only make a "service

offering" that has the potential to create value for the customers' (Osborne, 2018, p. 227). PSL thus frames value as being created by the service recipients, who have the prerogative of determining the benefit of a service based on experiential value (as value-in-use) which is mediated through their individual lifeworlds (Osborne, 2018, p. 227). An individual's experienced benefit is thus argued to rely on the skills, intangible resources, and 'life experience' of the service recipient (Osborne, 2018).

The relevance of PSL for this study lies in how it frames the empirical data and subsequent analysis. Following developments in PSL, I have sought to understand service through how recipients were able to create and assess value from the service offerings provided by the municipal PSOs. In Chapter 2, I discuss how policy establishes the premises for municipal PSOs' value facilitation, as legislation and policy outline the kind of measures that should be included in their service offerings. Service offerings in this study are understood as the PSOs' configuration of resources and associated practices that are intended to support the service recipients' value creation (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 703). In a PSL framework, service recipients' value creation is consequently enabled through the process of value co-creation in which service recipients integrate their resources with PSO-provided service offerings in order to create – ideally – beneficial value.

PSL has implications for the study of public service innovation, as a focus on service recipients implies that improved service should result in increased or improved value outcomes for the service recipients (Osborne et al., 2012, p. 146; Skålén et al., 2018, p. 703). According to the resource integration model (Figure 1), innovation may alter the providers' value facilitation (and thus service offerings) and the service recipients' resource integration abilities and practices or otherwise alter the joint sphere in which value co-creation occurs. Studying public service innovation from a PSL perspective thus highlights the importance of accounting for the three types of resource integration – value facilitation, value co-creation, and value creation – and understanding how disruptive change will be perceived and enacted by the different stakeholders involved. To situate the value creation process in a broader context, I have also included a definition of service systems in which such systems are defined as dynamic configurations of actors and resources that work to provide service offerings and facilitate value creation through the service recipients' resource integration. Diverging from the service system definitions in service-dominant logic (e.g. Maglio, Vargo, Caswell, & Spohrer, 2009), I understand service systems as consisting of actors connected through formal agreements. To consider potential external influences, I have developed a concept of extended service environments that aim to

address how uncontrollable or unexpected externalities affect service provision and value co-creation. Extended service environments are thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2.

This section has briefly outlined the basic reasoning behind PSL, which provides an analytical framing that is important in the following sections, so I have situated the study within a larger research context. In the next section, I discuss the role of refugee integration as a topic in service research and present a recent debate on refugee integration in the field of migration studies.

Refugee Migration and Service Research

There has been increasing interest in refugees as a topic in service research (Finsterwalder, 2017; Geuijen, Oliver, & Dekker, 2020; Nasr & Fisk, 2019; Paraskevas, Brookes, & Altinay, 2019; Raadschelders, Larrison, & Thapar, 2019). Finsterwalder (2017) recently noted that despite the fact that 'service provision is an integral part of hosting refugees', the topic had largely been neglected by the service scholar community. He argued for the use of a service ecosystem lens – as defined in service-dominant logic – to study refugees and their inclusion in service ecosystems (Finsterwalder, 2017, p. 178). Service ecosystems in service-dominant logic have been defined as a 'relatively self-contained, self-adjusting system of resource-integrating actors connected by shared institutional arrangements and mutual value creation through service exchange' (Vargo & Lusch, 2016, pp. 10-11). In his conceptualisation, Finsterwalder distinguishes between those inside and outside host community ecosystems, with those inside being defined as 'established actors in the system [who] have already been interacting with one another, integrating resources, and are linked by institutions' (2017, p. 178). Later, a research agenda on refugees in service science noted that a number of studies had indeed been conducted, but 'a broader conceptual foundation for understanding refugee migration impacts and implications on different service industries is required' (Farmaki & Christou, 2018, p. 12). Following Finsterwalder, Farmaki and Christou adopted a service ecosystem perspective that can be used to understand 'refugee integration within the service ecosystems of host countries' (Farmaki & Christou, 2018, p. 8).

In 2019, *The Service Industries Journal* published a special issue on the global refugee crisis and the service industries, in which the editors recognised 'that there is still a significant gap related to the service sector and its role within the extant refugee research' (Paraskevas et al., 2019, p. 663). As part of the issue, Nasr and Fisk argue that a hands-on approach should be taken by scholars working in transformative service research (TSR) to try to alleviate the 'fundamental lack of service research regarding the global refugee crisis' (Nasr & Fisk, 2019, p. 685). TSR represents a stream of research in which scholars focus on work that seeks 'to enhance the human experience'

(Nasr & Fisk, 2019, p. 685). Through their conceptual paper, Nasr and Fisk advocate for the inclusion of 'relieving suffering' as an outcome of TSR to support 'deeper research that addresses remedially providing for basic human needs such as education, healthcare, and freedom of speech to various service actors in diverse service settings and contexts' (Nasr & Fisk, 2019, p. 697).

Beyond using the service ecosystem as a conceptual lens, refugee research in service science has been framed through concepts such as wicked problems (Raadschelders et al., 2019), the provision of service as a process through which service organisations facilitate users' value creation (Strokosch & Osborne, 2016). So far, the literature on refugee migration as a wicked problem – that is, a problem that has no finite solution – has largely been discussed as a structural issue (Geuijen, Moore, Cederquist, Ronning, & van Twist, 2017; Murray & Longo, 2018; Raadschelders et al., 2019; Termeer, Dewulf, & Biesbroek, 2019). In this literature, complex issues related to negotiations at different scales have been discussed, and it has been argued that refugee migration is wicked in part due to the continuity of an institutional void (Geuijen et al., 2017). The cause of this void has been attributed to the absence of an international coordinating government agency and the consequent failure to come up with a solution where responsibility is shared by all the actors that must be in involved in order to alleviate the suffering of those who have fled their homes. In response to these issues, a recent article has called for ground-level empirical research (Noordegraaf et al., 2019). Specifically, while recognising the potential of wicked problem theory to address structural issues, the authors report that they 'feel that wickedness theory in its current shape and form does not contribute enough to the ability to tackle wicked issues in practice' (Noordegraaf et al., 2019, p. 278). They thus call for additional research that explores how 'people and practices actually deal with complexity' (Noordegraaf et al., 2019, p. 282), especially by exploring everyday experiences through coping (Daviter, 2017; Noordegraaf et al., 2019). Within PSL research, only one identified study has addressed the topic of refugees (Espersson & Westrup, 2019).

Refugee migration is a multilevel phenomenon in which drivers, obstacles, and structures can be difficult to locate. In this study, I have chosen to consider the implications of refugee migration as it unfolds at the municipal level. Even though refugee migration is frequently addressed as a global issue, those who are forced to flee inescapably experience those processes that occur on a local level. The global influence on this study has emerged through a number of factors, such as language barriers, cultural differences, and the different ways in which employees and settled refugees perceived public service provision. The recognition of refugee migration as a wicked problem helps acknowledge the several perspectives that co-exist and drive discussions related to

the issue. As a result, this study extends PSL concepts and the wicked problems literature for use as analytical tools to study refugee integration.

While service researchers appear to have only recently become interested in matters of refugee migration, the issue has long been studied through other disciplinary lenses. Below, I review a recent debate from the field of migration studies and show how the concept of refugee integration has been challenged in recent years. The problematisation of the concept is of interest to this study because it reveals a number of power asymmetries that need to be taken into account.

Studying Refugee Integration

Integration as an analytical concept has come under increased scrutiny among migration scholars (Dahinden, 2016; Rytter, 2018; Schinkel, 2018, 2019). Rytter has argued that a recent conflation between the conceptualisation used by scholars (etic term) and policymakers (emic term) has had the unfortunate consequence of distinguishing between those who are to be integrated (refugees) and the society in a given country into which they are to be integrated (Rytter, 2018). In short, this means that the politicians' definition of integration as a process of governmental interest has influenced the language of refugee integration studies to make it difficult to separate integration as a political project from its function as a social process that can be analysed. Advancing the argument further, Schinkel has shown that 'measuring immigrant integration is a thoroughly neo-colonial practice' with clear historical roots distinguishing between hosts and guests; in this case, the latter are newly arrived immigrants (Schinkel, 2018, p. 12). These neo-colonial undertones are associated with how the indicators for measuring integration are established by government actors who are likely to define them based on domestic practices and imagined perceptions of national identity.

The recent critique of using the concept of immigrant and refugee integration in academic analysis has sparked a discussion regarding the term's analytical use. Schinkel has argued for the complete abolition of the term as '[t]here is nothing defensible in the concept of immigrant integration, and neither in anything that purports to be an "alternative" for it' (Schinkel, 2019, p. 1). For Rytter, a possible solution to the conceptual integration-crisis lies in a clearer separation between policy and analytical definitions, as he argues that anthropologists 'need to take responsibility for the concept of *integration*, which has had many unforeseen consequences and effects since it was de-territorialised from social theory' (Rytter, 2018, p. 15). Taking a mediating position, Klarenbeek has argued against Schinkel specifically by stating that eradicating

integration as a concept from our analytical apparatus would be the equivalent of 'throwing out the baby with the bathwater' (Klarenbeek, 2019, p. 1). As an alternative, she argues for an approach in which refugee integration is studied both as a social process and as part of the discourse as influenced by the political vernacular.

The critical stance found in recent writings against integration is based on the premise that integration studies may reify the distinction between those outside and those inside a defined whole, such as the nation-state (Schinkel, 2019). Taking a position similar to Schinkel, Favell has argued that 'if it is used at all "integration" now today would have to be global (or better: planetary) integration. The idea of national integration is an absurd anachronism' (Favell, 2019, p. 3). His position relates to similar critiques of the nation-state and the way the social imagination of a unified national whole has created global segmentations. This argument connects the discussion on immigrant integration to the larger research corpus involving studies on ethnicity, national identity, and the way in which differing perceptions of groups come into being (e.g. Agamben, 1998; Barth, 1969; Eriksen, 1993). This literature has often focused on the way group formations are based on how exclusionary practices can lead to the formation of an internal whole.

The conceptual crisis of integration in migration studies has led to a situation in which writing about immigrant integration can lead to accusations of reifying neo-colonial power structures and global inequalities (Favell, 2019; Schinkel, 2019). At the same time, integration remains a relevant term through its very fuzziness, due to both its origins as a concept used to describe social adaptations and its current use in political discourse (Rytter, 2018). Integration, as both a process and a concept that is both emic and etic, is thus something that requires critical attention and inevitably occurs in one way or another.

The writing against integration stream of research found in recent migration studies literature relates to the broader research interest of this thesis, as it adds perspective on what refugee integration means in different academic disciplines. While the recent turn towards studies of refugees in service research has shown an interest in 'alleviating suffering' and contributing to the improvement of services for migrants, migration scholars who have been studying the topic for years have become increasingly critical of the concept due to its neo-colonial connotations. Important lessons can be drawn from recent writings in migration studies, as the critique of integration serves as a reminder of how policy and service solutions are developed by policymakers. Carrying out a study on refugee integration requires the recognition of different processes and an awareness of those stakeholders with particular interests in those processes.

This short presentation of recent debates on refugee integration and services in service research and migration studies provides a foundation from which it is possible to proceed. While a more extensive literature review may have been beneficial, the included scholarship on refugee integration provides an ample basis from which to mark out certain preliminary gaps in research. First, refugees and integration as a topic has received increasing interest in service research. This has come through the recognition that while refugees and migrants are subject to a number of public services, they have largely been neglected as a topic of research by service scholars. Recent literature on the topic, however, has largely focused on refugee migration as a structural issue, and there have been more discussions about the importance of studying refugee migration through research agendas (Farmaki & Christou, 2018; Finsterwalder, 2017; Nasr & Fisk, 2019) than empirical studies on the topic. Furthermore, the service science community is marked by a willingness to help, as seen through the recent introduction of TSR. Second, migrant studies constitute an important counterweight that should be considered in a service study on refugee migration through their recent recognition of the possible neo-colonial undertones in political refugee integration discourse.

Refugee Integration as a Wicked Problem

Refugee integration is a process that consists of several issues that are often perceived differently by different people. For those who have fled their countries, the difficulty lies not only in learning a new language and obtaining work but also in finding ways through which they can construct a new life and sense of normality. This includes a mode of being in which there is a quasi-perfect fit between expectations and reality (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 164). For people employed in refugee services, the challenges of refugee integration are associated with housing, secondary language education, making agreements with public and private enterprises for work practice, and communicating with people who often have a different notion of the relationship between the government apparatus and themselves as private citizens.

The aggregation of challenges associated with refugee integration efforts can be said to pose a wicked problem (Rittel & Webber, 1973). The conceptualisation of wicked problems has long been established in areas such as innovation, planning, and organisational theory, and one of the defining traits of wicked problems relates to the difficulty of actually defining one: 'the formulation of a wicked problem *is* the problem!' (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 161). Another key characteristic of a wicked problem is its uniqueness, as no single solution implemented in one context can be readily replicated elsewhere (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 164). What the concept

then offers is a level of consciousness regarding the complexity of a particular issue in a particular location.

Wicked problems are not only recognised due to their complexity, some have argued, but also through the way that solutions to such problems have to surpass more obstacles than 'tamer' problems do (Geuijen et al., 2017, p. 623). Consequently, a wicked problem is defined within the nexus between a problem and a solution. In the case of refugee integration in Norway, solutions have been articulated in different government white papers and, since 2003, in the Introduction Act, according to which the preferred outcome of the refugee integration process is for participants to become active members of society and economically self-sufficient. In other words, they are expected to engage in waged labour (Introduksjonsloven, LOV-2003-07-04-80). From this solution, the problem can be articulated through how a sufficient percentage of people who obtain residency in Norway fail to reach the government's articulated goal regarding employment and level of language acquisition. In this scenario, wickedness represents the obstacles found between the problem and the outcome, and the problem that needs a solution thus lies in figuring out ways to overcome these obstacles.

In a recent article on refugees as a global wicked problem, such problems are characterised by '(1) multiple, potentially conflicting values, (2) strong political passions on different sides of the issue, (3) substantive uncertainty on how to best solve the problem, and (4) multiple independent arenas for social deliberation and action' (Geuijen et al., 2017, p. 623). These characteristics in isolation do not, the authors argue, make a problem wicked. Rather, they insist that it is the absence of

> any institution, structure or process that provides a natural social or political location
> in which the problem can be nominated for attention, sized up in a process of
> deliberation and design, and used as the platform for directing coordinated action
> across many different organizations. (Geuijen et al., 2017, p. 623)

Hence, the challenge of solving wicked problems can often be found in what the authors call an 'institutional void' (Geuijen et al., 2017, p. 635); that is, an overarching institution that aims to or in fact can call attention to the wicked problem as a large and complicated issue. Refugees and their integration as a wicked problem is tackled on different scales, from global organisations such as the UN (through the UNHCR) to the municipal level. Along both vertical and horizontal axes, the institutional void becomes apparent in how organisations each work on the same problem but lack a common institution or framework that guides their work towards the same goal. This might also be referred to as a silo problem.

Wicked problems thus unfold uniquely in different locations. In major cities, refugee integration has been connected to issues of segregation and situations in which ethnic minorities cluster together and comprise separate communities within larger communities (Wessel, Andersson, Kauppinen, & Andersen, 2017). In small communities like those featured in this study, however, immigrants often serve as an addition to an otherwise declining population, and there have been examples of Norwegian municipalities actively recruiting labour migrants to their villages (Sørhaug & Vareide, 2014). In rural municipalities, immigration has become a solution to the problem of a declining population, as labour migrants who settle help local businesses and stimulate the area's economy (Meld. St. 5, 2019-2020, p. 27).

Wicked Problems and Public Service Innovation

Refugee integration as a political project and social process is an issue to which no finite solution has been found. Rather, and in line with definitions of wicked problems, it is an issue solved and re-solved continually and in different contexts (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 160). Public sector responsibilities in refugee integration differ significantly between countries (Scholten et al., 2017), as some nations primarily provide protection to those who are accepted as refugees, while others – such as the Nordic countries – have established comprehensive welfare schemes. The extent of public service provision to settled refugees influences the public service's capacity to renew such programmes and engage in attempts to improve these services. In the Norwegian case, the government has established an introduction programme for refugees that is mandatory for all who settle in the country over the first two (sometimes, three) years following their arrival. The programme was implemented in 2003–2004 and marked a paradigm shift in Norwegian integration policy that was accompanied by increasing responsibilisation of settled refugees. In the years following its implementation, the programme has been subject to a number of reforms that have shaped its current status (Djuve & Kavli, 2018). Each instance of reform has come in response to new political aims or by learning from programme results. As such, the programme resonates with the wicked problem descriptions of Rittel and Webber (Rittel & Webber, 1973), as the problem-solution articulation has been solved and re-solved regularly over the past 17 years.

Refugee integration as a wicked problem that needs to be, and indeed has been, repeatedly re-solved in Norway over the past 50 years suggests that the field is open to and even necessitates novel solutions that aim to address new challenges. To understand how the municipalities work with problem solving and innovation at the local level, I use the concept of bricolage (Fuglsang, 2010; Fuglsang & Sørensen, 2011; Witell et al., 2017) to capture how local PSOs coped with policy-mandated service offerings in their context (Daviter, 2017). Bricolage as a concept

originated in French scholarship and was used by Claude Lévi-Strauss to describe situations in which problems are solved with whatever is at hand (Lévi Strauss, 1966, pp. 16-17). It has since been used as a concept that refers to ad hoc and pragmatic innovations (T. Baker & Nelson, 2005; Fuglsang, 2010; Witell et al., 2017). The use of bricolage to capture local public service innovation has emerged through the empirical data, which showed multiple cases of how municipal PSOs worked in resource-scarce environments and continually adapted their service provision to novel problems that appeared through their interactions with service recipients. Bricolage as a service innovation concept is relevant to organisations characterised by resource scarcity (Witell et al., 2017). Furthermore, bricolage has been proposed as a type of innovation that enables the recording of several minute innovations that together may lead to durable and significant changes in an organisation's characteristics (Fuglsang, 2010).

Fuglsang has argued for a bricolage perspective in public service innovation studies to capture how 'innovation in public sector services should be seen in light of processes of building of skills and expanding routines' (Fuglsang, 2010, p. 68). In this view, bricolage is defined not just by one-off instances in which PSOs develop or readjust their service offerings but rather as the continual efforts required to adapt to ever-changing circumstances in the sector. Elsewhere, Witell et al. have emphasised how bricolage is frequently used as a tool that results from resource scarcity, as 'organizations relying on bricolage can be seen as *"muddling through"* … an approach that directs an organization's decision-making in resource-constrained environments' (Witell et al., 2017, p. 292).

What is of interest in the present study, then, is how the featured PSOs worked to implement introduction programmes in resource-scarce environments and how they adjusted and improved their service offerings in tandem with the interactions they had with the settled refugees.

Aim of the Study and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to show how PSL can be used to better understand refugee integration, and further how studies of refugee integration provide promising avenues for developing PSL. Refugee integration has been termed a wicked problem (Raadschelders et al., 2019); through this study, I reveal how this wickedness is materialised at the local level and experienced by those working in or otherwise involved with the field (Noordegraaf et al., 2019). The study has distinct theoretical and empirical ambitions. Theoretically, I aim to connect PSL with wicked problems theory to grasp the (complex) ways in which policy influences local PSOs' service provision and practices. Furthermore, I explore local-level adjustments by considering bricolage as a technique

used by front-line and municipal-level PSOs to cope with the requirements of both policy and their service recipients. Practically, I strive to show how service provision and adjustments were conducted and engaged with in the four featured municipalities.

Research Questions

The research questions formulated intend to address the theoretical and practical ambitions of this study and have been articulated in alignment with recent conceptualisations from PSL. The study responds to one main research question, which is further addressed through three sub-research questions.

> **Main research question:** How can we understand refugee integration as a wicked problem from the perspective of PSL?

The main research question establishes the premise for this study by situating it within the emerging stream of PSL research while also signalling that wicked problems are used as a framework to extend our understanding of PSL. Understanding refugee integration through a PSL perspective steers the study in a particular direction, as it makes use of the meta-theoretical assumptions and concepts available in PSL to understand refugee integration. As presented earlier in this chapter, my interpretation of PSL is influenced by the research stream inspired by service logic (Grönroos, 2011, 2019; Skålén et al., 2018). In practical terms, this means that I explore refugee integration as a service process that occurs within and across three spheres: the providers' sphere, the joint sphere, and the service recipients' sphere. This division of the service process leads to my sub-research questions, which are explored in the empirical Chapters 5, 6, and 7, respectively.

> **Sub-research question 1:** How are settled refugees' lifeworlds affecting their value creation?
>
> **Sub-research question 2:** How do PSOs provide service offerings and engage in public service innovation?
>
> **Sub-research question 3:** How does the extended service environment influence the process of local service provision and value co-creation in a municipal service context?

Sub-research question 1 is (mainly) explored in Chapter 5, which focuses on how the settled refugees were able to create value from local service offerings and highlights how their lifeworlds affected this process. Chapter 5 is therefore focused on the service recipients' sphere. The

inclusion of lifeworlds is inspired by previous service research (Helkkula, Kelleher, & Pihlström, 2012) and has been adopted by PSL, with Strokosch and Osborne arguing that value creation must be interpreted through service recipients' 'own life circumstances' (Strokosch & Osborne, 2020, p. 2). Lifeworlds are addressed through presentations of the biographies of a selection of the service recipients and through their own reported self-experienced value creation as service recipients.

Sub-research question 2 is (most explicitly) discussed in Chapter 6, where I present experiences and data from the service providers' sphere. There, I show how local PSOs worked to implement and adjust policy-defined service offerings in their municipal context and how this service provision was influenced by their dual responsibilities to their legal mandates and their service recipients. Providing service offerings as a way to facilitate service recipients' value creation requires continual adjustments in which the service-providing entity needs to come up with contextually based solutions and measures in accordance with the local context. This question thus serves to highlight the ways in which municipal PSOs are engaged in public service innovations as a means to both ensure the fulfilment of their legal mandate and facilitate optimal value creation for their service recipients.

Sub-research question 3 differs from the other two as it does not explicitly address the three-phase service process (Grönroos, 2019) but rather aims to determine how external influences affected those services. The question includes the concept of extended service environments, which are discussed in Chapter 2. In short, the inclusion of extended service environments as a concept in this study is intended to highlight the interconnection between actors and systems involved in service and the broader context in which they operate. Extended service environments thus serve as a way to open up the field of study to explore the influence of external incidents and factors on service provision.

A Note on Writing

This thesis has been conducted as an ethnographic study and is influenced by my disciplinary background in anthropology. While there has been growing interest in ethnographic studies in service research (Chandler & Lusch, 2015; Cluley & Radnor, 2020; Koskela-Huotari, Vink, & Edvardsson, 2020; Osborne et al., 2012; Trischler & Scott, 2016), and some studies have been employed ethnographic methods (Kabadayi, 2019), the influence of anthropological writing has not yet been fully incorporated. Writing across and between disciplines involves a number of translations, ranging from discipline-specific terminology to expectations regarding phrasing. The

difference in professional vernaculars between social anthropology and service research-related disciplines became clear during my transition from one field to the other. As anecdotal evidence, this clarification has come from both a reviewer who took offence to the inclusion of 'first-person writing' in a paper submitted to a journal and an economics professor whose commentary on a conference paper indicated that I had to write more professionally. Objectivity in research can be reached by excluding oneself from the message. My sin had been to note that that 'I had a theoretical epiphany' at some point during my fieldwork.

In social anthropology, the importance of reflexivity in writing arose in the wake of the reflexive turn initiated by the book *Writing Culture* in the mid-1980s (Clifford & Marcus, 1986). There, Clifford – and others – argued against the way in which anthropologists of the past had tended to write themselves out of their works, which inescapably was the result of the ethnographers' social interactions with the subjects represented through the literature (Clifford & Marcus, 1986, p. 7). The inherent social nature of ethnographic research, it was argued, had to include the research instrument with which the data presented had been produced. As ethnographers themselves are the primary tool for producing data, it thus became common practice to involve a degree of reflexivity in ethnographic writing. Leach, a notable figure in the discipline, later emphasised the importance of recognising how the ethnographer as a being with agency and individual characteristics is prone to influence his or her research:

> As anthropologists we need to come to terms with the now well-recognised fact that in a novel the personalities of the characters are derived from aspects of the personality of the author. How could it be otherwise? (Leach, 1989, p. 140)

For Leach, the writer is always likely to influence those being written about, so some degree of reflexivity is warranted, as 'the only ego [person] that I know at first hand is my own' (Leach, 1989, p. 141). Ethnographic reflectivity can thus be read as an attempt to ensure empirical sincerity regarding the process through which the ethnographic data has come to be. It is inherent in the process of ethnographic writing that ethnographers write down their interpretations of their encounters with others (Ingold, 2014). As a consequence, each fragment of ethnographic writing has been argued to be partial and incomplete (Clifford, 1986).

In Chapter 3, I provide a more detailed account of fieldwork and ethnographic data production as a method and show the multiple ways in which I seek to account for the partial and apparent incompleteness of the method. For now, this brief digression has been included as a reminder

that since this study has been written from the perspective of a person trained in social anthropology, there may be consequences for the writing and reading of this thesis.

Thesis Structure

This thesis contains nine chapters. The first four cover the research background, theory, method, and context. The next three present empirical data and findings, which are synthesised, analysed, and discussed in Chapter 8. Finally, Chapter 9 presents conclusions and suggestions for further studies.

In Chapter 2, I present my theoretical framework and further situate the thesis. The chapter includes a presentation of the main theoretical concepts used and outlines the model in which these concepts are operationalised. The model serves as an anchor for the empirical chapters in which different sections of it are addressed. The concepts and meta-theoretical assumptions presented in Chapter 2 provide important scaffolding that is used in the analysis later in the thesis.

Chapter 3 includes a presentation of my methods and a description of my methodology, research design, data, and analytical approach. Further, I describe ethnography and participant observation and explain how the data produced through the fieldwork have influenced the writing of this thesis.

Chapter 4 is a background chapter in which I present the research context of this study and introduce the fields in which the research has been carried out. This chapter also reviews the services provided to immigrants and refugees in Norway over the 50 years leading up to the implementation of the introduction programme in 2003–2004. That programme and associated processes related to refugee arrivals and integration are presented thereafter. Following this, I include a comprehensive description of the political and historical context of immigration (including refugee immigration) to Norway since the 1970s. This section is useful in situating this study in a broader historico-political context, as it shows how immigration policies have changed in response to the exogenous changes and shocks over the past 50 years. While the descriptions of that background are important for understanding current refugee integration services in Norway, the details included are not essential for the subsequent analysis and discussions. As a suggestion for the reader, the first half of the chapter – prior to the section 'Political and Historical Background' – may thus be prioritised.

Chapter 5 explores refugee integration from the perspective of settled refugees and presents biographies that show how the people presented as service recipients in this study came to occupy that position. The chapter emphasises the ways in which individual settled refugees' lifeworlds affected their ability to create value by integrating their resources with the municipalities' service offerings. As such, the chapter is primarily concerned with exploring the service recipients' sphere of the service process.

Chapter 6 explores the service providers' sphere in refugee integration services and accounts for the complex realities of local service provision. This chapter describes how the PSOs worked to develop their service offerings and engaged with public service innovation to improve their value facilitation. Based on examples of various innovation projects in the municipalities, I discuss how the rural context of the municipalities affected their ability to offer customised services.

In Chapter 7, I explore how extended service environments affected local service provision. The notion of extended service environments aims to take a wide range of externalities into account. The importance of doing so emerged through the fieldwork, as certain external events, actors, and factors recurrently disrupted the service process. In the providers' sphere, this is shown by how increasingly restrictive policies regarding refugee migration in the EU and Norway made refugees a scarce resource in the municipalities. In the service recipients' sphere, a number of unforeseen and unrelated events in actual service provision distorted their ability to interact with local service offerings. Sometimes, this distortion was related to events that took place in their countries of origin, while in other cases, events related to their individual lifeworlds impacted their ability to create value from the providers' service offerings.

Chapter 8 synthesises the study's theoretical findings and discusses how they can be used to develop PSL: it presents a multidimensional service model that aims to capture the complexity of service provision explored throughout this study. The model aggregates the findings and contributions of the thesis through descriptions of the service process; I then discuss its implications for different concepts in the framework.

Finally, I conclude this study in Chapter 9 by summarising its contributions, outlining its limitations, and suggesting potential avenues for future research.

Chapter 2: Theory

As, before putting up a large building, the architect surveys and sounds the site to see if it will bear the weight, the wise legislator does not begin by laying down laws good in themselves, but by investigating the fitness of the people, for which they are destined, to receive them.

(Rousseau, 1913 [1762], p. 38)

Introduction

Refugee integration has been defined as a multifaceted concept that can refer to multiple processes (Scholten et al., 2017, p. 3). Sometimes, it refers to the sociocultural processes of becoming part of a community; at other times, it refers to the systemic integration, economic independence, and self-sufficiency achieved by a refugee settled in a new society (Eriksen, 2007). The term can be used to describe both a personal socialising process and a policy-driven process in which the government establishes a number of measures to facilitate refugee integration.

The fuzziness associated with the concept of refugee integration has made it resistant to any conclusive articulation (Rytter, 2018). In this thesis, the term is used to describe two processes: (1) a social process experienced by refugees, and (2) an administrative process handled by public sector services. This means that the theoretical framework has to include a number of approaches to capture these processes as they are perceived and engaged with from the different actors' perspectives. In this chapter, I outline the theories and concepts used to interpret the empirical material in this thesis. As a study focusing on the public service component of refugee integration, most of the theories presented in this chapter relate to service provision and how refugee service organisations work to implement policies by offering services to refugees. Moreover, the study explores how the processes of service provision links to the phenomenological experience of refugees interacting with public service offerings.

In this chapter, I discuss concept and theory formation to serve as the foundation for my theoretical framework. Next, I present an overview of that framework and a service model (Figure 2) that is used throughout the thesis and captures the service process as defined through service logic (Grönroos, 2019; Grönroos & Voima, 2013). This study has been heavily influenced by the emerging PSL, which is briefly discussed in Chapter 1. The influence of PSL permeates the analytical framework as a whole, as it provides a meta-theoretical foundation upon which the

other concepts can be understood. After presenting the model and theoretical framework, I explicate their relevance for PSL through a presentation of its associated concepts.

That presentation is structured into five sections: public service innovation, lifeworlds, wicked problems, PSL, and systems approaches to service. The order of these concepts is deliberate, as it allows the various concepts to supplement and extend one another; however, the order of presentation does not serve as a ranking of their relative importance.

From Common Sense to Abstraction: Concepts and Theory Formation

Concept formation has been shown to consist of three aspects: '(a) the events or phenomena to be defined (the extension, denotation, or definiendum), (b) the properties or attributes that define them (the intension, connotation, definiens, or definition), and (c) a label covering both *a* and *b* (the term)' (Gerring, 1999, pp. 357-358). A good concept, John Gerring has argued, can 'attain a proper alignment between *a, b,* and *c*' (Gerring, 1999, p. 358).

Conceptualising observed phenomena has been described as a process through which common-sense descriptions are heightened to a level of abstraction that can serve to subject the phenomena to analysis. Thus, Alfred Schutz has argued as follows:

> The thought objects constructed by the social scientist, in order to grasp this social reality, have to be founded upon the thought objects constructed by the common-sense thinking of men, living their daily life within their social world. Thus, the constructs of the social sciences are, so to speak, constructs of the second degree, namely constructs of the constructs made by the actors on the social scene, whose behavior the social scientist has to observe and explain in accordance with the procedural rules of his science. (Schutz, 1954, p. 267)

The difference between the common-sense concept and the second-degree abstraction of such concepts (Schutz, 1954) has been discussed above through the topic of refugee integration, where it was shown that Rytter (2018) and others argued against a recent conflation of etic (analytical) and emic (discourse) understandings of the concept. The same term can thus be used to cover two different concepts that are based on definitions that guide how the term is understood. The emic definition, typically used by politicians, is based on a conceptualisation of refugee integration that some believe promotes a reification of differences between those who are part of the nation-state and those who are outside it (Schinkel, 2018, p. 8). The properties and attributes designated to describe these different phenomena, by extension, can also differ, so the primary

remaining common feature between the etic and emic understandings of refugee integration is its label.

Refugee integration as a multifaceted and controversial term points to how the definition of a concept is crucial to its use in analysis. A concept, Blumer has argued, 'is of value in empirical sciences only to the extent to which it connects fruitfully with the empirical world' (Blumer, 1954, p. 4). Through properly defined concepts, connections between theory and the empirical world can be established in ways that open up observable realities for further interpretation; as Blumer puts it:

> With clear concepts theoretical statements can be brought into close and self-correcting relation with the empirical world. Contrariwise, vague concepts deter the identification of appropriate empirical instances, and obscure the detection of what is relevant in the empirical instances that are chosen. (Blumer, 1954, p. 5)

The present study relies on and extends previous concepts and conceptual developments. As such, much of the crafting has already been done, and the concepts used have been applied to describe particular phenomena that are defined through established properties and attributes. Several of the concepts and theories included in the theoretical framework originate in mundane terms from ordinary language that have been abstracted and crafted to serve an analytical purpose. While I have adopted a number of concepts to shape the theoretical framework, the approach in applying these concepts to my empirical data has treated them as dynamic rather than definite. The phenomenological approach of this thesis means that I have taken the observed behaviour and dynamics from my empirical research as the starting point and used theory and concepts as tools to understand these phenomena in distinct ways. As a consequence of the fact that 'the objects of research in the social sciences refuse to lie still in the manner of rocks, animals, cells and atoms' (Gerring, 1999, p. 393), the adoption of concepts and theories in a social science project such as this requires a dynamic approach.

'Every concept', Waquant has argued, 'is liable to be deformed, misused, and even abused, for concepts are our instruments of reasoning and observation: the work they do depends on how we work with them, that is, *what we make them do* in our analyses' (Wacquant, 2014, p. 123). The use of concepts in analysis, it can thus be argued, is to serve as instruments that allow the researcher to better grasp, understand, and describe the phenomena of interest. As argued above, the inescapable motion of the field in social research, made up of the social behaviour of persons with agency and self-interest, has resulted in a belief among some that concepts should be

considered inherently dynamic. According to Gerring, 'definitive definitions, good for all times and situations, are rare' (Gerring, 1999, p. 390). Nonetheless, sound explanations of the attributes and phenomena that various concepts are used to describe are important and take up the majority of this chapter.

My approach to theoretical application, especially abduction as a research strategy, is further described in Chapter 3. This has allowed me to oscillate back and forth between theory and empirical data. I outline below my theoretical framework before exploring each theoretical component in detail.

Theoretical Framework and Initial Service Model

This study on refugee integration in rural municipalities in Norway uses the ambiguity of the term *refugee integration* as its starting point and seeks to determine how refugee integration as a process was experienced from the different perspectives of public service employees and settled refugees.
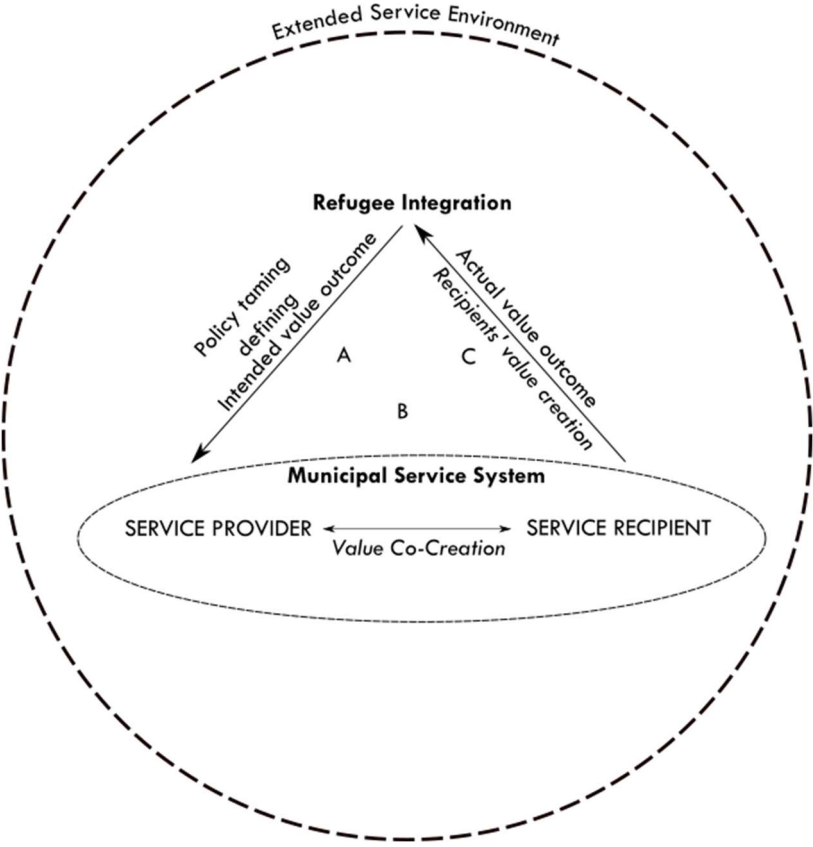
Figure 2: Refugee integration service model.

Figure 2 illustrates the analytical framework of the service process that is explored throughout this thesis and takes three focal actors or entities into account: refugee integration, service

providers, and service recipients. As such, the model serves as a foundation that makes it possible to consider the main research question of how municipal services operate in fields characterised by wicked problems. The model is inspired by a division of spheres in the service process articulated by Grönroos and Voima (Grönroos & Voima, 2013, p. 141). In their model, they separate the service process into three spheres, each of which corresponds to a distinct process of resource integration. Value facilitation occurs in the providers' sphere and value creation in the service recipients' sphere, while their interaction is captured in the joint sphere, where value co-creation occurs (Grönroos & Voima, 2013, p. 141).

The model is also inspired by a similar model advanced by Archibugi, Ciccarone, Mare, Pizzetti, and Violati that describes triangular relations between government, service suppliers, and citizens in the public sector (2003, p. 51). My model (Figure 2) has been separated into the exploration of three distinct phases that connect the actors and refugee integration: phase A (the problem-defining process that articulates an intended value outcome); phase B (the value facilitation and co-creation process); and phase C (the value creation process). Phases A and B relate to the public sector and the design and implementation of policy. Later in this chapter, the difference between policy design and implementation is discussed in terms of the theorisation of wicked problems, where phase A is described as the stage in which appropriate problems and solutions are defined, while the implementation of those ostensible solutions is conducted by municipal service organisations in phase B.

Phase B is central to service provision and the value co-creation process. The recipients' value creation process is covered by phase C in the model. The core intent of the model is to show how intended value outcomes, as defined by policymakers and described through legislation, will often differ from the actual value outcomes that are created through the process of service exchange (Laud et al., 2019). The literature review presented below shows how problems and solutions are defined while describing how the service exchange process may lead to a misalignment or only a partial alignment between intended and actual service outcomes. The emergence of a misalignment between those outcomes, I further argue, opens up a space for public service innovation. This is explored through how actors and processes at different stages may alter their roles and practices to work towards lessening the gap between intended and actual value outcomes. The aim from the service providers' perspective is to facilitate service recipients' value creation in a way that aligns with the intended value outcome defined in policy.

Due to the ethnographic foundation of this thesis, where I have followed settled refugees and municipal PSOs in their everyday practices, the empirical material primarily explores what occurs

in phases B and C. The main emphasis of the theoretical framework pertains to the processes of service provision and value creation that occur in the dyadic relationship between service providers and service recipients who are co-located in a single municipal service system.

Table 1: Theoretical framework.

Theory	References	Significance for the Study
Bricolage and public service innovation	Broad scholarly field that describes a particular type of change – innovation – in a public sector context. Can be described as intentional or haphazard but shares the important characteristics of novelty and implementation. This study emphasizes bricolage innovation in municipal PSOs. The theoretical foundation follows key previous research on the topic (e.g. T. Baker & Nelson, 2005; Fuglsang, 2010; Fuglsang & Sørensen, 2011; Hartley, 2005; Witell et al., 2017) .	Bricolage in public service is understood as the incremental changes made by PSOs when faced with novel challenges in their operations. The innovative capacity of bricolage is captured through how aggregate changes are likely to end up altering the characteristics of the PSO in significant ways.
Lifeworlds	Considers the lifeworld situations of individual service recipients and how they may influence their ability to create value or benefit from service offerings (Bourdieu, 1977; Friedland, 1991; Helkkula et al., 2012; Osborne, 2018; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020; Trischler & Scott, 2016).	Lifeworlds enable our understanding of the broader societal and subjective context in which service provision and value creation occur.
Wicked problems	Describes the problem-solution complex of social problems that are difficult or impossible to solve (Daviter, 2017; Geuijen et al., 2017; Geuijen et al., 2020; Noordegraaf et al., 2019; Raadschelders et al., 2019; Rittel & Webber, 1973).	Refugee integration is a complex process that includes a number of actors and components. Wicked problems support comprehension of the complexity of the process and how those working in sectors characterised by wicked problems deal with that complexity.
PSL	Departs from previous service paradigms in understanding service as a dynamic process. Service is not provided but instead co-created through resource integration. Public service offerings should serve to co-create public value (Osborne, 2018; Osborne, Radnor, Kinder, & Vidal, 2015; Osborne et al., 2012).	PSL alters the roles of actors in service from the binary construct of providers and beneficiaries to seeing service as a cooperative process. PSOs come up with service offerings whose value is realised by beneficiaries through resource integration.
Service systems and extended service environments	Service provision occurs within networked structures consisting of several actors. Networks of actors that work together to provide service offerings are defined as service systems (Maglio et al., 2009; Skålén, Aal, & Edvardsson, 2015). Extended service environments are conceptualised in an extension of previous service environment research (J. Baker, Bentley, & Lamb, 2020).	Service systems are defined as configurations of resources providing service offerings that can be used in resource integration and value co-creation. Extended service environments are included as a way to grasp how factors external to the service system may influence the service process.

The concepts presented in Table 1 address the different processes and aspects of the service model (Figure 2) in this chapter. First, service innovation is used to capture the different ways that service is designed and implemented to facilitate service recipients' value creation. In this study, I focus primarily on bricolage as a pragmatic type of innovation through which PSOs work

to improve their value facilitation and policy implementation locally and under resource restraints. The bricolage approach was chosen based on the empirical data, as the municipalities featured in this thesis had developed distinct service offerings even though they were all in charge of implementing the same policy: the introduction programme. In addition, bricolage has been used in previous research to explore how organisations in environments characterised by limited resources work to develop or improve their service offerings (Fuglsang & Sørensen, 2011; Witell et al., 2017). Innovations in this thesis are thus primarily treated as changes that seek to improve or increase service recipients' ability to create value.

The lifeworlds perspective aims to capture how individuals' experiences shape and influence their ability to engage in resource integration and create value (Helkkula et al., 2012; Trischler & Scott, 2016). In this study, the influence of individuals' lifeworld situations on service is primarily explored from the perspective of settled refugees and their value creation. The inclusion of lifeworlds (or life experiences) as a mediating aspect of service recipients' value creation has been adopted by PSL in the last few years (Osborne, 2018; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020). Through this thesis, I show how social and structural circumstances may enable or inhibit individuals' from benefitting from service offerings.

Wicked problems thinking serves as a theoretical contribution to PSL in this study and is discussed in terms of two distinct processes: taming and coping (Daviter, 2017). Taming a wicked social problem occurs in phase A in the model presented. I describe the articulation of policy and its aims as intended value outcomes that are expected to be realised through PSOs' service offerings and provisions. Coping refers to the processes through which front-line PSOs work to implement policy and provide service offerings.

PSL serves as the theoretical scaffolding of this study and the framework from which the model is developed. My reading of PSL has been particularly inspired by recent developments from service logic (Engen, Fransson, Quist, & Skålén, 2020; Grönroos, 2019; Petrescu, 2019; Skålén et al., 2018). This includes an emphasis on value facilitation, value co-creation, and value creation (Grönroos, 2019; Grönroos & Voima, 2013) as concepts that capture the service process.

Finally, I discuss in this chapter how service occurs in service systems (Skålén, Aal, et al., 2015) and how these systems are affected by the broader extended service environment in which they are situated.

Public Service Innovation and Bricolage

Although past debates have questioned the relevance of innovation in a public sector context, even suggesting that the notion of public service innovation is an oxymoron (Torfing, 2019, p. 1), it is now broadly recognised that innovation is and always has been an essential part of the public sector (Hartley, Sørensen, & Torfing, 2013; Torfing, 2019; Wagenaar & Wood, 2018). Following the growing interest in public innovation over the last 15 years (Osborne & Brown, 2011), the notion of an innovative public sector has become entrenched in government and now frequently appears in policy documents. In response to the increasing emphasis on innovation in the public sector, some authors have questioned whether the positive connotations associated with the term *innovation* might have led to an assumption that innovation is always a normative good (Osborne & Brown, 2011, p. 1339). Thus, Osborne and Brown have argued that 'one can agree that "innovation" as a process is essential for the improvement of public services – but that is not the same as asserting any specific innovation must therefore be positive, simply because it is an innovation' (Osborne & Brown, 2011, p. 1339).

Even though innovations do not always lead to improvement – as what is defined as an improvement by some may by contested by others, depending on positioning and perspective – the importance of trying to do things differently is recognised, not least due to the context and intended beneficiaries in public services; namely, the citizenry as a whole (Alford, 2016, p. 680). Writing from the perspective outlined above, in which it was expected that 'markets are simply *better* at learning, experimenting, and innovating, than public sector organization', Parsons argues that 'businesses learn or they go bust, whereas government fails to learn, and society goes bust' (Parsons, 2006, pp. 3-4).

The roles and drivers of public service innovation vary. At times, it is a matter of muddling through and keeping up with society as a whole (Witell et al., 2017, p. 292). At other times, public innovation is championed as a solution to existing problems and a pathway to the future (Osborne & Brown, 2011, p. 1339). The multiple manifestations of disruptive change in the public sector have led to discussions on what can be defined as innovation within that sector.

Several definitions of service innovation in general and of public service innovation in particular have been proposed. In a literature review, Chen, Walker, and Sawhney found a general consensus in seeing public service innovation as involving 'the generation and realization of novel ideas' (Chen, Walker, & Sawhney, 2019, p. 2). Beyond this general characteristic, there are a number of nuanced differences. One is whether innovation has to be the result of intentional

implementation or can emerge organically (or incrementally) in organisations. Some, such as Osborne and others, have defined innovation as 'the intentional introduction and application of … new ideas, processes, products or procedures, new to the relevant unit of adoption' (Brown & Osborne, 2013, p. 188; Osborne et al., 2020, p. 52). Elsewhere, it has been argued that it is the government and policymakers that innovate in the public sector, and in so doing, reify the impression that innovation in the public sector is formed through a top-down process (Wagenaar & Wood, 2018, p. 152). The emphasis on the intentionality of policymakers and government agencies in public service innovation defines a distribution of roles and responsibilities in which those at the top are charged with coming up with new solutions, while those working in PSOs are given the job of implementing such changes. Large-scale public innovation projects follow this scheme, as central government agencies have the power to implement large-scale structural change. These changes are marked by a high degree of risk (Brown & Osborne, 2013) and can involve processes of organisational restructuring or new means of communication (such as the move towards online communication between PSOs and citizens). In this study, I lean towards a definition in which 'those changes worth recognising as innovation should be … new to the organization, be large enough, general enough and durable enough to appreciably affect the operations and character of the organisation' (Hartley, 2005, p. 27). At the same time, the PSL framing of this study slightly alters the foundation from which innovation is understood. Furthermore, the emphasis on an innovation being large and durable enough may conceal important ad hoc innovations that can alter operations in significant ways.

While policy-driven innovations are widespread and observable, alternative forms of innovation in the public sector have also been described. Rather than following the top-down policy trajectory, some have explored the ways in which first-line employees and PSOs continually come up with new solutions to do their jobs better and improve the service recipients' benefit. Fuglsang and Sørensen have questioned the criteria of intentionality in innovation and proposed a framework to study innovation as it emerges in local service organisations (Fuglsang & Sørensen, 2011). Applying Lévi-Strauss's perspective on bricolage (Lévi Strauss, 1966), Fuglsang and Sørensen argue that innovations can also emerge in the service interface where employees meet unpredicted user needs that have to be solved immediately (Fuglsang & Sørensen, 2011, p. 582). The term bricolage is taken from the French verb *bricoler* and was initially used by Lévi-Strauss to describe an alternative mode of thinking introduced in *The Savage Mind* (Lévi Strauss, 1966). Rather than following the logic of an engineer, the bricoleur's 'universe of instruments is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with "whatever is at hand"' (Lévi Strauss, 1966, p. 17). The two modes of thinking he describes have proven useful in a public service

innovation context through their illustration of two alternative trajectories of change. Following Schumpeter's initial description of innovation as the creation of new products or means of production through new combinations (Schumpeter, 1939, p. 88), innovation through bricolage refers to the way in which organisations with limited resources come up with new solutions based on what is at hand (T. Baker, 2007, p. 695). This bricolage form of innovation is related to strategies of coping with wicked problems, which are discussed later in this chapter, as such novel solutions often emerge in response to concrete and specific problems that must be solved in context. It is argued that local articulations of a problem-solution complex must be defined and dealt with based on the available resources.

Bricolage represents a useful concept in PSL studies due to its emphasis on direct feedback mechanisms between problems and the development of novel solutions. One conceptualisation of bricolage in the context of public service innovation holds that it consists of three elements: '1) making do, 2) resources at hand, and 3), combination of resources for new purposes' (Krontoft, Fuglsang, & Kronborg, 2017, p. 2). Essential to bricolage as a type of innovation is thus a repurposing of available resources to solve new problems or achieve new goals. Even though bricolage appears prevalent in the public services, it has simultaneously been argued that any pragmatic solution developed though bricolage 'seems to be hidden in the daily activities, even though it is recognised … as a critical aspect of work' (Fuglsang & Sørensen, 2011, p. 593). The invisibility of bricolage as a type of change that is not often acknowledged as innovation makes it an interesting facet of innovation that may be studied through ground-level empirical approaches like an ethnographic study. Related to the service model, bricolage provides a language to describe two types of behaviours in the service providers' sphere. First, the empirical chapters show that bricolage, as a process in which PSOs implement policy in resource-scarce environments, results in renegotiations of the purpose of their work and the local interpretation of policy. Second, the direct interactions with service recipients in the joint sphere – where co-creation occurs – are further likely to influence the practices and resources associated with service providers' value facilitation. Dealing with heterogeneous service groups such as settled refugees may often result in a constant stream of novel problems that have to be tackled by the front-line workers who are held accountable by the service recipients.

Below, I further relate bricolage and public service innovation to PSL and expand on the use of bricolage in a PSL study.

Public Service Logic and Innovation

Previous research has found that PSL has important implications for the study of innovation (Skålén et al., 2018): 'a service-dominant approach to innovation in services puts the service user rather than the policymaker or professional at the heart of this process' (Osborne et al., 2012, p. 146). Placing service users, or recipients, at the centre of public service innovation alters the core motivation of engaging with disruptive change in the public sector. Rather than striving towards organisational efficiency, a successful innovation in PSL should increase or otherwise improve the service recipients' value creation and its outcome. As such, public service innovation 'may arise from the problem-finding and problem-solving practices related to all three resource integration processes … value co-creation, value creation and value facilitation' (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 704).

Following developments in service logic and service-dominant logic, a PSL framing of the service process assumes that all involved actors partake in a process of resource integration with the purpose of co-creating value. From a service logic perspective, PSOs and service recipients can be understood as playing different roles in the value co-creation process. Specifically, PSOs facilitate service recipients' value creation by offering services (Grönroos, 2019, p. 777), so value co-creation is defined as the intersection of a PSO's value facilitation and a service recipient's ability to create value through resource integration.

As a consequence of the concentration on service recipients, public service innovation in a PSL framework focuses on understanding service recipients' experienced value outcomes through changes in one of the three identified co-creation practices: value facilitation, value co-creation, and value creation (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 704). The service model presented in this chapter connects a PSL understanding of innovation to bricolage innovation. At the policy level, which is described through the process of taming and designing public service offerings (phase A), innovation may occur by altering the definition of the problem-solution complex that provides the foundation from which the service is implemented. This is discussed later in this chapter through the wicked problem concept (Rittel & Webber, 1973) and represents a change in PSO value facilitation practices. At the municipal level, PSOs in charge of implementing certain policies are tasked with facilitating service recipients' value creation based on their locally available resources. I thus understand the process of value co-creation as occurring in the intersection between service-offering organisations – like refugee administrations and adult education centres – and settled refugees as service recipients.

Bricolage in this study is primarily explored at the intersection between PSOs and service recipients, as I have observed and sought to grasp the ways in which PSOs work to implement and provide the service offerings described in legislation while simultaneously striving to facilitate their service recipients' value creation in the best way possible. Similarly, service recipients' value creation may be subject to innovation through either altering their resource-integrating capabilities or adjusting service offerings so that they better correspond to such capabilities. Assuring a match between municipal PSOs' service offerings and the service recipients' resource-integrating capabilities – the skills and assets they use to interact with particular service offerings – requires continual adjustments.

Lifeworlds and the Experience of Service Provision

In recent years, the phenomenological influence of individual users' lifeworld conditions has received increased attention in service research (Akaka & Vargo, 2015, p. 459; Helkkula et al., 2012; Trischler & Scott, 2016, p. 722). Lifeworlds were introduced into service research as a consequence of recent definitions of value as determined by service recipients' experiential benefit or disadvantage (Grönroos & Voima, 2013, p. 138). The phenomenological definition of value, in which phenomenology is understood as 'the study of phenomena as they appear in an individual's experiences and identifies different types of experience' (Helkkula et al., 2012, p. 59), requires increased attention to how service recipients experience service and value creation and the ways in which their lifeworld situations affect these experiences. In PSL, the influence of service recipients' life experiences in value creation has been implemented as part of the framework (Osborne, 2018; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020).

Lifeworlds refer 'to a world that is grounded in an individual's everyday lived experience in which meaning is prioritized in the individual's social context' (Helkkula et al., 2012, p. 59). Previous research has used the concept as a way to encourage service-providing organisations to pay attention to the lifeworld situations of their user groups in an attempt to improve their service offerings (Trischler & Scott, 2016, p. 722). This is further relevant for a public service approach towards studying innovation as it reminds service definers (policymakers) and providers (PSOs) of the importance of considering service recipients' lifeworlds.

The ethnographic orientation of this study has allowed for an intimate account of the everyday experiences of employees and settled refugees engaged in refugee integration services in Norway. By spending time with participants in the programme and with teachers and refugee advisors, I was able to gain detailed impressions of the ebbs and flows of everyday life. This provided crucial

phenomenological and process data related to the everyday experience of service while also illuminating how some external and internal factors altered the service providers' abilities to provide service offerings and the service recipients' abilities to benefit from such offerings through interactions with them. The empirical data produced through the fieldwork are a significant contribution to the development of a service science understanding of how lifeworld conditions influence service provision and value creation.

The lifeworld as an analytical concept reminds us of how service and other events in the world are perceived differently by different actors based on their positioning in relation to a particular occurrence or phenomenon. For those settled as refugees, this study shows that refugee integration constituted a life-altering process through which they would have to learn to communicate in a new language, establish new social networks, and determine how to navigate local communities and deal with a government apparatus that is far different from the one they had left behind. Similarly, the lifeworld context of service employees *as* service employees influenced their service-providing efforts, as their work was carried out in close alignment with the structural conditions established through legislation like the introduction programme.

In recognition of the assumption that value is determined by service recipients (e.g. Medberg & Grönroos, 2020), which is elaborated on later in this chapter, this study focuses primarily on how the lifeworld conditions of settled refugees affected their ability to create value from municipal service offerings.

Wicked Problems

> For those who believe they can identify the feasible [problem], there is the saving moral principle of honesty. If I tell you honestly what I have done, so goes the story, then you need not be deceived. So the management scientist, being honest, says to the manager: 'Look, I've not tamed the whole problem, just the growl; the beast is still wicked as ever'. (Churchman, 1967, pp. B-142)

Refugee migration has been characterised as a wicked problem (Raadschelders et al., 2019), with part of its wickedness attributed to the existence of an institutional void that results of the absence of a multi-governmental body in charge of coordinating efforts on a global scale (Geuijen et al., 2017, p. 629). Moreover, refugee migration is an inherently complex social phenomenon due to how it is manifested on multiple scales, ranging from the global issues of 'burden-sharing' (Murray & Longo, 2018) to the local intricacies of refugee integration (Geuijen et al., 2020).

The wicked problem concept was introduced by Rittel and Webber to describe problems that have no obvious solution (Rittel & Webber, 1973). Inherent to the wickedness, they argue, is that 'there is no definite formulation of a wicked problem' (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 161). The shared characteristic of such problems is consequently that they cannot be solved using one particular scheme that might work regardless of context. In other words, such problems are unique in each instance.

In an early description of wicked problems, Churchman described his impressions of a talk held by Rittel, who had

> suggested at a recent seminar that the term 'wicked problem' refer to that class of social system problems which are ill-formulated, where the information is confusing, where there are many clients and decision makers with conflicting values, and where the ramifications in the whole system are thoroughly confusing. (Churchman, 1967, pp. B-141)

Rittel and Webber's elaboration of the concept shows how the class of problems they call *wicked* differs from the tame problems articulated in fields seeking finite answers. Due to the complexity of social problems, wicked problems can only be fully identified by articulating a solution, as 'the problem can't be defined until the solution has been found' (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 161). To clarify, Rittel and Webber argue that the 'process of formulating the problem and of conceiving a solution (or re-solution) are identical, since every specification of the problem is a specification of the direction in which a treatment is considered' (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 161).

This problem-solution complex was detailed in an earlier article by Rittel that discusses 'ill-behaved' problems in relation to design and claims that 'every formulation of the problem is already made in view of some particular solution principle' (Rittel, 1971, p. 19). This, he further argues, could be seen through the process of formulating a problem as originating 'from a recognized discrepancy between what is and what ought to be. Any attempt to solve it consists in the search to remove this discrepancy' (Rittel, 1971, p. 21). Part of the wickedness of the problems described by Rittel and Webber results from the fuzziness of expected outcomes. Societies evolve, and the best possible solution to a problem in one era may be anachronistic in another (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 168). Fluctuations in what constitutes social value, furthermore, may differ not only over time but also between people in the same era (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 169). The lifeworld conditions of different people are then likely to influence how a problem is perceived and the identification of measures to solve or at least confront it.

Wicked problems are formulated by devising problem-solution complexes that are articulated to face a complex social problem. In relation to PSL and service innovation, wicked problems can be identified and explored through the design of service offerings that consist of a configuration of resources assembled to provide a promise of future benefit. Adding the concept of wicked problems to the equation further underlines the intricacies in defining the value outcome of a service offering, as the potential benefit is likely to differ among different actors. As such, what is considered beneficial to government agencies as representatives of a state's interest may differ from what is deemed beneficial to refugees who have been settled in a given municipality (Geuijen et al., 2017, p. 625).

Over the past decade, wicked problems have been applied as an analytical lens in a variety of sectors (Daviter, 2017, p. 572; Jordan, Kleinsasser, & Roe, 2014, p. 415). Though framed as unsolvable and consequently a 'hard sell' (Wexler, 2009, p. 539), the concept has grown in popularity, perhaps due to the way it captures real-world dynamics and complexities. Wicked problems have generally been considered problems worth dealing with in some way; exactly *how* wicked problems should be dealt with, however, has been the subject of years of discussion (Daviter, 2017; Head, 2019).

Problem Makers and Strategies of Dealing with Wickedness

Writing on the process of problem framing in relation to wicked problems, Head argues that the 'dynamics of problem framing and problem definition are important for many reasons, because the way a problem is defined is very closely tied to the type of solution that is proposed' (Head, 2019, p. 185). To describe the problem-solution complex, Head uses the example of poverty and shows how its very framing as a problem is likely to influence broad policies and specific measures introduced to counter poverty. If poverty is regarded as an individual problem 'generated by deficits in personal skills and motivation', the solution will be to increase personal skills, personal resources, and motivation; if, on the other hand, poverty is seen as 'an enduring structural feature of society', system-level solutions are likely to be implemented (2019, p. 185).

Head's argument alludes to the aspect of power in wicked problem formulations and the way such problems are framed by those with the ability to come up with solutions, such as policymakers. According to Head, 'the wicked problems paradigm serves as a reminder that the *political arenas* of policy argument constitute battlefields for complex social policy arguments' (Head, 2019, p. 183). Although unsolvable, wicked problems are a class of problems to which a proposed solution has been formulated, and those coming up with the solution are at once the

problem makers and the problem solvers. Dealing with wicked problems becomes as much a process of articulating good problems as coming up with good solutions.

This, however, does not mean that wicked problems are solely the result of the formulations of the problem maker. They are complex social problems that need to be addressed even though any proposed solution has no guarantee of success (Head, 2019, p. 183). In response to the futility of coming up with a definitive answer to this particular class of problems, Daviter outlines three common responses advanced in the literature as possible strategies: coping, taming, and solving (Daviter, 2017, p. 574). Despite the characteristics of wicked problems – which by definition are unsolvable – Daviter finds that a portion of the literature on wicked problems 'appears to promote strategies that are designed to accomplish just that' (Daviter, 2017, p. 574): that is, to solve them.

After finding that approaches to solving wicked problems either theoretically or by PSOs appear to fail due to their being inherently unsolvable, Daviter suggests two alternatives for solving wicked problems: coping and taming (Daviter, 2017, p. 578). Coping strategies deal with parts of the problem as it unfolds and 'do not seek to freeze the problem-solution link' (Daviter, 2017, p. 581). No point of saturation in coming up with a final solution is ever reached. As such, the way to deal with wicked problems becomes a process of continual adjustment: it is never completely solved, but rather 're-solved—over and over again' (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 160). To put it differently, coping with wicked problems becomes an ongoing process of muddling through and making the best out of the situation (Geuijen et al., 2017, p. 632). Daviter situates coping strategies at the local or micro level, arguing that 'coping does not bet on the benefits of centralization and hierarchical control, but relies on the organizational intelligence produced by decentred and delegated expertise' (Daviter, 2017, p. 580). Coping as a strategy of governance is exemplified through how policy solutions can allow local adjustments by PSOs to face unruly problems, rather than imposing strict criteria and measures with which the problem should be solved. The introduction programme serves as an example of a type of legislation that provides a high degree of autonomy to the implementing organisation, and the programme itself allows for a significant degree of tinkering as a coping strategy.

Coping with wicked problems becomes a pragmatic response by which those facing a challenge come up with intermediate solutions because they have no other choice (Noordegraaf et al., 2019, p. 291). This relates coping to bricolage as a process in which organisations, employees, and service recipients come up with novel solutions to emergent problems based on the available resources. In an article on consumer vulnerability, Echeverri and Salomonsen argue that 'coping

strategies during interactions are likely crucial both to the consumer experience and to the development of the marketing practices of service providers' (Echeverri & Salomonson, 2019, p. 368). This further highlights how adjustments through bricolage and coping are often the result of direct interactions between service providers and recipients.

Taming, Daviter finally contends, 'aims to transform an ill-structured or wicked problem into a more manageable and well-structured problem for the purpose of decision making' (Daviter, 2017, p. 578). The dyad of tame and wicked problems is at the centre of Rittel and Webber's initial articulation of the two classes of problems:

> You may agree that it becomes morally objectionable for the planner to treat a wicked problem as though it were a tame one, or to tame a wicked problem prematurely, or to refuse to recognize the inherent wickedness of social problems. (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 161)

Nevertheless, the prospect of taming a wicked problem when solutions are presented as theoretical possibilities makes sense, as the result may help 'to reduce and control it' (Daviter, 2017, p. 578). Acknowledging the advantage of taming wicked problems to make them solvable by segmenting them into actionable pieces, Daviter argues, allows the public administration to act on those problems by distributing responsibilities and establishing evaluative criteria (Daviter, 2017, pp. 578-579).

Taming and coping are related to the processes through which policy is defined (phase A) and value is facilitated (through value co-creation, or phase B), as described in the service model (Figure 2). In reference to refugee integration as a social problem, taming has now been identified as a process through which policymakers temper the problem by coming up with a problem-solution complex. This complex, I have argued, consists of making the problem actionable so that measures to alleviate it can be implemented. At the local level represented by the municipal refugee services in this study, PSOs engage in value co-creation in which they work to implement the tamed problem (as defined in policy) and provide service offerings in their particular context. The recognition of coping processes as inherently local phenomena takes into account the resource restrictions that exist and has been associated with bricolage, as municipal PSOs are forced to implement the required solutions with the resources they have at hand. Later in the chapter, the implementation of policy at the local level will be explored through conceptualisations of the service system as a configuration of resources and actors who work together to provide service offerings.

A final and relevant research gap in the wicked problem literature is the apparent deficiency of research about actors who operate in services characterised by wicked problems (Noordegraaf et al., 2019). The bricolage perspective presented in this section offers a promising avenue of research to capture the individual experiences of people operating in wicked problem service, and thus this study helps fill the research gap in question.

Public Service Logic

PSL is premised on the idea that PSOs 'do not create value for citizens – they can only make a public service offering. It is how the citizen uses this offering and how it interacts with his/her own life experiences that creates value' (Osborne, 2018, p. 228). The introduction of PSL, first called public service-dominant logic, was a response to the lack of emphasis on service in public management theory (Osborne et al., 2012, p. 141). Emphasising the qualitative differences between private and public sector service, the introduction of PSL has sought to apply lessons from generic service logic[1] to a public sector context (Osborne et al., 2012, p. 141). Among the differences between the private and public sectors, it has been noted how service exchange in the latter concerns a far larger number of stakeholders (Alford, 2014, p. 308). While private sector business concerns a company, its stakeholders, and its customers, the public sector caters to society as a whole, so adjustments have to be made to adapt the analytical lens to a new context:

> By adopting a public service-dominant approach to public services delivery both the
> citizen and user are situated as essential stakeholders of public policy and public
> service delivery processes and their engagement in these processes adds value to
> both. (Osborne et al., 2012, p. 143)

Generic service logic has noted the changing role of users, according to which they are no longer considered consumers of service (i.e. value destroyers) but instead active parts of service delivery and value creation and thus value creators (Grönroos & Voima, 2013, p. 138). The roles ascribed to the actors have changed (see Goffman, 1956). This further addresses the way in which service is provided by PSOs, which are no longer regarded as simply offering services; rather, service recipients can interact with their offerings in a process of value co-creation (Osborne et al., 2012, p. 145). This shift has analytical and practical implications, with PSL framed as an alternative to the goods-dominant definitions of value found in new public management (Eriksson & Hellström, 2020, p. 2). In relation to the issue of wicked problems, Eriksson and Hellström endorse a PSL perspective because 'these issues concern entire societies, trusting the responsible

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[1] The term 'generic service logic' is borrowed from (Eriksson et al., 2019) and used to capture the variety of service logic streams that have emerged, including service-dominant logic and service logic.

public service organization (PSO) to address these challenges in a solitary and introspective [new public management] fashion is likely to do more harm than good' (Eriksson & Hellström, 2020, p. 2). Rather than focusing on the individual PSO outputs in terms of performance measures (such as calls, meetings, and hours spent doing different tasks), the experienced benefit of service recipients is placed at the centre.

PSL has been developed as a public sector counterpart to private sector service-centric theory, specifically service-dominant logic (Osborne et al., 2012; Petrescu, 2019, p. 1738) and service logic (Grönroos, 2019; Osborne, 2018). In focusing on contributing to PSL in this thesis, I recognise the emergence of PSL as a theoretical framework that continues to adopt lessons from service-dominant logic and increasingly from service logic. This has been demonstrated in the case of incorporating a language for value propositions and resource integration in PSL (Eriksson & Hellström, 2020; Grönroos, 2019; Grönroos & Voima, 2013; Skålén et al., 2018) and the increasing emphasis on service ecosystems (Engen et al., 2020; Petrescu, 2019). Although I recognise the continued impact of service(-dominant) logic on the development of PSL, I have chosen to forgo a section dedicated to this concept. This choice is due to some significant departures from the service-dominant logic foundation in this study and other recent PSL literature. The main difference lies in the degree to which institutions (norms, practices, beliefs, and so forth) have been emphasised in the recent service-dominant logic literature (Baron, Patterson, Maull, & Warnaby, 2018; Koskela-Huotari, Edvardsson, Jonas, Sörhammar, & Witell, 2016; Koskela-Huotari et al., 2020; Vargo, Koskela-Huotari, & Vink, 2020; Vargo & Lusch, 2016). Though I recognise the importance of institutions, this thesis does not follow the recent institutional turn in service research (Koskela-Huotari et al., 2020), in which shared practices and other institutions constitute the foundation from which service relations and value creation are analysed. This, however, does not indicate that I have neglected the influence of institutions on areas like sociocultural practices, norms, behaviour, and language. Rather, I have aimed to capture such shared systems of actions and beliefs through the conceptualisation of lifeworlds and ethnographic descriptions of everyday practices and service exchange. In the empirical chapters, what could otherwise have been generalised as a statement of the formation and maintenance of shared institutions is covered through descriptions of difficulties in learning a language, norms, strategies, and other elements of everyday praxis.

PSOs' Service Offerings and Value Co-Creation

Value propositions have been defined as 'configurations of resources that promise future value to users' (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 703). Osborne has suggested that *service offerings* be used instead of

value propositions to describe the configurations of resources deployed by PSOs (Osborne, 2018, p. 227).[2] In this study, I have followed Osborne's suggestion to use *service offerings* when describing PSOs' value facilitation in PSL.

Grönroos has defined service – the central concept – 'as providing help to another person's or organization's relevant processes in a way valuable to this person or organization' (Grönroos, 2020, p. 292). Promises of future value as a central feature are discussed by Grönroos as a service offering attribute that distinguishes service from material products and goods (Grönroos, 2020). While a product may be offered, marketed, and expected to hold its promise due to qualities embedded in tangible materials and specifications, service

> is a process-based business, where promises are made of processes taking place in the future and promises are kept through how well such processes function to a smaller or larger extent in the interaction with the customers. (Grönroos, 2020)

Processes related to service and value co-creation have previously been connected to the three spheres (the provider's, the recipient's, and the joint spheres) and the processes of resource integration presented in relation to the service model of this study (Grönroos, 2019; Grönroos & Voima, 2013).

From a wicked problems perspective, comparing promises made (intended value outcomes in the service model) and promises kept (actual value outcomes in the service model) can be used to determine whether a particular service is successful in reaching its goal. Here, a successful outcome is understood from a provider's perspective as a quasi-perfect alignment between intended and actual value outcomes. In other words, the service has been able to achieve what it intended to do through value co-creation. Conceptually differentiating public sector service offerings from private sector value propositions, however, requires acknowledging certain differences between the sectors. While actors and organisations in both work to provide promises of future benefit (determined as value-in-use) by configuring resources, the proposed benefit in public sector services should be enjoyed by the public, not just individuals (Eriksson, 2019). At the same time, it has been acknowledged that public benefit is mediated by the collective benefit of several individuals. Examples of how the aggregate value creation of several individuals may lead to a public value outcome that is greater than its parts have been framed through education, as 'value is created not only for students, but for companies who are going to hire them, or for

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[2] The term *service offering* has also been used in previous articulations of service-dominant logic; see, for example, (Vargo & Lusch, 2010, p. 176).

society in general' (Spano, 2009, p. 334). Consequently, the public value outcome of public services 'seems to imagine a more collectively shared view of a good and just society which is more than a simple aggregation of the individually held views of individual citizens' (Geuijen et al., 2017, p. 629). Public value, it may thus be argued, is mediated by the value outcome of individuals, but it aggregates to a higher purpose than the sum of benefits of individual service recipients.

Public service offerings can be characterised through how such offerings often reflect the responsibility of the state to provide citizens with certain services. The publicness of public service, Alford has argued, 'is public not because of who *produces* it but of who "consumes it": the collective citizenry, mediated through the political process' (Alford, 2016, p. 680). Service offerings should thus result in 'publicly beneficial outcomes' (Alford, 2016, p. 680) and extend beyond the individual scope of private sector value creation. The first distinguishing feature of service offerings in the public sector can thus be found in identifying the collective as potential beneficiaries, not just individuals. Recognising service offerings as promises of future benefit or value leads to a situation in which there may be a misalignment between intended and actual value outcomes (Bitner, Faranda, Hubbert, & Zeithaml, 1997). This is further discussed in the next section on resource integration.

Service offerings in the public sector are provided in a context of resource scarcity, as PSOs are subject to budget restraints and even cuts (Strokosch & Osborne, 2020, p. 6). Service offerings are therefore constrained by local resource availability. From the national to the municipal levels of the public sector, finances are allotted annually to different PSOs and service areas through budgeting, in which officials use financial and other resources to design, implement, and provide service offerings (Vike, 2013, p. 123). Vike has shown how municipalities 'must balance their budgets but, as servants of ambitious states, they are supposed to satisfy needs – needs that cannot simply be ignored if resources are too scarce' (Vike, 2013, p. 123). Elsewhere, he has illustrated how the influence of economic scarcity in some municipalities was manifested through how 'some were quite willing to deal with principles of welfare policy as relative to budget restraints' (Vike, 2017, p. 63). Financial resource scarcity, it will be seen, was repeatedly mentioned as restricting the development and extension of service offerings in the municipalities. However, this issue has received little attention in the PSL literature (see Parahoo & Al-Nakeeb, 2019). Financial resource restraints as crucial to service offering provision orient attention towards what needs to be put into service offerings to facilitate promises of future value for the service recipients.

Finally, promises of future value are enabled and constrained by political decisions (Alford, 2016, p. 680). 'Public value creation', it has been argued,

> can be considered the outcome of a production process of different public services pursued by public agencies to fulfil the collective goals that citizens define in the democratic process of political elections – i.e. that are politically legitimated and sustainable. (Panagiotopoulos, Klievink, & Cordella, 2019, p. 2).

Democratic processes serve as an underlying legitimisation of public service offerings as promises of future value, because the public – through elections – is able to choose those parties and politicians whose vision of society aligns with their views. Representative democracies like Norway allow the electorate to govern through the people they elect. The shifting of ruling parties may thus indicate a change in direction for the policies implemented. Thus, it is possible to follow the ways in which policies and policy implementation affect locally provided service offerings. Recognising the multiple levels of public administration, Strokosch and Osborne have recently highlighted that various factors may influence the implementation of political decisions and thus 'how shared policy goals are translated on the ground' (Strokosch & Osborne, 2020, pp. 12-13).

Policy Taming / Service Offering Design ⟶ PSO Coping/ Service Offering Implementation ⟶ Service Offering/ Value Faciliation

Figure 3: Service offering process.

In relation to the service model (Figure 2), service offerings can be considered the value facilitation – and thus resource integration – of PSOs as they configure and make available a set of resources with which a group of service recipients can integrate with their own resources. On their own, service offerings thus also result from the PSOs configuring and integrating a set of resources to facilitate the service recipients' value creation in the joint value co-creation sphere. Figure 3 illustrates the design and implementation of service offerings. The process is defined in terms of three underlying processes, with the first consisting of policymakers and problem makers devising a problem-solution complex that provides the basis of the service offering design. My understanding builds on the theorisation of wicked problems (Rittel & Webber, 1973), in which a problem is defined and measures to alleviate it are suggested. This adds to the development of PSL by including wicked problem theorisation as an integral part of the service process described. Next, PSOs' coping with the policy to be implemented is framed within a context of local resource scarcity and competencies (Daviter, 2017). Through their coping, I

argue, the service offering is slightly altered before being provided to recipients in the process of value co-creation.

Service Recipients' Resource Integration and Value Creation

Much of the current literature on value co-creation through recipients' interaction with service offerings has assumed that recipients are likely to benefit from this process. Hence, a foundational premise in service-dominant logic states that 'value is always uniquely and phenomenological determined by the beneficiary' (Vargo & Lusch, 2016, p. 8). Even though it is clear that an underlying assumption of beneficial value creation underpins the design and implementation of service offerings, studies have found that actual value outcomes and processes may be negative as determined by the *potential* beneficiary (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Espersson & Westrup, 2019; Plé & Cáceres, 2010). That is, the service recipient becomes worse off by interacting with the service offering through a process of co-destruction (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011).

To avoid the potential positive bias of defining resource-integrating actors as *a priori* beneficiaries, some scholars have adopted more neutral terms, such as customers (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Plé & Cáceres, 2010) or users (Grönroos, 2019). For this thesis, I have chosen to adopt the term *service recipient*,[3] even though it carries some of the same connotations. Some have, for instance, argued that the categorisation of resource-integrating actors as service recipients reflects a passive position (Frow et al., 2014, p. 331; Park, 2020, p. 460). This, it could be assumed, might have to do with a theoretical understanding in which value is produced by an organisation and then transferred to a recipient.

Service recipients' resource integration in value creation is distinct from the resource integration conducted by the PSOs and affects value co-creation. Generally, resources in the context of resource integration have been defined as '"skills and knowledge" that are "employed to act on operand resources (and other operant resources)"' (Engen et al., 2020, p. 3). A distinction has been made between operant resources, defined as an individual's intangible resources such as knowledge and skills, and operand resources, defined as tangible resources such as edifices and material goods (Skålén, Gummerus, et al., 2015, p. 139). Resources included in PSO service offerings consist of a combination of tangible and intangible resources that are configured to facilitate the service recipients' value creation. The service recipients' ability to benefit from this

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[3] I wish to acknowledge and thank Mekhail Mustak for suggesting the adoption of the term *service recipient* rather than *beneficiary*.

configuration depends on whether the initial configuration has been adjusted in accordance with those tangible and intangible resources.

Intended Value Outcome

Providers' Value Facilitation ← Value Co-Creation → Recipients' Value Creation

Actual Value Outcome
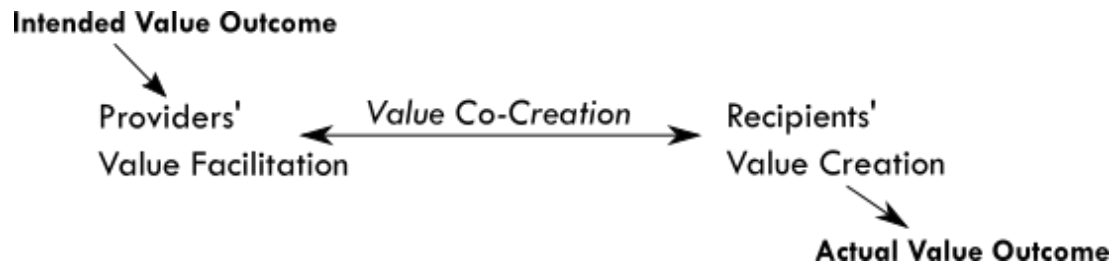
Figure 4: Resource integration and actual value outcome.

As noted above, the previous literature has argued for a distinction between three types of resource integration: value facilitation, value co-creation, and value creation (Grönroos, 2019, p. 781; Skålén et al., 2018, p. 702). Value facilitation has been described as how PSOs configure service offerings that can be used by service recipients to create value (Grönroos, 2019, p. 782) and is limited to the providers' sphere. Value co-creation has been defined as the joint sphere in which service providers and recipients interact, with providers facilitating recipients' value creation (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 702). Consequently, service recipients create and determine value, but that value creation is mediated through processes of value co-creation and value facilitation that involve service providers.

In the model in Figure 4, I have isolated the process of value co-creation and included only PSOs as the service-providing actor and the service recipient as the value-creating actor. The model illustrates how intended and actual value outcomes might change during the process of value co-creation and that this discrepancy can emerge at different points in the value facilitation, value co-creation, or value creation processes. To clarify, value facilitation is defined as the resource integration conducted by PSOs, while value creation refers to the actual value created by service recipients through the value co-creation process. There are also indications in the previous literature that value may be created by service recipients even without the involvement of PSOs, which thus have to be invited to partake in the value creation process, rather than vice versa (Grönroos, 2019, p. 778). 'In such cases', Grönroos argues, 'the service providers get opportunities to co-create value with users' (Grönroos, 2019, p. 778).

Measuring, or grasping, the service recipients' actual value outcome as an experientially determined factor is a methodological challenge. In this study, I have assessed the actual value outcomes of the introduction programme through formal and informal conversations with settled refugees. I have engaged with and listened to their experiences as participants and asked

whether they found the service offerings beneficial. Furthermore, fieldwork observations provided insight into the actual service process *in situ* as I spent time in classrooms and similar service arenas (or joint spheres) to observe service processes. These encounters are detailed in Chapter 3. This approach aligns with the emphasis on how lifeworlds have mediating effects on service experience in PSL (Osborne, 2018, p. 227).

Value Co-Creation and Destruction and the Misintegration of Resources

Value facilitation and service recipients' value creation are part of the process of value co-creation, which has been described as the point at which 'users come into contact with organisations' value propositions [service offerings]' (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 705). Recipients' value creation is thus facilitated through the service providers' service offerings and leads to what are called *actual value outcomes* in this study.

Over the past decade, several authors have increasingly underscored how service interactions between recipients and providers do not always lead to beneficial value outcomes for all those involved (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Engen et al., 2020; Laud et al., 2019; Plé & Cáceres, 2010). Co-destruction has been defined as a service process through which the well-being of at least one actor declines following the encounter (Plé & Cáceres, 2010, p. 431). The concept has been used by Echeverri and Skålén to describe how service actors like bus drivers and their passengers may become worse off following a service encounter (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011). In the instances described in their study, value co-destruction could ensue as a result of 'ignorance on the part of the passengers when it comes to how the public transportation system works' (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011, p. 359). This could be manifested through a failure or unwillingness to accept tardiness or complaints regarding the bus not waiting for people who are running late. In the service recipients' sphere, value co-destruction has been explored through a study of the Swedish National Insurance Agency and tax authorities, in which customers found themselves experientially worse off following the service encounter (Engen et al., 2020). This particular study found that value co-destruction may come because of 'accidental misuse of resources … during the resource integration process' (Engen et al., 2020, p. 14).

Relatedly, Laud et al. (Laud et al., 2019) conceptualise resource misintegration through how actors in the service process may apply their resources in erroneous ways. The authors identify a number of potential causes for resource misintegration, which refers to the use of resources that leads to the diminishment of value through the service encounter (Laud et al., 2019, p. 873). These causes are (1) a lack of resources to integrate, (2) an unwillingness to integrate resources,

(3) misunderstandings of how to integrate resources, and (4) the inability to integrate resources (Laud et al., 2019, p. 873).

A lack of resources to integrate refers to situations in which actors (whether providers or recipients) do not have adequate or appropriate resources to achieve integration (Laud et al., 2019, p. 869). Time is an example of a resource that might be so scarce as to prevent resource integration. Other examples include a mismatch between the resource configuration of service offerings and service recipients' operant resources, such as skills, that hinders value co-creation.

The unwillingness to integrate resources may result from the 'withholding or withdrawing of at least one actor' (Laud et al., 2019, p. 869). Examples include employees in the service-providing sphere going on strike or similar refusals to engage in the service encounter by service recipients. Within a networked understanding of service, which is discussed later in this chapter, the unwillingness to integrate resources can also result from an organisation's unwillingness to participate in providing resources to be configured in service offerings.

Misunderstandings of how to integrate resources are of particular interest to this study, as they refer to situations where an unintentional failure to integrate resources leads to value diminution (Laud et al., 2019, p. 870). Misunderstandings in resource integration processes may occur in the sphere of either service providers or recipients; it can also emerge in the intersection between these entities through mutual misunderstanding or one-way misunderstanding. In the refugee integration context, an important step to avoid misintegration through misunderstandings includes transparency as to what is to be achieved through the service offerings and what is expected from both service providers and recipients.

The inability to integrate resources differs from a simple lack of resources in that the relevant actors possess the required resources to co-create value but are hindered from applying them appropriately. In particular, inability refers to 'the disqualification to integrate resources by at least one interacting actor' (Laud et al., 2019, p. 870). This disqualification might be decided by both the providing and recipient actors either through a diagnosis of others or the self, as in situations in which the provider assumes the recipient is unable to integrate resources, or if recipients find themselves unable to integrate through self-diagnosis. The latter can be associated with the lifeworld concept discussed in this chapter and can be used to describe situations in which circumstances prevent a recipient from making proper use of the resources available.

Laud et al.'s typology of resource misintegration (Laud et al., 2019) and the value co-destruction literature in general serve as a reminder of the unpredictability of actual value outcomes and how they may be influenced by a range of instances of resource misintegration and other factors. In this study, I adopt lessons from the value co-destruction literature through a recognition of how value co-creation or -destruction – as a process of service exchange – may leave resource-integrating actors both better and worse off. Making this argument has the logical consequence that such processes can only be defined as one or the other following the service encounter. From a conceptual perspective, this complicates the model. Rather than formally including value co-destruction into the model (Figure 2), I have chosen to recognise that the process termed *value co-creation* may actually leave service recipients better off, worse off, or a mixture of the two. Therefore, I primarily use *value co-creation* in this thesis and empirically discuss the subjective experience of the service users.

Systems Approaches to Service

It has been argued that the introduction of service systems has created a shift from 'the traditional view of service that emphasises dyadic one-to-one service encounters, to a more encompassing view of service within service systems' (Chandler & Lusch, 2015, p. 6). Increasing attention to structured actors, who in the aggregate make up service systems or similar service networks, has become an embedded part of service-dominant thinking and has recently been linked to PSL research (Engen et al., 2020; Eriksson, 2019; Petrescu, 2019; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020). Following the initial introduction of service systems as the description of a networked structure in which service exchange occurs, service-dominant thinking has become increasingly marked by the development of service ecosystems, as the concept is used to capture networked service relationships (Akaka, Koskela-Huotari, & Vargo, 2019; Di Pietro et al., 2018; Koskela-Huotari et al., 2016; Mustak & Plé, 2020; Vargo, Akaka, & Wieland, 2020). In 2010, Vargo and Lusch offered the following definition of a service ecosystem:

> A spontaneously sensing and responding spatial and temporal structure of largely loosely coupled, value-proposing social and economic actors interacting through institutions, technology, and language to (1) co-produce service offerings, (2) engage in mutual service provision, and (3) co-create value. (Vargo & Lusch, 2010, p. 176)

Following the initial definition of the concept, later developments have led to an increased emphasis on institutional theory, as institutions like beliefs, norms, and values have been held to be 'the glue that binds an ecosystem together' (Baron et al., 2018, p. 144; Vargo, Koskela-

Huotari, et al., 2020; Vargo & Lusch, 2016). In empirical research, examples have shown how a UK food waste reduction organisation created innovation through changes in the institutional arrangements of a service ecosystem (Baron et al., 2018), while others have used the service ecosystem approach to illustrate how a service ecosystem structure can be used to scale up businesses (Di Pietro et al., 2018).

While service ecosystems have become increasingly popular in service research, Mustak and Plé note that the premises of Vargo and Lusch's 2016 definition 'do not appear to have been questioned or critically analyzed' (Mustak & Plé, 2020). In this definition, Vargo and Lusch note that a service ecosystem is 'a relatively self-contained, self-adjusting system of resource integrating actors connected by shared institutional arrangements and mutual value creation through service exchange' (Vargo & Lusch, 2016, pp. 10-11). The implications of a lack of criticism of the definition can be interpreted as a stagnation in the conceptual development of service ecosystems. Further, Mustak and Plé argue that the current conceptualisation of service ecosystems 'suffers from a positive bias' that is evident in how it is 'inherently optimistic' (Mustak & Plé, 2020). This has been suggested to conceal instances of misintegration and value co-destruction (Mustak & Plé, 2020).

Over the past decade, *service ecosystems* has become established as a term to describe how organisations and actors engaged in mutual value creation through shared institutional arrangements operate. The powerful connotations that have emerged in relation to the service ecosystem concept have led me to exclude the concept from this thesis, as I do not draw explicitly on institutional theory. As an alternative, however, I have found the term *service systems* to be useful in thinking about how service organisations work in alignment with other organisations and actors to see that services are provided.

In this study, I follow a definition of service systems as 'dynamic configurations of actors and resources that enable value cocreation through the integration and use of resources, benefitting actors within and across linked service systems' (Skålén, Aal, et al., 2015, p. 251). This definition accounts for the multilevel structure of service systems and recognises that systems at the micro, meso, and macro levels are interconnected in a number of ways. I have adjusted my understanding based on previous definitions (Skålén, Aal, et al., 2015) and therefore consider service systems to be dynamic configurations of actors and resources that work to provide service offerings and facilitate value creation through the service recipients' integration of resources.

Public sector service systems exist on multiple scales, from central governments to the lowest levels of counties and municipalities (Rossi & Tuurnas, 2019). Even within municipalities, a smaller scale can be found in similar hierarchical structures that include municipal executive officers, municipal-level politicians, department and unit leaders, and front-line employees. Multiple and overlapping service systems may result in an analytical situation that makes it difficult to ascertain where one such system stops and another begins. For the sake of empirical clarity, I have chosen to describe the various service systems in detail to make clear which types of aggregations are being discussed. My use of *service systems* in the empirical chapters is meant to describe the system of actors and resources that were involved in the municipal-level provision of Norway's introduction programme. In general, these include the refugee administration, adult education centres, the local Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) office, and other relevant partners like businesses and volunteer organisations. To identify service systems and their extension, I have used a single PSO – such as the refugee administration or services – as the starting point and followed the connections where they led me. In practical terms, this has been achieved by exploring the connections between the refugee administrations and adult education centres featured in this study as the focal point of service systems and mapping the networks that enabled them to provide service offerings.

Uncontrollable Externalities: The Extended Service Environment

Sometimes, external shocks or other influences alter the practice of service provision in significant ways. Events such as pandemics or rapidly increasing refugee arrivals challenge service systems and the public sector as unforeseen externalities. In economics, externalities are used to describe instances in which the actions of one firm or organisation have an effect on another, without the latter party paying or being paid for its consequences (Stiglitz, 2000, p. 215). Such externalities, furthermore, can have both positive and negative consequences for the affected firm or organisation.

The conceptual development of both service systems and service ecosystems has largely relied on the description of various types of scalable structures; consequently, attention has been focused on what holds such systems together, such as 'endogenously generated, shared institutions' (Ng & Vargo, 2018, p. 518). Often, the exogenous – that which is outside the endogenously generated aggregations – appears to have been neglected in the development of service-dominant logic. Through a closer reading of that literature, the influence of uncontrollable externalities is clarified. Lusch and Vargo describe how 'the existing dominant paradigm in marketing' – goods-dominant logic – has followed a belief that 'external environments are uncontrollable forces to be

reckoned with' (Lusch & Vargo, 2006, p. 407). 'Surprisingly', they then argue, service-dominant 'logic takes an opposite perspective' as 'external environments are not uncontrollable but are resources that can be drawn upon for support once resistances are overcome' (Lusch & Vargo, 2006, p. 407). Such resistances are then described in relation to legal and social environments, technology, and the physical environment. Consequently, service-dominant logic 'reverses the logic of viewing external environments as uncontrollable and views them as resources to draw upon for support' (Lusch & Vargo, 2006, p. 419).

External environments in the later service-dominant logic literature have likewise been associated with a goods-dominant logic and hence framed as analytically uninteresting objects of academic scrutiny, as all resources have been viewed as emergent and latent (e.g., Lusch & Vargo, 2014). All that is not included at any given point becomes a potential future resource rather than simply something external and uncontrollable. Thus, it has been suggested that 'humans live in a sea of resource potential, and these potential resources only become resources when appraised and acted on, often through the integration with other potential resources' (Lusch & Vargo, 2014). In later articles, less attention has been paid to the role of external environments and exogenous impacts. This has been further enabled by arguments in which 'adopting a lens that identifies service ecosystems as a system of processes, external or exogenous environments can also be viewed as endogenous or internal' (Lusch & Vargo, 2014, p. 171).

As a counter-argument to the endogenous emphasis in the service-dominant logic literature,[4] I have found it useful to return to the idea of uncontrollable externalities and external environments (Lusch & Vargo, 2006, p. 414). What happens to the analytical apparatus if not all actors and components in the broader 'service ecosystem' are framed as (or as becoming) resources, and what if that which is uncontrollable is acknowledged as difficult to control and tame? While actors and resources may certainly be included in a given service setting in the future, most actors, resources, and occurrences that surround the service process will not be included.

Following the presentation of Gerring's (Gerring, 1999) three factors of concept formation earlier in this chapter, the phenomenon to be described has now been identified: the impact of uncontrollable externalities and external environments on the service process. The attributes are social, technological, natural, and other environmental factors that are not directly connected to a particular service field. Here, a service field is understood as a set of interrelated service systems

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[4] Systems approaches have been less prevalent in the service logic literature.

(Möller, Nenonen, & Storbacka, 2020, p. 385) and is exemplified by the multilevel organisation of refugee services, from politicians and agencies of the central government through meso-level oversight organisations such as the county governor to the municipal services charged with providing service offerings at the micro level. The interrelations between these organisations in the framework of this study are captured through how they are all, if in different ways, responsible for the design and provision of service offerings.

Having identified the phenomenon to be described by a concept and set of attributes, the process of finding an appropriate label remains. The term *service ecosystem* is already established in service research to describe actors connected through shared institutions who are engaged in mutual service provision (Vargo & Lusch, 2016). From this definition, I find it difficult to make the term *service ecosystems* do anything other than what it has been developed to do: describe systems of service actors and resources held together through endogenously generated institutions. The ecological connotations of the ecosystem, however, are appropriate through how they evoke thoughts of complex interconnections and uncontrollability. Another frequently discussed term in service research and in research regarding the service ecosystem (Lusch & Vargo, 2006, p. 414), is the *environment*. In an alternative stream of research, service scholars have used the *service environment* concept to describe the ways in which immediate social and physical environments – such as lighting, the interior, the exterior, and service behaviour – may influence the service encounter and customers' experience of service (J. Baker et al., 2020; Bitner, 1992). In early descriptions of service environments and servicescapes (Bitner, 1992), they were defined as the physical context of a service encounter. Rosenbaum and Massiah have argued for an expanded servicescape definition in which four – rather than one – environmental dimensions are considered. In addition to the physical, they include a social dimension, a socially symbolic dimension, and a natural dimension (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011, p. 473). This expanded view of the servicescape thus seeks to increase the attributes of the concept while focusing on the same phenomenon: the immediate service encounter and its physical surroundings (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011).

To capture the wider context of service provision in terms of the influence of uncontrollable externalities, I have found *extended service environment* to be intuitively helpful. Like the service environment and the conceptualisation of the expanded servicescape (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011), the extended service environment facilitates understanding how some uncontrollable environmental dimensions affect service provision. These include physical, natural, social, and technological dimensions and are consequently inspired by the conceptualisation of the expanded

servicescape (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011). A crucial difference, however, is that this is a conceptualisation in which the reach of an extended service environment is neither spatially nor temporally limited.

The inclusion of a term to describe external and uncontrollable influences on the service process in this study is due to the empirical findings that do not resonate with either the current theoretical framework in PSL or the ones in generic service logic. In its current articulation, the service ecosystem is suitable for describing how service offerings and service recipients' value creation processes occur within a larger network of actors. However, these systems are of limited extension because of the institutional emphasis that has been developed. In other words, only those resources that can be used have been taken into account, with those not embedded or possible to use largely ignored. Resources are thus not always resources but become so only through human interaction (De Gregori, 1987). A resource is 'a property of things – a property that is the result of human capability' (De Gregori, 1987, p. 1243). The service ecosystem, in my view, is an appropriate concept to capture the cooperation and relations between actors and resources directly involved in service provision, but it is not capable of capturing outside influences. The world as a whole has yet to be connected through a single shared understanding or institutional arrangement (Vargo & Lusch, 2016), and the tensions and discrepancies that emerge as a result need to be captured and analysed.

Having introduced the extended service environment as a potential concept to capture external influences on service provision, the next challenge relates to how such influences may be studied. This, again, is a problem that must be tackled at the intersection of theory and method, and the ethnographic and phenomenological approach used in this study has followed an inductive path to understanding external influences. A theoretical counterpart to this approach appears in recent studies of the biological ecosystem, in which scholars have argued for an individual-based approach (Grimm, Ayllón, & Railsback, 2017). This approach recognises how all systems (and in this case also the larger environment) consist of a number of individual actors and thus claims that 'this idea [of individual based modelling] may seem irrational until we remember that individuals are where theory is most firmly tied to reality' (Grimm et al., 2017, p. 234).

The operationalisation of the extended service environment in the empirical data analysis of this study has followed specific cases to determine how external environments and uncontrollable externalities had an impact on service. Instances of extended service environment disruption could come from events happening in the settled refugees' country of origin or be manifested through how those who settled struggled to establish social networks in their new communities.

Following the definition in which the extended service environment exists outside specific service systems, such extended service environments can furthermore be acknowledged as containing a number of other service systems whose potential influence on service provision is revealed through empirical studies.

Summarising the Framework: The Refugee Integration Service Model

In this chapter, I have outlined my theoretical framework, which is based on recent developments in PSL, especially the research stream inspired by service logic thinking (Engen et al., 2020; Grönroos, 2019; Osborne, 2018; Osborne et al., 2015; Skålén et al., 2018; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020). The chapter is structured around a service model (Figure 2) that seeks to capture the processes of policy design, value facilitation, value co-creation, and value creation. The content of the model is based on Grönroos and Voima's three spheres and processes in value creation (Grönroos & Voima, 2013), while its architecture is inspired by a similar service model created by Archibugi and colleagues (Archibugi et al., 2003).
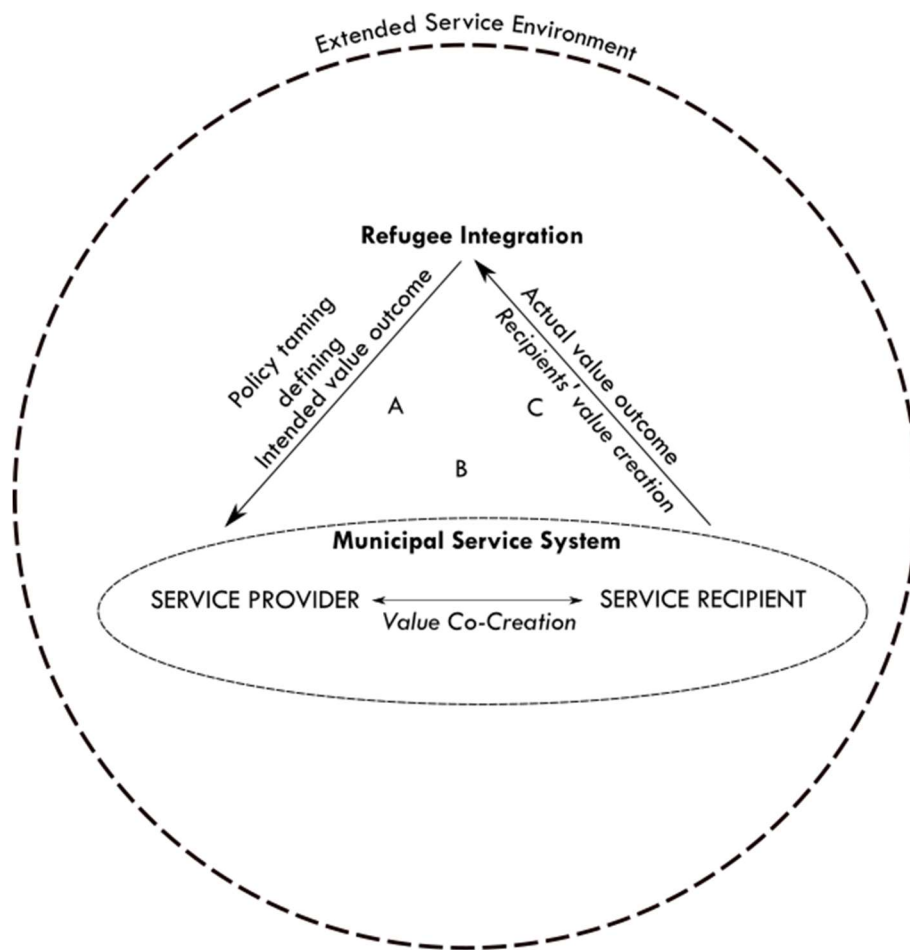
Figure 5: Refugee integration service model.

The chapter has situated my study as a contribution to PSL and presented a set of premises and assumptions that provide the foundation from which the empirical data are studied. The processes included in the model (Figure 5)[5] have been explored and clarified through a discussion of the relations between its parts. The framework contributes to the extant PSL literature by including a conceptualisation of wicked problems in the value co-creation process and by advancing a model that aims to capture the unpredictability of value outcomes in service. Furthermore, the bricolage perspective on innovation chosen for this study indicates a focus on municipal-level processes and, more specifically, on how the PSOs worked to implement legislatively defined service offerings in a resource-scarce setting. A tension between the obligation to provide service offerings that align with the PSOs' legal mandate and their wish to best facilitate the service recipients' value creation represents a double bind in public service provision that is explored throughout the thesis.

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[5] Figure 5 is the same as Figure 2 and has been repeated here for the reader's convenience.

The various phases and processes of the model are explored in detail in the background chapter (Chapter 4) and the empirical chapters (Chapters 5, 6, and 7). In Chapter 4, wicked problems and value facilitation are discussed through a presentation of the development of service offerings to immigrants and refugees over the past 50 years. Chapter 5 focuses on phases B and C by exploring how settled refugees were able to make use of local service offerings in the value creation processes; it also accounts for how individual lifeworlds affected their value creation. Chapter 6 focuses on phases A and B as it follows the perspective of municipal PSOs and their work to implement policy and develop and deliver their service offerings. Different innovations and attempts by PSOs to improve those offerings are discussed through empirical examples, and the potency of bricolage as a useful concept is explored. In Chapter 7, I discuss the implications of including an extended service environment perspective into the analysis of public service provision.

In Chapter 3, I present my method and the ways in which it has enabled me to produce data capable of addressing the issues outlined in this chapter on theory.

Chapter 3: Method – Young Men with Notepads Usually Have an Agenda

Let me begin with ethnographic encounters. Simply put, in the conduct of our research, we meet people. We talk with them, we ask them questions, we listen to their stories and we watch what they do. In so far as we are deemed competent and capable, we join in. There is nothing particularly special or unusual about this: it is, after all, what people do all the time when they encounter one another. (Ingold, 2014, p. 386)

Introduction

One March afternoon, I returned to the adult education centre in Varmdal to attend a meeting hosted by a local chapter of the Rural Women's Association (*Bygdekvinnelaget*), which wanted to become involved in local refugee integration efforts and had convened a meeting to discuss what they could do with volunteers, locals, and some participants from the adult education centre. Upon my arrival, I introduced myself to some people who seemed to be organising the event and asked if they would allow me to attend as an observer. The organisers gladly approved and showed support for the work I was trying to do, and so I found myself in a corner in the back when the meeting finally started. Throughout the meeting, representatives from both the Rural Women's Association and the local chapter of Save the Children presented some of the work they were doing and how they wished to contribute to refugee integration efforts. At one point, one presenter asked if it was easy to get to know Norwegians. Some settled refugees who were relatively fluent in Norwegian said yes, while some who were less fluent said no. I took notes and joined the participants for coffee and cake during the break.

After the break, a representative from an organisation in another municipality took the podium and talked about a specific project they had successfully launched. Towards the end of her presentation, she looked around the room and asked if anyone had any thoughts on either what she had said or what more could be done. In a room mostly filled with retired women and settled refugees, I seem to have been the odd one out, and she asked me what I thought. And, by the way, who was I? I again introduced the project I was working on and realised that I had missed her when I was introducing myself to the organisers. 'Yes, young men who sit scribbling notes usually have an agenda', she said. I readily admitted that this was the case.

In this chapter, I describe the methods, research design, types of data, and analytical approach used in this project. First, I offer a brief explanation of ethnographic fieldwork as a method and explore the collection of methods used during data production. Next, I describe the research design that shaped the project and the data produced. There, I account for the data production strategies followed while doing the fieldwork and present the process of choosing the field sites. This section includes a description of how I gained access to the people I met in the field and a brief description of the practice of doing fieldwork.

After this, I present the types of data gathered and produced for this project. Aside from relying on fieldwork and ethnographic data as primary sources, I conducted different types of interviews and engaged in conversations with any number of actors. As a means of triangulating my data, I collected documents from four municipalities – Endefjord, Kryssfjord, Varmdal, and Haugen[6] – and other relevant actors. After describing my data, I address the analytical approach that has guided the data interpretation before addressing issues related to positionality and ethical considerations.

Methods

Most of the data produced for this thesis were collected through two three- to four-month periods of fieldwork that amounted to more than seven months in total. While ethnographic fieldwork has been associated more or less exclusively with participant observation, especially in social anthropology (Jackson, 1983, p. 40), the approach in this project has been to view intensive fieldwork as incorporating several methods. The ability to experiment with multiple methods was due to the prolonged time spent in a single location. There has been an increasing tendency to expand the field in which the fieldwork is located, as scholars have moved away from the notion that the field is a specific site in which one's informants are somehow incarcerated. Arjun Appadurai, for instance, has drawn attention to how previous anthropologists created a sort of linguistic prison for their subjects:

> Natives are in one place, a place to which explorers, administrators, missionaries, and eventually anthropologists, come. These outsiders, these observers, are regarded as quintessentially mobile; they are the movers, the seers, the knowers. The natives are immobilized by their belonging to a place. (Appadurai, 1988, p. 37)

While this linguistic incarceration might have made partial sense when social anthropologists first forged their methods, the current era represents a radical shift from a time when people were not

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[6] The municipalities and all other given names in this study have been anonymised with pseudonyms.

united through the same flow of information and telecommunication we have today. For this project, I argue that my fieldwork started as soon as I first made my attempts to single out the municipalities in which I wanted to conduct my work. Here, an initial collection of documents and their analysis triggered my imagination regarding how the field might look and the ways in which interactions in the field could play out. Documents posted through the municipalities' websites allowed me to form an impression of what was going on and served as a reminder that I was about to enter a field that was very much in motion. As such, the first method I applied in the larger scope of doing fieldwork was to conduct document studies as a way to prepare myself for what was to come. Later in this chapter, I describe these document studies and the other methods applied during my fieldwork. While participant observation has remained vital to the project, I do have a clear impression that the additional methods I employed to understand the field and subject matter should be construed as equally important to fieldwork as a type of overarching method, as a method that actually encompasses several methods.

Ethnographic fieldwork as a method containing several other methods (Keränen & Prior, 2019) has served as a way for me to grasp as much information as possible on the subject I have been studying and has also served as a means of triangulating data from different sources (Lune & Berg, 2017, p. 14). In some instances, the type of information I needed could only be obtained through participant observation, while interviews and document analysis offered different types of information. Working through document studies, participant observation, and interviews simultaneously allowed me to question different types of information and head directly to the source of a specific type to seek clarification.

Ethnographic Fieldwork and Participant Observation: Transparent Espionage

On my first day in Haugen, I introduced myself to a group of employees who were drinking coffee in the lunchroom. 'Oh, so you are a spy then? We have to be careful with what we tell you then', one of them stated cheerfully. Coincidentally, it was the second time I had been called a spy during fieldwork, and I told the employees that if indeed I were there in that capacity, I would have to be a terrible spy, as they had already seen my true intentions.

Ethnographic fieldwork is a method in which a researcher goes into the field to produce ethnographic data. The method has been associated with immersion as a participant observer (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 30). This means that the ethnographer, as the person who records ethnographic data, goes to and stays with a group of people over a longer period and writes down data based on participant observation (Brewer, 2000, pp. 1-2). As has been noted, the word

ethnography means 'writing about people' (Ingold, 2014, p. 385), and the practice of doing ethnographic fieldwork thus entails going into a field for a set time and writing down the things that happen.

Traditional fieldwork, as it is known in social anthropology, often lasts for one to two years (Hannerz, 2010, p. 80). Engaging with people through long-term fieldwork has been said to provide deep insights into the topic explored, as social patterns of behaviour or opinions can best be observed over a long period (Barth, 1967, p. 662). A frequently cited strength of ethnographic fieldwork as a method is the way long stays can serve to surface inherent contradictions in practices, beliefs, and other types of social institutions that in various ways bind groups of people. The difference between what is said – as a type of data that can be produced through interviews – and what is done relates to Goffman's distinction between front- and back-stage (Goffman, 1956, pp. 77-78). His metaphor comes from the theatre, as he compares society with a sort of role-play that occurs in everyday life. The argument goes as follows: people tend to differentiate their exhibited behaviour when they are front-stage because they present what they want people to see. The ongoing access provided through extended fieldwork hopefully allows the researcher to study both front- and back-stage behaviour.

What is of interest is to understand the kind of thing that 'goes without saying because it comes without saying' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 167). Societies and social groups, Bourdieu argues, tend to habituate certain practices in ways that lead to a tradition being 'silent, not least about itself as a tradition' (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 167). The work of doing ethnographic research hence consists of questioning the various practices that for different reasons have become silent and incorporated into everyday practices that are taken for granted. Part of this effort, it has been suggested, includes the practice of asking dumb questions (Lune & Berg, 2017, p. 111; Plesner, 2011, p. 480). This, it is claimed, is instrumental to understand what Malinowski called 'the native's point of view' (Malinowski, 1922), referring to an understanding of what the world looks like for our interlocutors.

The role of a researcher conducting an ethnographic study should include a sense of methodological naïveté and curiosity (Bernard, 2006, p. 367). This furthermore points to the fact that doing ethnographic fieldwork in itself is an intrusive practice in which the researcher might do things that otherwise would have been unthinkable (Bernard, 2006, p. ix). Once again, the degree of intrusiveness allowed to the researcher is bound to be connected with the degree of acceptance among the people and groups being studied. During the fieldwork, I was granted access to a wide range of arenas, such as closed interviews between settled refugees and

programme advisors that are otherwise confidential. This access was the result of formal agreements and the construction of relationships between me and my interlocutors, wherein a mutual trust regarding the way the data were produced and would be used had been established.

A consequence of the influence the researcher has on the data produced through ethnographic fieldwork is a difficulty in replicating different studies; in other words, it is difficult to reach the same analytical results based on an original set of empirical data in the same way that can be achieved through studies based on 'objective' data sets (Brewer, 2000, p. 107). As a way to counteract the difficulties in situating the types of data that are produced, increasing attention has been directed to the inclusion of positionality and reflexivity through which researchers outline the influence their own role and status might have had on data production: gender, age, education, ethnicity, and so forth (Brewer, 2000, p. 108).

Participant observation may occur along a spectrum that at times might primarily consist of observation and at other times might entail participation (Jackson, 1983, p. 41). The spectrum between participation and observation has been argued to be of importance because it can sometimes be impossible to do both at once. As one example from the fieldwork conducted, I spent time as an assistant teacher in one of the municipalities, which meant going around a classroom and assisting the students with questions about Norwegian. Although I initially intended to make notes and spend time observing the classroom while assisting the teacher, this quickly proved to be a difficult exercise. I had to choose between doing a poor job of engaging in the combination of participation and observation or immersing myself as a full participant in the work of assisting those in need of grammar corrections and so forth. Faced with this dilemma, I opted for the latter; as a result, I believe I was able to obtain a better sense of what it entailed to work as a teacher in that particular setting. Later, this experience helped me better understand the experiences of the teacher when I engaged solely in an observer role.

During the fieldwork, I attended 80 meetings in total. Meetings offer excellent insights into the internal and external operations of an organisation and the ways through which organisational and inter-organisational agreements and shared understandings are created and maintained. As an outsider without a voice to give input, I was not supposed to engage with the subjects being discussed, so the meetings constituted an arena of pure observation. While it perhaps would have been preferable to remain entirely invisible during the meetings, my presence did invariably seem to have an influence through the explicit mentions of things that would have to be excluded from my notes or implicit behaviours, such as glances my way during different discussions.

Research Design

This ethnographic study explores refugee integration services and processes in rural municipalities in Norway. The choice of ethnography, with all it entails for this study, was partially the result of my own background as a social anthropologist, combined with an increasing recognition of that field's potential in service research (Chandler & Lusch, 2015, p. 15; Helkkula et al., 2012, p. 69; Koskela-Huotari et al., 2020; Osborne & Strokosch, 2013, p. 44; Trischler & Scott, 2016, p. 722; von Koskull, 2020). The perceived advantage of ethnographic data in service research has been associated with, among other things, the complexities of service systems and value co-creation (Chandler & Lusch, 2015; Helkkula et al., 2012). It has also been endorsed as a potential way to empirically test a number of theoretical propositions concerning value co-creation (Kabadayi, 2019; Osborne & Strokosch, 2013). Moreover, ethnographic research is efficient in gathering the subjective and lived experiences of people who are working or otherwise engaged in areas characterised by wicked problems (Noordegraaf et al., 2019). As briefly mentioned in the previous chapter, the ethnographic research design is useful in uncovering the actual value outcomes of service interactions for service recipients, which can be followed and discussed with interlocutors in real time.

Designing a research project involves a number of decisions that will affect both the production of data and the subsequent analysis (Lune & Berg, 2017, p. 33). These decisions include limiting the study through selecting field sites and topics, the type of data the researcher aims to produce, and the methods through which the data will be produced. As a project designed in response to a call for applications regarding a study on refugee integration in rural municipalities, the parameters were partially determined from the beginning. During the first five months of this project, the study was refined by selecting a number of municipalities that would serve as field sites for this project.

The duration of the fieldwork was limited by the three-year time limit of the overall project. Within this period, a full year of fieldwork or more would have taken up more than a third of the total time; viewing this as unrealistic, I decided that I would stay with each of the featured municipalities for somewhere between three and four months. As this is a study of the public services related to refugee integration, it furthermore made sense to schedule the fieldwork to accord with school semesters, as this is the period during which the public services and the settled refugees are in contact on a daily basis. This would provide an arena for me to follow their interactions as they unfolded. Limiting the duration of the fieldwork prior to entering the field runs the risk of failing to reach what has been called the saturation point (Merriam & Tisdell,

2016, p. 101); that is, the point at which additional data do not significantly increase what is already known. Reaching such a point varies with each study and often depends on the data available.

Thanks to careful preparation prior to going into the field and the accommodation I received from those I encountered there, I was granted access quite rapidly and could start collecting 'meaningful' data from the outset. This would likely not have been the case if I had not prepared properly in terms of research design and other arrangements. Reaching the saturation point is a matter of subjective reasoning and is furthermore influenced by a range of factors, such as subjective considerations like fatigue and emotional capacity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 101). In light of these factors, I felt that I had reached saturation towards the end of my second fieldwork stint, as the knowledge I had added over the previous couple of weeks did not appear to significantly broaden my understanding.

Finally, the research design was guided by restrictions in terms of personal data privacy. These restrictions arise from both ethical concern and national legislation.[7] As I arrived at the municipalities where I was to conduct fieldwork, I made it clear that my primary interests were to obtain a general understanding of the various practices and processes that are part of the daily operations of a municipal refugee service. As such, issues that concerned specific persons were of secondary interest to the way in which these challenges were handled. This clarification proved to be a prerequisite for doing research, as I was required to sign non-disclosure agreements that would prevent me from singling out individuals. The first-person accounts featured in this study have therefore been primarily sourced through first-person interactions.

Preparation and Preliminary Interviews

In many ways, the preparation for this study started early, when I was offered the opportunity to work as a substitute teacher at various adult education centres in Oslo. Even though this provided me with an elementary understanding of the substantive field of this study – refugee integration and public services – I saw a need for further preparation before going to the municipalities. In addition to reading studies, reports, news articles, and legislation related to the field, I attended four different conferences and seminars for practitioners to gain further insights into the issues faced by people working in the services I was going to follow.

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[7] Specifically, the Public Administration Act (*Forvaltningsloven*), § 13. URL: https://lovdata.no/lov/1967-02-10

In addition to attending these conferences, I was able to arrange meetings with three people employed in an adult education centre in a larger city in Norway. These preliminary interviews provided some additional context and proximity to the field, as I was able to both gain insights into the field and learn the types of things that were of interest to people working in it – and those that were not of interest. Moreover, initial contact with people working directly with refugees – as opposed to reading about them – allowed me to ask some 'dumb questions' that were not necessarily the result of methodological naïveté but of a lack of knowledge. While the practice of asking dumb questions has been shown to be part of a good methodological strategy (Plesner, 2011, p. 480), they can just as often lead to an impression that the researcher is ignorant about the field, which may often be true. The opportunity to ask some of the 'dumbest' questions regarding the daily operation of municipal refugee related services prior to entering the municipalities where I was going to do my fieldwork thus offered an opportunity to be perceived as ignorant by people other than those with whom I was going to spend several months and on whom I would rely for crucial information.

Field Selection and Data Collection Strategies

The data presented in this thesis were produced during two periods of fieldwork in 2018. The municipalities were selected through variables that characterised them as interesting. I began by compiling data from Directorate of Integration and Diversity's (IMDi) website and compared them to location-specific information found online, such as whether the municipalities had a strategy for settling refugees, various previous projects, and archived data from newspapers that in some way could help inform my decision. Norway is currently undergoing a process of municipal reform, which also had an impact on my choice of municipalities.

The project's overall focus on refugee integration in rural contexts implied that the selected field sites had to be rural. The rural focus of this study was predefined in the initial call for applications for this project. To consider the rurality of the municipalities, I followed a centralisation index developed by the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR; Gundersen & Juvkam, 2013). The scale defines a major city (1) as having more than 500,000 residents and the highest level of service production and public institutions (Gundersen & Juvkam, 2013, p. 47). Peripheries are given the number 10 on the scale and are defined as municipalities with a population of less than 1,201 and a low to very low presence of services and public institutions (Gundersen & Juvkam, 2013, p. 49). The centralisation index guided my search for potential municipalities, and those included in this project were located between the numbers 7 and 9 on

the centrality scale; they have between 1,201 and 10,000 residents. The biggest municipality featured in this study had a population of close to 7,000.[8]

The search for suitable locations went through two rounds. First, I sought to find a location for my first fieldwork stint in the spring; I then searched for municipalities for my autumn fieldwork. To locate the municipalities, I created a document in Excel in which I listed a range of variables, including population and population growth, financial support from the state to integrate refugees, the number of immigrants, the number of refugees, and recent requests from the IMDi to settle refugees. The latter were emphasised as the history of requests gave an indication regarding the municipalities' recent histories of refugee settlements. This was important, as my fieldwork would have been of little worth if the municipalities had not settled a significant number of people over the previous three years. After creating a shortlist of potential municipalities, I visited their websites to determine whether they had any concrete projects I could follow while doing my fieldwork and if they had a plan for refugee integration. At this point in the search, an additional component was added following the ongoing municipal restructuring process that was initiated by the government in 2014–2015 (see Meld. St. 14, 2014-2015). As a researcher conducting a study in public innovation, I felt obliged to locate municipalities that were involved in some sort of innovative activity, and the major restructuring caused by a municipal merger seemed like the type of change that could help me gather data on the topic. In the end, the data produced in relation to the municipal mergers have largely been omitted from the thesis. The meetings attended in relation to the mergers, however, afforded important insights that do appear.

For the first fieldwork, I found two municipalities that had a long history of refugee settlement and had developed different types of local solutions to supplement the nationwide introduction programme. These local solutions were identified by surveying municipal websites. Furthermore, the two municipalities – Haugen and Varmdal – were undergoing a municipal merger process that I thought might make them interesting sites of study. I called the two municipalities in November 2017 and asked if I could stay from late February until the end of the school year in June. Following the first cold call to one of the two, I submitted a formal application that was handled by the department heads of the unit I wished to follow; it was accepted. This dual-field approach would, I hoped, enable me to gather twice the amount of data in the same period. In April and May of 2018, I repeated the process and was accepted by the two municipalities selected for the autumn fieldwork. As was the case for the first fieldwork, the municipalities were

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[8] This rough estimate has been included to suggest the size of the locality while protecting the anonymity of its residents.

selected based on a number of factors, including the history of settlements and projects developed locally as supplements to the introduction programme.

The site of the spring fieldwork, which is described in Chapter 4, was located in south-eastern Norway and is typical of rural municipalities in the region. For the autumn fieldwork, I had an idea that the process of refugee integration and in particular the job prospects for settled refugees might be different in municipalities with major industries or a large fishing sector. Here, my perhaps ignorant perception was that such municipalities had a greater need for low-skilled workers – those lacking higher formal education – than municipalities that did not have industries or fishing. After doing my research, my choice fell on a region that has a long industrial history.

After reaching out to the department heads of refugee-related services in Endefjord and Kryssfjord, I underwent the same procedure as I had previously and sent an application that was brought to the respective heads of municipal affairs for approval. By the end of the spring fieldwork, my requests to these municipalities had been accepted, and I started looking for a place to stay. Like Haugen and Varmdal, Kryssfjord and Endefjord were undergoing a process of municipal merger in autumn 2018. This, I believed, would allow me to follow a process wherein the municipal services would be scrutinising their current approaches and looking for new solutions.

Methodology and Philosophy of Science

Ethnographic fieldwork has conventionally been associated with induction, referring to the process through which patterns and theoretical developments are drawn from the data (Brewer, 2000, p. 108). Induction is often opposed to deduction, or the hypothetic-deductive method, in which data are used to test a hypothesis through deduction (Føllesdal, 1979, p. 321). The inherent weakness of each approach can be found in how the hypothetic-deductive approach requires a hypothesis to be either verified or rejected before refining it and making new deductions in accordance with theory (Popper, 1972, p. 36) and through how an inductive approach does not necessarily know where it is going. The latter has been captured in social anthropology through the concept of ethnographic epiphanies – or sudden realisations or serendipity – as the point at which pieces of previously produced data suddenly join to form a larger picture (Marcus, 1986, p. 189).

Prior to starting fieldwork, I had been inspired the recent developments in service research described in the previous chapter, and I decided to approach the field to see how it could help me make sense of the data produced. This intermediate location between the deductive and

inductive approaches, where the empirical data are analysed inductively and deductively at the same time, has been termed both *abductive* and *retroductive* (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 173). Both concepts have generally been attributed to Pierce (Peirce, 1878) and have been used synonymously (Niiniluoto, 1999, p. 439) or with subtle distinctions. Although sharing crucial characteristics, the main distinction is epistemological, as retroduction has been used to support transfactual conditions (i.e. the necessary yet hidden conditions behind the appearances of things), while abduction has been defined as a way to 'interpret and recontextualize individual phenomena within a conceptual framework or set of ideas' (Bertilsson, 2004, p. 385). The main difference lies in the ambitions of retroduction and abduction; the former seeks something akin to universal truths, while abduction has a more specific and contextual focus. Though distinct in their methodological ambitions regarding the types of description they seek, both concepts originate in Peirce's articulations and their function as a type of 'instinctive reason' (Ayim, 1974, p. 34). As mediating approaches that combine the inductive and hypothetic-deductive methods, abduction and retroduction have been described as useful when facing new and surprising facts that Ayim has described as follows:

> A fact which cannot be accounted for by standard theories is witnessed, and the scientist is thrown into a state of puzzlement. He must suspend belief in the theories which cannot account for the surprising fact and yet he has no new theory to replace the old one. Retroduction steps in and fills the vacuum. (Ayim, 1974, pp. 34-35)

Following the initial realisation that the old theory is not able to explain the new facts, Ayim further writes that the 'reasoner guesses at a hypothesis which will satisfactorily explain the facts accounted for by the old theory without excluding the new fact' (Ayim, 1974, p. 35).

The logic of reasoning in an abductive or retroductive approach thus involves a combination of hypotheses and inductions made from facts with which the researchers have to actively engage. Abduction as a methodological approach and theoretical foundation thus leaves room for the theoretical framework to be used as a tool to analyse the specific phenomena observed.

The choice of abduction as a methodological approach bears an important relation to the research question, as the approach seeks to account for facts that are not necessarily covered by any previous theory. Wicked problems, as described in the previous chapter, were shown to constitute a type of contextualised problem that may arise as a consequence of a number of factors. The use of abduction as an approach of inference to address wicked problems has been advocated in previous articles (Blanco, 1985; Khisty, 2000; Wood, 2000). Specifically, Wood has

argued that 'wicked problems usually call for an "abductive" approach because you don't have enough given variables to indicate a clear (deductively logical choice)' (Wood, 2000, p. 52).

Qualitative data, including ethnographic data, have been argued to be 'inherently *partial* – committed and incomplete' (Clifford, 1986). Realising that qualitative research on human behaviour relies on partial truths and the difficulties of capturing a one-to-one relationship between reality and the truth, I have adopted a strategy of triangulation, which can be ensured through four distinct approaches: 'the use of multiple methods, multiple sources of data, multiple investigators, or multiple theories to confirm findings' (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 244). Fieldwork has been shown as a way to both use different types of methods to produce data and to communicate with multiple sources of data. Moreover, the longevity of fieldwork proves valuable, as the same people could be asked about a single topic on different occasions, sometimes resulting in different answers being produced on the basis of their own evolving understanding of the topic. Even though I am the sole investigator in this project, thus posing a challenge in triangulating findings that have been coloured by my own understanding, partial triangulation has been made possible through previous research conducted by others on topics that overlap with those featured in this study.

Description of Data

What are data? Comparing the practices in his field with those employed by his father, who was a mycologist, social anthropologist Ingold suggests the following:

> A datum is, by definition, that which is given. But what today's scientists count as data have not been bestowed as any kind of gift or offering. To collect data, in science, is not to receive what is given but to extract what is not. Whether mined, washed up, deposited or precipitated, what is extracted comes in bits, already broken off from the currents of life, from their ebbs and flows, and from their mutual entailments.
> (Ingold, 2016, p. 9)

Following Ingold, a datum can thus be seen as a fragment of information that in some way is broken away from its origins and placed in a static state for it to become analysable.

Qualitative data collection in the social sciences has been framed as distinct due to how data are produced in the intersection of researchers and their interlocutors (Alvesson, 2003, p. 25). Consequently, I perceive the majority of data presented here as having been produced in the intersection between me as a researcher and the people with whom I have spent time. This matter is briefly touched upon in Chapter 1, where I discuss the role of reflexivity in social

anthropology. Perceiving data as the result of social interactions means that I acknowledge that my presence is likely to have influenced what has been recorded and that I have thus played an active part in the production of this data, rather than having worked as a disinterested collector who has recorded stories and narratives in which I perceive myself as having no role.

Through the fieldwork conducted, I have produced different types of data, which are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Overview of data types.

Type of data	Sub-groups	Collection
Ethnographic data		Written as field notes over more than seven months in total
	Field journals (chronological) and everyday observations	
	Conversations (informal interviews), observations, and meeting notes (see sub-category 'Meeting notes')	
	Locations: offices, adult education centres, language cafés, libraries, various meeting venues, and local areas	
	Substantive field notes and analytic field notes	
Interviews		Recorded and transcribed; written down during or just after conversations
	Refugees	With interview guide (see appendix 1); 23 interviews
	Public employees	Four formal interviews (three from pre-study) and countless informal interviews during fieldwork
	Third-party actors (volunteer sector, labour training centres, etc.)	Several informal and four formal interviews
Meeting notes		Attended more than 80 meetings
	(1) Weekly and semi-weekly scheduled meetings related to the daily operations of services	
	(2) Meetings held for municipal mergers	
	(3) Meetings held with third-party actors	
	(4) Meetings between users and employees in refugee-related services	
Documents		Gathered from online resources or provided in print by municipalities

	(1) Service-specific documents from the municipalities	
	(2) Municipal administrative documents	
	(3) Government documents (white papers, policy papers, etc.)	

In addition to field notes, document collection, and informal interviews, I conducted formal and semi-structured interviews with refugee service employees, settled refugees, and volunteers, as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Overview of interviews.

Location	Category	Age group	Gender	Nationality	Type of interview
Undisclosed	Employee	40–50	Female	Norway	Pre-study interview
Undisclosed	Employee	20–30	Female	Norway	Pre-study interview
Undisclosed	Employee	55–65	Female	Norway	Pre-study interview
Varmdal	Settled Refugee	40–50	Male	Syria	Semi-structured
Varmdal	Settled Refugee	30–40	Male	Sudan	Semi-structured
Varmdal	Settled Refugee	30–40	Male	Sudan	Semi-structured
Varmdal	Settled Refugee	50–60	Male	Syria	Semi-structured
Varmdal	Settled Refugee	20–30	Male	Syria	Semi-structured
Varmdal	Settled Refugee	30–40	Male	Syria	Semi-structured
Varmdal	Settled Refugee	20–30	Male	Somalia	Semi-structured
Varmdal	Settled Refugee	20–30	Male	Syria	Semi-structured
Varmdal	Settled Refugee	20–30	Male	Syria	Semi-structured
Varmdal	Settled Refugee	40–50	Male	Syria	Semi-structured
Varmdal	Settled Refugee	40–50	Female	Syria	Semi-structured
Endefjord	Settled Refugee	30–40	Male	Kurdistan	Semi-structured
Endefjord	Settled Refugee	30–40	Male	Syria	Semi-structured
Endefjord	Settled Refugee	30–40	Male	Syria	Semi-structured
Endefjord	Settled Refugee	20–30	Female	Ethiopia	Semi-structured
Endefjord	Settled Refugee	20–30	Male	Syria	Semi-structured
Kryssfjord	Settled Refugee	20–30	Female	Sudan	Semi-structured
Kryssfjord	Settled Refugee	20–30	Female	Serbia	Semi-structured
Kryssfjord	Settled Refugee	40–50	Male	Syria	Semi-structured
Kryssfjord	Settled Refugee	20–30	Female	Eritrea	Semi-structured
Kryssfjord	Settled Refugee	50–60	Female	Thailand	Semi-structured
Kryssfjord	Settled Refugee	30–40	Male	Sudan	Semi-structured
Kryssfjord	Settled Refugee	50–60	Male	Eritrea	Semi-structured
Haugen	Volunteer	60–70	Female	Norway	Unstructured
Varmdal	Volunteer	40–50	Male	Norway	Unstructured
Varmdal	Employee	40–50	Female	Norway	Semi-structured
Haugen	External Firm	30–40	Male	Norway	Unstructured
Haugen	Politician	40–50	Female	Norway	Unstructured

There was a bias towards men in general and men from Syria in particular among the refugees interviewed, as there were 15 interviews with men and 7 with women among the settled refugees.

The bias results from a strategy in which the interviewees themselves would volunteer and report their interest to their teacher, who would then send people out for interviews during class. Among the interviews with refugees, there were a dozen from Syria, one from Ethiopia, two from Eritrea, one from Somalia, one from Kurdistan, three from Sudan, and two from Thailand and Serbia. The last two volunteered through the teacher and had come either as labour migrants or through marriage. The interviewees had differing language levels, so I had to adjust my questions as a consequence. Differing language levels resulted in a wide range of interview durations, which ranged from 25 to more than 90 minutes. A person working at one of the adult education centres assisted as a translator for two of the interviews.

The different types of data were collected in different ways. In relation to the above description, field notes, meeting notes, and interviews are to be regarded as produced in a social setting that is prone to have influenced the data in various ways, and one observation or statement by itself should thus be regarded as inherently partial. To lessen the idiosyncrasy of a given observation or a statement, however, the three types of data (field notes, interviews, and meeting notes) have been substantiated by repeating questions at various points or following certain patterns that have emerged.

Field Journal

Although the interviews, documents, and meeting data have been crucial to my analysis, the field notes remain the backbone of this study. Importantly, the observations and notes produced through the fieldwork have helped me gain a thorough understanding of the subject matter and, even though much of the empirical data presented in Chapters 5 to 7 are based on interviews, the foundation for these interviews and the context from which they have been interpreted would not have been the same without thorough prior ethnographic research. Taking field notes can be a tiresome exercise, as it often includes writing down things that may seem trivial at the moment but later turn out to provide valuable insights. The ethnographer has been metaphorically described as 'someone who is simultaneously creating and solving a puzzle' (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 173). The fieldwork conducted for this study was improved by the fact that I had previously conducted fieldwork in another context.

When following the service provision of four municipalities over a seven-month span, it was impossible to behave as a human tape recorder. As a being with interests and agency, I was quite certain to leave something out to include something else. Drawing on experience from previous fieldwork, I adopted a strategy in which I tried to follow certain events and incidents that arose to

create a highly detailed account of specific matters. The events and incidents I followed more closely were usually identified through their potential to help me understand issues related to my research questions, such as explicit wickedness and innovations. This strategy was adopted to avoid a fragmented empirical base of knowledge: in short, it is easier to build an analysis on a coherent case than attempt to put together a set of puzzle pieces after all the fieldwork is done.

The field notes were written by hand on notepads and later transcribed into a single password-protected document made for each fieldwork stint or by hastily returning to the computer after engaging in a discussion. The extensiveness of each entry varied with the context in which the notes were taken, as I was sometimes able to write out extensive field notes on the spot, while at other times it was more feasible to write condensed field notes before expanding on them later that day. The decision to include all field and meeting notes in one document for each fieldwork stint was made to ensure an effective synopsis of my data. The data were systematised as a chronological journal series, with each journal starting on the date of my arrival and ending when I left. The decision to write the journal chronologically rather than thematically resulted from a previous attempt to write a field journal based on themes, which ended up causing more confusion than clarity. In addition, I kept a pre-fieldwork journal to keep track of the contact I had with the services prior to my arrival. In total, I compiled approximately 300 pages of field notes (Typeface: Garamond, font size 12, 1.5 line spacing), in addition to a few hundred pages of interview notes that were transcribed.

Writing a field journal can be a simultaneous process of recording what is observed and heard (as substantive field notes) combined with analysis at an intermediate level (analytic field notes; (Brewer, 2000, p. 107). During the process of writing down notes, this combination is useful as it can help make sense of specific data in a wider context. A potential issue, however, can arise if the different types of notes – substantive and analytic – become confused (Brewer, 2000, p. 107). To avoid this pitfall, I clarified my analytic notes in the journal by noting that certain parts of the journal were ideas I had while jotting them down. As an example from the journal of my autumn fieldwork, I wrote, 'this, I believe, can serve as a good example of ecosystem thinking in the municipality where things are connected and service does not occur in a vacuum' (Field journal, p. 48).

Conversations and Informal Interviews

The conversations and informal interviews conducted during the fieldwork were primarily written down as paraphrase. When conducting fieldwork, it is not always possible or indeed preferable to

bring a notepad along to the coffee machine while engaging in informal conversation, but such conversations might nonetheless include important information that needs to be preserved (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 63). Usually, I would go back to my computer or notepad following a conversation as quickly as it had reached a natural halt to write down what had occurred as precisely as possible. Sometimes, these notes included exact quotes from my interlocutor; at other times, the reiteration would be written down in a more general form. For example, one note looked like this: 'I went to speak with the programme advisor after lunch. I wanted to ask how the search for summer jobs [for the settled refugees] was going. It appeared to be going well' (Field journal 1, p. 109).

The reiteration of conversations (as informal interviews) is often more imprecise than recorded interviews: they make up the foundational basis for the understandings reached during fieldwork. Short conversations here and there may serve to bring together many small pieces that together produce a holistic impression of the subject being studied. This holistic, yet often rough, knowledge basis can later serve as the foundation from which formal interview questions can be articulated.

Informal interviews and paraphrased statements in a field journal can be less precise than verbatim statements, which allows the researcher to gain an advantage by paying attention to not only what is said but also the way it is said (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 65). Natural dialogue, as opposed to the content of a formal interview, often includes a range of gestures and other types of behaviour that serve as a type of meta-communication. While meta-communication is likely to be abundant during formal interviews, such settings can often distract the researcher from paying full attention to such gestures, as part of the process includes figuring out logically related questions as the interview is being held. Moreover, if the interview is recorded and later transcribed, the meta-communication that has occurred during the actual interview might be forgotten at the time of transcription. Writing conversations down immediately after they have occurred in a 'natural' or uncontrolled setting, in contrast, provides a better opportunity to include the various types of meta-communication that occur during a conversation, such as a perceived sense of frustration or eagerness on the part of the interlocutor.

Semi-Structured Interviews

For the interviews conducted with the refugees, I used an interview guide designed to glean a broad impression of their lives prior to and after being displaced (see Appendix 1). The use of an interview guide for these conversations proved valuable, as I was able to collect comparable data

from a range of people of varied origins who were now living in different municipalities throughout Norway. Another advantage of using the interview guide was that I was able to improve some of my questions by adapting them for people with a relatively narrow, yet in my experience effective, vocabulary. Most of the interviewees who had arrived as refugees had a language level somewhere between A1 and B1, which resulted in different durations of the interviews. Nevertheless, except for a few interviews, most respondents were able to answer the questions to a satisfactory degree in Norwegian. The fact that I was able to conduct the interviews with people who did not have Norwegian as their first or often even their second language was, I believe, made possible through my long-term presence in the municipalities. Consequently, when I finally conducted the interviews towards the ends of my stays, I had already talked to most of the people before and discerned their Norwegian communication skills. Furthermore, my prolonged presence was likely to have resulted in a degree of trust, so that I was not confused with, for example, someone coming from the government to see whether their 'stories' still held.

The issue of interviewing refugees brings up a key challenge that could be addressed in my ethical considerations. For many, being interviewed can be tiresome, and it is likely that refugees experience greater tensions during this particular form of social interaction than others might. Refugees who arrive in Norway by themselves (as asylum seekers) are subject to interviews by the authorities, who then use this information to decide whether they are eligible for protection in Norway. To avoid any confusion, the interviewees who participated in this study were initially asked to participate by their teacher, who explained the nature of the interviews. This protocol followed a suggestion from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data[9] in its response to my application to process personal data. Once in the room with me, I asked the interviewees again if they understood what I was doing and why I was doing it and reassured them of their anonymity.

Meeting Notes

This study has aimed to examine refugee-related services through everyday practices and interactions. As things turned out on my first day of fieldwork, such practices include many meetings held both internally and with external actors. Being allowed to follow the services over a prolonged period, I was able to write down the contents of these meetings as a kind of

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[9] The project's reference number is #58655.

comprehensive meeting report. Ordinary meeting reports, as types of documents, are in themselves interesting and indeed powerful, as they tend to conceal differences and make it appear as if certain decisions were made.[10] As a semi-intrusive actor during these meetings, my notetaking strategy was to grasp the arguments uttered in the meetings in as 'thick' a way as possible. This resulted in my scribbling intensely during many of the meetings I attended, something that more than once provoked statements such as 'You do not have to write this down', or the imperative, 'Don't write this down'. Nevertheless, I am grateful that the participants in these meetings allowed me to attend and attempt to understand the dynamics of how they confronted a wide array of issues and how decisions were made.

The more than 80 meetings I attended during my fieldwork can be separated into four categories: (1) scheduled weekly and semi-weekly internal meetings related to the daily operations of the services, (2) meetings held regarding municipal mergers, (3) meetings held with third-party actors, and (4) meetings between users and employees in refugee-related services. Each type of meeting had its own characteristics, followed a particular trajectory, and often overlapped with other meetings. I describe below some of the characteristics of the different meeting types, which are ranked in terms of the amount of data gathered from each type.

Scheduled weekly and semi-weekly meetings in the municipalities were held to make sure that all those employed in the municipal refugee service organisations were operating with shared understandings. Often, different units of the refugee services held meetings separately: teachers had one meeting and programme advisors another. In addition to ensuring that everyone was operating in accordance with a shared normative foundation, programme advisor meetings usually included a session where the refugee administration went through a list of participants and their statuses in the introduction programme. This session proved to be the arena in which I was most limited in producing data from what I heard, as the content included personal information protected by law. During these sessions, furthermore, people with the status of good to know but not need to know would leave the room, and thus I found myself lucky to be allowed to stay. While I did not write down specific data from the cases discussed during such meetings, I did write down the ways in which different issues were discussed and suggestions on how to deal with the matter at hand. Other times, meetings within the PSOs would be used to deliver information collected through other meetings to the employees. As I was often allowed to attend these different kinds of meetings, the staff updates provided an arena through which I was

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[10] For an interesting account of the way a writer of reports can facilitate the anticipated outcome of a meeting and thus its report, see (Green, 2003).

able to see how decisions and discussions from one meeting were communicated in a different context. This proved particularly valuable for my understanding of knowledge translation between internal meetings and meetings held in relation to municipal mergers.

Those municipal merger meetings were held between relevant parties from each of the municipalities where I was doing fieldwork: Haugen and Varmdal in one case and Endefjord and Kryssfjord in the other. The meetings differed from the internal meetings in terms of how they were often characterised by a mutual curiosity regarding how the respective services ran their operations, along with ongoing attempts to determine the practices they would transfer when they became a single organisation. The latter point further characterised the meetings as an arena of negotiation, where the different parties emphasised what they believed should be transferred to the merged municipalities. As such, municipal merger meetings would often – for me as an outsider – seem relatively competitive compared to the other types of meetings. The people involved were stakeholders with a direct interest in the meeting outcomes and thus engaged in debate in different ways than they likely would have in an internal meeting.

The third type of meeting was held between the refugee services as a focal organisation and third-party actors and organisations. These differed from the municipal merger meetings in how the attendees usually sought to expand or maintain connections within the service system to the advantage of all relevant parties. For example, meetings held between local representatives from the Red Cross and the refugee services were concerned with the ways in which they could make better use of their respective resources.

Finally, meetings between users and employees in refugee-related services were held to establish and account for mutual expectations. Such meetings are mandated by law and were usually held in association with the refugees' individual plans. These plans were to be updated semi-annually and chart the trajectory of the users' time in the introduction programme. The guidelines set by the individual plans made such meetings rather mechanical, as in my experience the meetings frequently consisted of checking through a series of points to see whether the participants were still content with the plans they had made.

In practical terms, all the meetings provided remarkable insights into the operation of the services and their relations with other actors. The range of topics discussed in a short period gave rise to ideas I discussed with various employees afterwards. To collect meeting data, I brought a notepad and a pen and later transcribed my hardly legible handwriting into legible accounts on my computer.

Documents

The collection of documents for this project was initiated in the preliminary period when I was looking for potential sites to be featured municipalities. The documents were mostly collected from public sector websites. Here, the requirements for transparency in the Norwegian government proved a valuable ally, as most municipalities published summaries of meetings and other documents that were helpful for the selection process and the subsequent period, when documents were collected to triangulate data obtained from empirical observations. While most documents were collected through the public sector websites, I was also given documents outlining specific strategies by people in the different municipalities I followed.

Three types of documents make up the bulk of material collected: (1) service-specific documents from the municipalities, (2) municipal administrative documents, and (3) government documents like white papers and green papers. Service-specific documents include everything from templates for conversations between employees and users to project descriptions written to obtain funding. The documents in this category were written by people employed in the study's focal service organisations. The municipal administrative documents are of two sorts: administrative documents and political decisions. The bureaucratic documents were written by administrative staff in the municipalities and can include everything from municipal budgets to reports from the ongoing municipal mergers. Usually, the documents are of the second sort: political decisions, which are generally in the form of reports from municipal council meetings or working groups consisting of politicians. These documents typically outline the guidelines for future practice in the municipalities; for example, one might lay out the political foundations for a municipal merger process.

Finally, government documents are all documents published by actors and organisations in Norway's national government, including ministries, directorates, and other sub-departments. These documents are of interest as they outline the various governments' positions on a range of topics, as detailed in Chapter 4, where I use them to describe Norway's historico-political response to immigration. Furthermore, policy documents and legislation provide a crucial context through which the decisions made in the central government affect local public service provision.

An unforeseen difficulty in collecting documents came at the start of 2020, when the four municipalities were reduced to two, and the old websites were shut down. As a result, I have not been able to find certain documents I had previously neglected to save.

Analytical Approach and Interpretation of Data

As the ethnographic fieldwork and period of data production ended, I had data from four municipalities. Thus, I was left with a choice of whether to proceed with analysing them comparatively or rather to use data from all four municipalities in support of a broader theoretical contribution. While much of the data from the fieldwork might have served as the foundation for a purely comparative analysis, the processual nature of the data would have made such an approach restraining. 'Process data collected in real organizational contexts', Langley argues, 'have several characteristics that make them difficult to analyse and manipulate' (Langley, 1999, pp. 691-692). The messiness of process data is manifested in how I as a researcher followed events as they unfolded and wrote down those that I could not have predicted. As such, the types of events and processes that happened in one municipality did not necessarily unfold in ways that were comparable with the others. Pursuing a purely comparative analysis would hence have prevented me from following municipality-specific events and processes that occurred in different locations.

The unpredictability of qualitative data in general and the types of process data produced through this project in particular led to an analytical approach that focused on conceptual and empirical contributions. Nonetheless, the inclusion of four municipalities in the research design did offer an opportunity for comparison through a number of intersections in the material produced.

Having made a decision to approach the data produced in the different municipalities as a whole rather than as parts of a comparative analysis has, however, had consequences for how the material has been analysed. Earlier in this chapter, this process was described as abductive as to research design (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 173). An abductive approach is a process in which certain analytical lenses are brought along when venturing into the field that in various ways influence the way in which that field is perceived. Through the fieldwork, I was able to sharpen these analytical lenses by redefining them in ways that resulted in a better fit between their explanatory potential and the things I wanted them to help explain (Wacquant, 2014, p. 123). Because of this refinement, the data were coloured in particular ways that more or less coincided with how I intended to analyse them after the fieldwork ended.

Having outlined a general analytical strategy influenced by the assumption that a modified understanding of the PSL, with all it entails, could help me frame the data, the next decision was to choose a vantage point from which to analyse the data. Ethnographic studies such as this often try to understand what unfolds from the point of view of those involved, once termed as 'the

natives' point of view', which would entail the realisation of the interlocutors' vision of their world (Malinowski, 1922, p. 25). This phenomenological approach (Bernard, 2006, p. 24) in combination with a theoretical understanding of service systems and the value co-creation process included a strategy in which I strove to see in which way study participants perceived the dynamics and influences that affected their everyday lives. Phenomenology as a research strategy further limited the scope of the study through the inherent emphasis on subjective experiences as opposed to a pursuit of quantification that would serve to produce generalisations from the empirical material (Bernard, 2006, p. 25).

Limitations, NVivo, and the Search for Patterns

Qualitative data analysis is invariably connected to qualitative data production; indeed, both frequently occur at the same time (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 195). While the research design, consisting of the preparations made before going to the field sites, was based on the aim of approaching the field in an open manner – as I did not know what I would encounter – the subsequent time spent producing data in the different municipalities led to the discovery of a number of behavioural patterns. Sometimes, these patterns arose due to something that was said, while others appeared as the result of careful participant observation (Emerson et al., 1995, pp. 129-130). While limitations were encountered in the field based on observed emerging patterns that laid the basis for an intermediate analysis, a subsequent period of analysis followed after I had left the field. During this post-fieldwork period, I reread my notes, interviews, and document collections on several occasions to find information that I might have forgotten or had not previously connected. This, then, served as a process of hermeneutic interpretation (Brewer, 2000, p. 33), as different types of information were interpreted in new ways throughout the writing of this thesis.

As the two fieldwork sessions were separated in time, I did not start analysing the data and writing the thesis until the end of the autumn fieldwork. As a substitute for thesis work, however, I did begin preliminary analysis in the form of paper presentations at conferences in August and November 2018, one of which one has since been published (Høibjerg, 2020b). Later, in September 2019, I presented additional papers at conferences (Høibjerg, 2020a) and in November 2019, I explored related or alternative interpretative approaches. Besides the general positive consequences of publishing for academics, intermediate analysis in the form of writing papers allowed me to pursue and explore patterns that emerged during my fieldwork and laid a foundation from which this larger work could be written.

The work of writing the thesis proper started after the second fieldwork session had concluded. As already outlined, the research design for this project followed an abductive approach in which data collection was influenced by both theories and the production of data from a more inductive approach. With the empirical data freshly in mind, the initial work consisted of further exploring and reviewing the relevant literature. The work with the theoretical chapter was prioritised during the early months of writing, as I considered it important scaffolding for the way in which the material would be analysed and presented. Writing the theoretical chapter still required oscillation (through a process of writing and deleting) between theory and the empirical material. Sometimes, the potential suitability of a particular theory would be tested by thinking through its consequences and explanatory capabilities for the empirical data. Other times, a theory or set of theories would help me structure the empirical data in particular ways. This back-and-forth process between theory and data helped sharpen the theoretical framework presented in the previous chapter and served as a way to limit the data included in writing up the thesis.

Following the limitations encountered in first finding certain patterns in the data and then articulating the theoretical framework, I have used the qualitative analytical software NVivo to explore further patterns within the data through the queries function. The software was fed with all the electronic documents from the data collection, including the field journals, interviews, and other documents. The software was primarily used to identify text excerpts based on keyword searches that were relevant to different sections of the empirical descriptions and analysis. NVivo was also used as a tool for focused coding (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 172), through which details regarding specific topics could be explored. Through queries (keyword searches), additional patterns were found as keyword hits from the various documents that were aggregated in a single document, which allowed me to see the available data in new contexts in how sentences from the field journal connected to what was said in the interviews. Keywords related to culture, language, and local communities were used to extract text excerpts that could be used to see what different actors had to say about a particular issue.

NVivo was thus used as a tool to find connections I had not noted in reading through all my material. In general, NVivo was used as an advanced search tool that allowed me to find broad excerpts of text that contained specific words; it has served as a supplementary tool to assist me in obtaining an overview of my empirical data.

Positionality and Reflexivity

> 'Are you a doctor?'
> 'Are you working here?''

'What is an easterner doing here in the west?'
– Questions encountered as a fieldworker.

Categorizations and taxonomies are integral to the human condition, and this was certainly true in the municipalities where I conducted fieldwork. Throughout my stays, I encountered new people on a regular basis, and most of these individuals tried to categorise me, just as I did them. The inclusion of a well-conceived understanding of positionality entered social anthropology with the reflexive turn of the 1980s, (notably through the volume Writing Culture, Clifford & Marcus, 1986). All of a sudden, it was realised that fieldworkers' presence in certain locations and settings might influence the resulting data. Therefore, human researchers could not pretend that their presence was like that of a fly on the wall or white-coated scientists in the laboratory. In the early days of anthropology, scholars like Evans-Pritchard, Radcliffe-Brown, and Malinowski carefully wrote themselves out of their ethnographies in order to produce the most 'scientific' account of what they had observed (Leach, 1989, p. 141). As such, sentences such as 'the X is an isolated tribe' or 'Y does not have contact with neighbouring tribes' were reified in what are now seen as attempts to erase the fact that the researchers themselves had somehow made contact.

To be aware of one's position as a researcher can be a daunting exercise, but certain aspects are readily available for reflection. Will my gender affect my ability to obtain contact with women? Is my lack of religion of any importance in communication with others? Will I be able to understand people from a cultural background vastly different from my own? Although no one showed suspicion about my origin, except my being from eastern Norway in general, the relationships and interactions I experienced during my fieldwork made it clear that my being in the world depended on more people than me.

Another aspect of reflexivity lies in the difficulty of explaining my position and role in the field to the settled refugees, a group of people who had not fully mastered any of the languages I spoke. After a while, I was able to somehow overcome this issue in cooperation with the teachers and employees, but also with certain key persons who had mastered a language we had in common (such as English and Norwegian). Through some of these people, who would become key interlocutors (Bernard, 2006, p. 196), I was able to communicate what I was doing. In one municipality, some of those I came to know had gone to university and knew what it meant to do both fieldwork and study humans and their interaction. Through these individuals, I was better able to communicate my role in the municipality.

Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations and challenges of this study can be separated into two parts. First, there was a formal component that included reporting the project to a privacy ombudsman: the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (project number #58655). The research data application included a brief description of my intended subject matter, along with the methods for data production and data handling. An additional formal component was encountered in the municipalities where I was required to sign a confidentiality agreement in accordance with a variety of laws. In particular, confidentiality in the public sector is regulated through article 13 of the *Public Administration Act* on the duty to secrecy. While signing a confidentiality agreement regulated by law might at first seem to be a hindrance to collecting, analysing, and distributing the data obtained, this obstacle is overcome through the paragraph's lettered *d* and *e* on use of the data for research purposes. In addition to signing the agreement, I entered into an agreement with the municipalities that I would not focus on individual cases discussed in meetings nor write down any names discussed by third parties. Rather, my focus during the data collection period was on the ways in which different cases were handled by the employees. This ethical decision was primarily pragmatic, as I would not have been able to do my research if I had not signed the agreements. By following the ways in which cases were handled, I was able to create an impression of how the structures around the users of the services were constructed, maintained, and performed.

The other side of the ethical considerations of this study lies in the sphere of morality and the researcher's obligation towards his or her interlocutors. First, this includes the principle of 'do no harm': none of those who chose to partake in the study should have their life altered in any negative way because of meeting me. This consideration was of particular importance through my contact with the user side of this study – the refugees – who were arguably already in a precarious position. In an environment where both foreign and domestic actors have been found to spy on refugees who attempt to create a new life in Norway[11], protecting their safety and well-being were clearly of the utmost importance.

As part of my effort to protect my interlocutors – including the employees, settled refugees, and others – I have replaced all names with pseudonyms. This included changing the names of municipalities and towns, all of which veil the origins from which the empirical data presented in

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[11] The previous Norwegian Minister of Immigration and Integration once encouraged citizens to identify refugees who returned to their country of origin: https://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/i/wqB8d/listhaug-oppfordrer-til-aa-angi-flyktninger-som-drar-til-hjemlandet.

this study are derived. Replacing real names with pseudonyms, however, serves an additional purpose, as it takes attention away from the particularities of Small Municipality X and allows the reader to focus on the subject discussed. As an additional measure, I have hidden the identities of those featured in this study by categorising them by age groups rather than by specific age, so that Informant X is in his twenties, rather than 23 years old and from Little Town in, for example, Syria.

While I have chosen to use pseudonyms for the people featured in this study, I am aware that certain characteristics of the places I have described serve to reveal where I have been. Moreover, being on fieldwork for seven months did not mean that I could get entirely off the grid, and consequently, a range of people close to me are aware of the places I have been. Nonetheless, I believe the measures taken should be sufficient to protect the privacy of those who agreed to be part of this study. The interlocutors who agreed to participate were informed about the project and that they could withdraw their consent at any time. During the interviews, I also informed my interlocutors that the data would be anonymised. Data from the interviews with settled refugees presented in Chapter 5 have been further anonymised by not connecting them directly to one of the four featured municipalities. The interlocutors gave their oral consent as described in the form approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (project number #58655).

Chapter 4: Research Context

History shows that the number of refugees and the composition changes rapidly in accordance with national policy and international events such as catastrophes and conflict. It is therefore difficult to say anything certain regarding the future organisation of the [refugee] services. The service thus has to be able to adapt to different situations that might occur in the future. The [refugee] service should be robust and stable. (Note regarding organisation of refugee services following the merger of Varmdal and Haugen)

Introduction

During the period in which thesis was written, Norway had experienced a decrease in refugee arrivals due to policies within and beyond the country's borders. While some 15,291 people were settled with the refugee status in 2016, only 4,903 were settled in municipalities in 2018, the year during which I conducted fieldwork. In 2019, 4,822 people were settled as refugees in Norwegian municipalities, while a record low 1,141 had been settled as of October 2020.[12] The rapid decline in arrivals has forced the municipalities that scaled up their services in 2015–2016 to scale them back down. While the declining number of refugee arrivals to Norway has been influenced by events outside the country, Norway has also shifted its policy to a stricter view of immigration (Brekke & Staver, 2018). Much of this has been influenced by the current government, in which a previous ruling party – the Progress Party – is on the vanguard of advocating for stricter immigration policies. The toughened line on immigration policies has, however, not only been fronted by traditional right-wing parties, as the Norwegian Labour Party and other parties have recently taken a similar line tending to stricter immigration.

This chapter provides a research context for understanding the subject matter, which in this case means the places in which the research was conducted, the legal and social conditions that framed the study, and the historical and political context in which it was conducted. Migration and immigrant integration remain controversial topics in public debates, and through this chapter, I situate the study within this wider context. This is important not only as a way to avoid depoliticising the context in which public services are offered to refugees, but also because the wider context in which the public services are provided influences the refugees' experiences as service recipients.

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[12] The low number of people settled in 2020 was influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The description of the research context in this chapter outlines a number of internal and external factors that influenced the study in different ways. Besides descriptions of the field sites, I show how the history of immigration to Norway has constituted a challenging field for policymakers and local service providers. The history and development of immigration to and services for immigrants in Norway connects to the main research question by revealing how the issue has been continually redefined over the past 50 years. The unruliness and wicked problem context of immigration and integration are reflected through both the history of the development of services provided to refugees since the 1970s and through a general description of the history of immigration to Norway in that same period. A general tendency over the last 50 years appears in how various types of immigration (e.g. labour migrants or refugees) have led to new service solutions, problem statements, and constellations of actors involved in immigrant and refugee integration efforts. The general tendency has been marked by a shift in which a larger number of public services and related partners have become involved in the work of refugee integration.

Historical descriptions have been included to show the developments of the field and the way in which the current services offered to immigrants and refugees settled in Norwegian municipalities have evolved over the last 50 years. Through the historical and political review, a sense of continuity and disruption can be traced. Moreover, this review underlines the inherent wickedness of immigrant integration as the responsibility of public services. Despite having been dealt with politically over the course decades, continual reforms and adaptations reveal that policymakers are still looking for a solution to a problem that remains insufficiently articulated. People who live in Norway are expected get a job and contribute as taxpayers, but no one is quite sure how to achieve that goal.

I begin by introducing the field sites and my impressions of them in an effort to bring these sites to life and lay the foundation that is later used to describe both the organisation of the public services and the settled refugees' experiences in these communities. Next, I present the Introduction Programme for Newly Arrived Immigrants, which is a core component that has been studied through the fieldwork sessions. The introduction programme outlines the rights and obligations of people who obtain protection in Norway and serves as the government's primary tool for refugee integration. After a short presentation of the development of and political discourse regarding the programme, I present its aims and components. I then describe the Norwegian service system for refugee integration, following the trajectory of settlement and integration efforts from the arrival of the refugees until their settlement in a municipality, which provides a broader understanding of the public refugee service system as an integrated web of

actors that cooperate to provide service to refugees. This section of the chapter concludes with a short description of the responsibilities of the two core organisations related to refugee integration in the featured municipalities: the refugee administration and the adult education centres.

The second half of the chapter contains a presentation of the policy context in which this thesis was written. This is part of the wider research context, and the description starts with a short history of immigration to Norway along with an account of the development of the public services provided to refugees. In this section, I rely on a collection of government documents (such as white papers and government reports) dating to the late 1960s and a number of articles, books, and reports by scholars. The history of immigration further frames the issue as a wicked problem and shows how the responses to immigration have changed over the 50-year period during which it has been a political issue. Finally, I describe the country's recent history of immigration and highlight the refugee influx of 2015–2016 as a turning point. That event, I argue, represents a change in public attitude towards immigrants – and refugees in particular – in Norway, as a record number of municipalities chose to settle refugees at this time.

The chapter addresses concepts from the theoretical framework by empirically connecting the theory of wicked problems with actual changes in the problem-solution complex regarding immigrants and refugee integration. It also discusses the ways in which uncontrollable externalities, captured by the extended service environment concept, have altered the service systems and service offerings provided to refugees over the past 50 years. The emphasis is on structural rather than individual and subjective experiences, which are the primary focus in the empirical chapters. As such, the chapter is intended to complement the accounts of the micro-level interactions produced through the ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with a description of the structural circumstances that have led to the current organisation of refuge integration services in Norway. The chapter also serves to provide a foundation upon which the wickedness and problem-solution complexes of immigrant and refugee integration can be situated in their historical context.

The Field: Locations and Impressions

Spring Fieldwork: Haugen and Varmdal

A central argument for moving to the place where one is to conduct fieldwork is immersion (Whyte, 1981). For the spring fieldwork in Haugen and Varmdal, I was able to rent an apartment in a student housing complex near the centre of Haugen that was close to the building that

housed the local refugee administration office. Fieldwork, as I had previously experienced, can be hard work not only due to the difficulty of finding informants – a process I had at this point been able to bypass by contacting the municipalities in advance – but because it often entails long periods of being alone. While the idea of living in a student housing complex initially may have seemed clever, it soon turned out that students do not like to speak to other people, and I was only able to become acquainted with one of the six people with whom I shared a kitchen.

Varmdal and Haugen were chosen partly because of their long history of engaging in refugee settlement and partly because they were undergoing a process of municipal merger during my fieldwork. Both municipalities had a long history of refugee settlements that extends from, according to the available statistics, the late 1990s. The merger, I furthermore believed, would serve as a process that would make the municipalities re-think the ways they organised their services. The timing of my project came during the part of the process when the refugee-related services of the two municipalities were to come to an agreement on how they would organise their services as of January 1, 2020. According to the service systems understanding outlined in Chapter 2, a municipal merger represents a process through which previous service systems are likely to be challenged and new constellations created. As such, the merger offered me a chance to study how new service systems could be formed from two pre-existing service systems and the process through which they occurred. The first fieldwork session started in late February on a particularly cold and snowy winter morning. Through the pages below, I offer a brief introduction of the locations to provide context to the data obtained them.

Haugen

Haugen is located in inland south-eastern Norway and has a population of approximately 6,000. The main town of Haugen, Toppen, can be characterised as a 'rural centre'[13] and caters to the commercial needs of the neighbouring municipalities through a range of shops that offer everything from tractors and animal fodder to clothes, shoes, and alcohol through the state spirits monopoly store (*Vinmonopolet*). Moreover, Haugen is a cultural centre of the region, hosting a number of festivals, a cinema, concerts, and other cultural events. It is also home to the campus of a regional university. Education, health care, and social services employ the largest group of people, amounting to almost 40% of the total labour force.

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[13] This determination is based on the NIBR classifications that have been used to categorise the municipalities featured in this study (Gundersen & Juvkam, 2013).

The village is located next to a mountain area that invites outdoor activities, and a large park in the village centre is frequently used by locals who go for walks either with their baby strollers or to meet friends. As a public health measure, a path has been created along a river that runs through the municipality that is home to a number of trout. During the school year, the town is energised by an influx of students who arrive to study at the university. In a recent attempt to encourage more students to report moving to Haugen in the government census, the municipality launched a stimulus incentive that would help it receive more basic support per citizen from the national government. The issue of students living in a municipality without reporting that they had moved there has been tackled in various ways in several Norwegian municipalities with university campuses.

Predictions made by Statistics Norway suggest that Haugen will have nearly 20% positive population growth in the coming 10 years. This makes it exceptional among the municipalities featured, as the others have either small positive population growth predictions or negative expected growth. Today, more than 10% of Haugen's 6,000 residents have an immigrant background.[14] Refugees and people who have arrived through family reunification makes up most of Haugen's immigrant population, but there are also a considerable number of labour migrants.

Varmdal

Varmdal is home to some 4,500 residents and is expected to see a population decrease over the next 20 years. The municipality has a decentralised village structure that differentiates it from Haugen, which has largely developed around Toppen as the main village. The largest of the five villages in Varmdal, Elvesrud, is located closest to Haugen. Even though Elvesrud has a train station, no train has stopped there for a number of years. Most of the refugees settled in Varmdal are located in or around Elvesrud, as it has the most available services, including a gas station, two grocery stores, a café that seemed to be open at irregular hours, and a pizza parlour. Most people work in services and the secondary sector. More than 20% of those employed work in health and social services, which is the largest sector in the municipality. In addition, a relatively high percentage of people are employed in construction, industries, and private services.

During one of my first weeks of fieldwork, I was captured by the way some people let their cars run while going into grocery stores for some quick shopping. Having lived in larger urbanised areas for 10 years, I regarded the notion of leaving the car running while walking away as a poor

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[14] Numbers and population estimations have been approximated in order to conceal the identity of the municipality.

choice – beyond its impact on the environment. However, this observation – which was repeated on several occasions – can be interpreted as saying something about the sense of security and trust felt among municipal residents. Varmdal has a comparable proportion of immigrants to Haugen (approx. 10%). Refugees and people who have arrived through family reunification with those already settled as refugees make up the largest group of those with an immigrant background.

Autumn Fieldwork: Endefjord and Kryssfjord

In early September 2018, I drove across the mountains that bisect Norway on my way to my second fieldwork session. My search for accommodation had begun before summer vacation but was prolonged due to a slow response from the rental company. Once I arrived at my home in Endefjord for the next three and a half months, I found that my 'fully furnished' apartment did not have a full stove or refrigerator and, after cleaning out the 50 dead flies in the apartment, I started to wonder how things were going to pan out.

The two municipalities that accepted my request to follow them during the autumn fieldwork were located around one of the many fjords that penetrate the interior of western Norway. With picturesque mountains that stretch upwards to a thousand metres above sea level on each side, the fjord creates a wind tunnel that intensifies the gusts that blow through. On more than one occasion, I was afraid that the fragile and semi-broken windows of my temporary 'home' would shatter. The beautiful scenery of the valleys that encompass the fjord comes at a price, and spending the autumn months in Endefjord and Kryssfjord resulted in a temporary feeling of existential anxiety. One morning after a particularly rainy night, I postponed my 50-minute drive from Endefjord to Kryssfjord due to rumours I had heard regarding frequent rockslides across the road. At 9:30, the local newspaper reported that there had indeed been a rockslide that – in my mind – could at worst have brought me and the old car I was borrowing into the fjord or at best made my journey back to Endefjord significantly more troublesome, as I would have had to take a ferry. Another time, the harsh weather forced me to decide whether I should drive through a fifteen-minute stretch of flooded roads or take a three-hour detour to get back after visiting a friend elsewhere along Norway's western coast.

Generally, the autumn fieldwork followed the same strategy as the first session, where I alternated between the refugee-related service organisations in the two municipalities. Even though I first intended to switch between the two on a weekly basis, rockslides, floods, and the

existential anxiety noted above frequently got in the way and resulted in my following the employees and daily operations in Endefjord more than those in Kryssfjord.

Part of my justification for following two neighbouring municipalities was that it would give me both a broader understanding of local refugee service provision and allow me to observe any collaborations between organisations that offered the same services. Moreover, as was the case for Varmdal and Haugen, Endefjord and Kryssfjord were undergoing a process of figuring out their common organisation of services after the two municipalities were to merge in January 2020.

Endefjord

Endefjord is located at the end of Sjøfjorden[15] and has a population of about 7,000. The municipality experienced a slow decline after its main factory and employer was shut down some years ago. The municipality now houses about 70% of its peak population. In 2017, Endefjord experienced negative net domestic migration, and the population projections estimate a declining number of residents in the municipality over the next 30 years.

During the 1900s, Endefjord experienced its golden era, at least economically, with a large factory serving as the cornerstone of the community. Today, that factory stands as a silent reminder of a bygone era. Nevertheless, there are still industrial activities in the municipality that have attracted a number of labour migrants from Eastern Europe. The largest town in Endefjord – Havna – is situated at the end of Sjøfjorden, where a number of small shops can be found along a short pedestrian street. Business has improved over the last few years as an increasing number of foreign tourists have found Norway an appealing destination. During the autumn months I spent in Endefjord, however, the number of tourists declined with the temperature, thus transforming the city centre from its high-season hustle and bustle into the serenity generally offered by small towns. Like many other small Norwegian towns, Havna has a variety of services that range from a cinema and library to clothing stores and an outlet of the government's wine monopoly. As is also the case with many such places, the availability of services is restricted by their opening hours and, with the exception of a few pubs and restaurants, there was not an abundance of places to meet. For me, a human being in addition to a researcher with a job to do, finding places where people met in the afternoons soon proved difficult. With the exception of the sauna of the local swimming pool, where local men in at least their fifties met to discuss various issues in an

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[15] Sjøfjorden and other geographic names are pseudonyms.

extremely relaxed (or perhaps rather spartan) atmosphere, local hangouts were largely absent. As an employee in one of the municipalities in my spring fieldwork had noted, however, this might have been connected with the fact that informal networks in Norway – perhaps especially those in rural municipalities – are centred on voluntarism.

A bit more than 10% of Endefjord's population of almost 7,000 are registered with an immigrant background, of which labour migrants and family reunifications (excluding refugee family reunifications) make up the majority. The secondary sector is the largest employer in Endefjord, largely due to the prevailing industrial presence in the municipality. In addition to two large factories, a range of subsidiary businesses that support them operate in the municipality. This served as an important element of my decision to include the municipality in this project, as I assumed the factories could serve as an important potential employer and thus make this municipality stand out from those in the spring fieldwork, where the secondary sector is influenced by seasonal agriculture. More than 20% of those living in Endefjord work in factories, which employ the second largest number of people after health and social services.

Kryssfjord

Kryssfjord is located along two sides of Sjøfjorden, has a population of roughly 3,000 residents, and is expected to experience a decline over the next 10 to 20 years, according to Statistics Norway estimates. The village in which the refugee services office is located – Harrtun – houses some small stores and is largely untouched by the sun during several months in the winter. The municipality has a scattered settlement alongside the fjord and is surrounded by high mountains on each side. Besides the municipal centre of Harrtun, small villages are located along both sides of Sjøfjorden, and many settled refugees who attended the refugee centre took the bus daily between their homes and the adult education centre.

The steep mountains frame the municipality and offer a remarkable impression when entering from the north. The refugee centre in Kryssfjord may have one of Norway's nicest parking lots, with its view of the fjords surrounded by steep mountains. Harrtun is home to a camping site and a small amusement park and has recently had an increasing number of tourists in the summer months. The road that connects the municipality with Endefjord has been acclaimed as both beautiful and dangerous, as it curves along the mountainside and the fjords. The road is, as noted above, susceptible to rockslides and was closed on several occasions during my fieldwork. Fruit farming makes up an important source of income for many in the municipality, and many farms

are visible on both sides of Sjøfjorden. The fjord, moreover, splits the municipality into two parts that are connected by a ferry that runs several times a day.

Around 10% of Kryssfjord's population are registered as immigrants, of which refugees and people who have arrived through family reunification make up the largest group. Most people in Kryssfjord work in either services or the secondary sector. Health and social services employ the highest number of people, as is true of all four municipalities. The second largest sector in Kryssfjord is construction, followed by some 10% of the population that works in industry.

Development of Refugee Services in Norway

> The committee believes that the natural starting point primarily is to consider newly arrived immigrants as those responsible for adjusting or becoming integrated in Norway. Society, on the one hand, must ensure the appropriate conditions to make sure participation in society is actually possible. The municipalities' primary responsibility for the introduction of newly arrived immigrants should be supported by arrangements that provides the appropriate tools to ensure motivation and active participation in the transition towards a normal working existence. (Preparatory report prior to the implementation of the introduction programme, NOU 2001: 20, 2001, p. 48, my translation)

Refugee Services Before 2003: Policy Developments

Prior to the implementation of the introduction programme in 2003–2004, a number of services had been offered to immigrants. In 1970, the Norwegian government decided to cover the fee for a 150-hour Norwegian language course through the social security budget (St. Meld. Nr. 39, 1973-1974, pp. 39-40). At the time, the courses were either organised through *Folkeuniversitetet* – a Norwegian organisation that provides decentralised education for adults – or by a workers' association. In a hearing response to the 1973–1974 white paper, the workers' association argued that a shift in education towards supporting immigrants ought to be implemented through a scheme that included 240 hours of language training and 40 hours of civics training.

In 1975, the reimbursement scheme to cover the Norwegian language classes for adult immigrants was increased to 240 hours and now covered all immigrants rather than only labour migrants, as had been previously been the case (St. Meld. Nr. 107, 1975-1976, p. 53). The option to attend such classes was limited to a two-year period, and classes were to follow a course plan that had been decided by the Ministry of Church and Education.

By the end of the 1970s, the composition of immigrants in Norway had changed due to an increasing number of refugees. In a 1978–1979 white paper, it was maintained that the Norwegian government still followed a policy of integration in the country whereby mutual adjustments would have to be made by both the minority and majority population (St. Meld. Nr. 84, 1978-1979, p. 45). The increased number of refugees as an immigrant group, however, led to an emphasis on the fact that many of those who arrived might have 'psychological, physical and social handicaps' (St. Meld. Nr. 84, 1978-1979, p. 45). This, it was further argued, meant that refugees were in need of social work which, like all social work, was the responsibility of public authorities (St. Meld. Nr. 84, 1978-1979, p. 45). From 1976, the Ministry of Social Affairs (*Sosialdepartementet*) set aside a sum of money for housing from the annual national budget. The arrival of refugees rather than labour migrants had thus resulted in a shift in the government's responsibility towards that group of immigrants. As a reflection of the increasing number of refugee arrivals to Norway and the increasing responsibility of the state to support their integration, an appendix to the 1978–1979 white paper shows that the government provided funds for 'refugee purposes' that had increased from 7,405,286 NOK in 1970 to 137,233,971 NOK in 1978, a 1,853% increase (St. Meld. Nr. 84, 1978-1979, p. 82).

In 1987–1988, the first white paper on immigration in a decade was published. An important change in this white paper was the establishment of a specialised government agency, the Directorate for Immigration (UDI), that would handle issues related to immigration beginning on January 1, 1988 (St. Meld. Nr. 39, 1987-1988, p. 6). The establishment of the UDI would was intended to better coordinate the government's work on integration and make better use of the available resources. From the outset, the UDI was to have the responsibility of helping the police with permits, planning and implementing the government's asylum reception apparatus, and conducting work related to integration and information dissemination for refugees in Norwegian society. Besides the establishment of the UDI, the white paper maintained the importance of integration as the country's policy towards immigrants and contained the following declaration:

> It is aligned with the ideal of the solidary welfare community, based on principles of equality and equal worth between the members of society, and affects by just distribution of rights and duties with the aim of maximal welfare for all (St. Meld. Nr. 39, 1987-1988, p. 47)

On a more practical note, it was also reported that the hours of education provided to refugees had increased from 240 in the late 1970s to 500 hours in 1987 (St. Meld. Nr. 39, 1987-1988, pp. 52-53). From 1988, it was further noted that the responsibility for educating immigrants was to

be transferred to the school administrations of the municipalities where the refugees lived. This shift represented an early move towards increased municipal responsibility in Norway's refugee integration work.

In 1994–1995, another white paper was published that suggested a new political line in immigration, with the main task of preventing people from fleeing in the first place; this is discussed in greater detail below. The white paper further elaborated on the settlement of refugees as a cooperative effort between the central government and individual municipalities by which the practical responsibility of the refugees would be transferred to the municipalities upon settlement (St. Meld. Nr. 17, 1994-1995, pp. 102-103). The guidelines provided to the municipalities stated that it would be beneficial to settle groups with similar origins in proximity to one another and that the municipalities should – to the greatest extent possible – assist those settled with housing, work, or educational opportunities. According to the white paper, 'it is assumed that the municipalities through determined and active effort will contribute to make sure that the individual [refugee] can become self-sufficient as fast as possible following their settling' (St. Meld. Nr. 17, 1994-1995, p. 103).

Continuity from the previous white paper appears in how the number of hours of Norwegian instruction (which should include topics related to civics and Norwegian society) remained at 500 hours (St. Meld. Nr. 17, 1994-1995, p. 106). If deemed appropriate, however, this could be increased by an additional 250 hours.

Two years later, an underlying shift could be seen in the white paper *About Immigration and the Multicultural Norway* (St. Meld. Nr. 17, 1996-1997). Through this publication, the government addressed how municipalities that settled refugees did not have the duty to provide them with Norwegian and civics education (St. Meld. Nr. 17, 1996-1997, p. 55). An idea was therefore put forth to explore which criteria could be established in future legislation that would make such education mandatory for the municipalities to offer, and that the municipalities in turn would be encouraged to actively include settled immigrants who did not enrol on their own. What is apparent in the white paper is an increased attention to municipal responsibilities in service provision to immigrants, particularly refugees. As such, the problem-solution complex is articulated in new ways, whereby the municipality becomes the unit responsible for coming up with and implementing service offerings established to benefit refugees living inside their boundaries.

In 2001, an Official Norwegian Report (ONR) was published that outlined the foundation of the Introduction Act (NOU 2001: 20). The committee in charge of the report had been given the mandate of preparing for a new act on financial support for newly arrived immigrants with the need for basic qualification (NOU 2001: 20, p. 9). A main driver behind the mandate was the fact that many people who had arrived as refugees were living on social assistance during their first years in Norway (NOU 2001: 20, p. 30). In a reading of this green paper, Anne Britt Djuve (2011) has noted that the concept of rights and obligations is featured 34 times, thus offering an indication of what was to come.

The developments in public services from the 1970s until the early 2000s appear to have been influenced by both the changing composition of the immigrant population, marked by an increase in refugee arrivals, and an increasing responsibility taken by the state and municipalities to ease their integration. This latter development is especially salient in the changes in the number of hours of Norwegian and civics education covered by the state. The service offering development described in this section shows how the configuration of the resources included has changed over the past 50 years. Although the number of hours provided for Norwegian education has remained relatively stable at 500 hours for the last three decades, there have been significant changes in the rights and obligation to attend such classes, along with the allocation of responsibility for those in charge of providing them. Furthermore, service development from the 1970s to 2000 displays a shift in the problem-solution complex, as the early years were characterised by the aim of assisting labour migrants to adjust to the country, while an increasing emphasis on services for refugees has been implemented since the 1980s.

Below, I describe the introduction programme and its development in the early 2000s. The programme represents the single most comprehensive policy development in refugee integration in Norway over the past 50 years, and its implementation has been at the centre of this study.

Preparation and Development of the Introduction Programme

Since its implementation in 2003, the Introduction Programme of Newly Arrived Refugees has been the most important policy development for the integration of immigrants in Norway. The programme was implemented as an attempt to hinder passivity among newly arrived refugees and has therefore been called a 'classic example of activation policy' (Djuve & Kavli, 2018, p. 27). In the years following its implementation in 2003, the programme has undergone several readjustments in accordance with the direction the ruling government has chosen. The introduction programme has been made a popular object of political scrutiny, as the perceived

large-scale failures of immigrant integration – seen from the perspective of several political parties – have been attributed to the programme's inefficacy (Ibrahim, 2018; Konstad & Befring, 2017; NTB, 2018). The perceived failure of the programme surfaced in a 2018 survey that reported that 48% of the population thought the integration of immigrants in Norway was going either rather or very poorly (Brekke & Mohn, 2018, p. 49). If one includes those who thought the integration of immigrants was going neither poorly nor well, 82% of those asked did not perceive the integration of immigrants as a success (i.e. rather or very good).[16] Although the survey and statements by some politicians paint a grim picture of the status of immigrant integration in Norway, they do not necessarily reflect the local efforts being made in Norwegian municipalities or the complete network of connections embedded in the process of immigrant integration.

Since its implementation in 2003, the Introduction Act has served as the government's primary tool for integrating newly arrived immigrants in accordance with the indicators for integration it articulates. These include whether a degree of economic and social self-sufficiency is reached following the completion of the programme. The power of the act has been strengthened through a resettlement scheme (*bosettingsordningen*) in which the government has followed a policy of dispersed settlement throughout the country (NOU 2017: 2, 2017, p. 129). In short, the combination of the two policies has led to an effectively mandatory period of immobility for those subject to the programmes, as settled refugees are obliged to participate in a two-year introduction programme in the municipality to which they are assigned.

The Introduction Programme

The purpose of the Introduction Act is articulated in its first paragraph:

> The aim of this act is to strengthen newly arrived immigrants' possibilities to participate in labour and civil life, as well as their economic independence. The act will also facilitate asylum seekers' knowledge of Norwegian language, culture and society at large. (Introduksjonsloven, LOV-2003-07-04-80)

The Introduction Act and the programme it mandates are aimed at people who have recently arrived as immigrants and their reunited family members (Introduksjonsloven, LOV-2003-07-04-80). The act differentiates between those who have a right *and* duty to participate and those who only have a duty, as paragraph 17 states:

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[16] Only 1% of those asked responded that they thought integration was working very well (Brekke & Mohn, 2018, p. 49).

> The right and duty to participate in free training in Norwegian and civic studies for a total of 600 hours applies to foreigners aged 16–67 who have received a) a residence permit pursuant to the Immigration Act that forms the basis for a permanent residence permit, b) collective protection in mass flight situations pursuant to section 34 of the Immigration Act, c) a limited residence permit as a member of a family of child with a pending documented identity status according to the Immigration Act section 38, paragraph 5, letter a or b, or d) a limited residence permit as a single minor with a pending documented identity status pursuant to the Immigration Act, section 38, paragraph 5, letter a or b. (Introduksjonsloven, LOV-2003-07-04-80)

In ordinary language, the Introduction Act offers a programme for people whose identity and need for protection have been established and who have settled in a municipality according to the settlement programme. Once people's refugee status has been acknowledged and their identity clarified – a process handled by the UDI[17] – they are given an offer to settle in a municipality somewhere in Norway. As the offer to settle is connected with the possibility of becoming enrolled in an introduction programme and receiving the 'introduction salary', the offer is for all practical purposes one that cannot be refused. The resettlement process is organised through a voluntary partnership between the individual municipality and the central government and administered by the IMDi. Municipalities that accept settling refugees are obliged to offer those settled a personalised introduction programme that lasts two to three years. Once a person is settled and enrolled in an introduction programme, he or she receives a fixed monthly salary that is subject to economic sanctions calculated by hourly absences.

The programme must be organised as a full-time and full-year service for the settled refugees and aims to provide people with the needs for basic qualification. As such, it should provide its participants with (a) basic skills in Norwegian, (b) basic insight into Norwegian society, and (c) preparation for participation in the work market (§4). The articulated aims are in effect the intended value outcome of the introduction programme; namely, how the government expects individual service recipients to benefit from it. These provisions are facilitated through the programme's three pillars:

1. At least 550 hours of Norwegian language education
2. A 50-hour civics course in a language the participant understands
3. Work- or education-specific measures (such as work or language practice)

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[17] The English translation of UDI might be a testament to the fact that the direct translation of *Utlendingsdirektoratet*, the Directorate of Foreigners, is more than a little anachronistic.

The three pillars constitute the minimum of services to be provided to settled refugees, and municipalities may choose to provide an additional 2,400 hours of language training if that is considered necessary. One survey found that 97% of the responding municipalities provided additional language training beyond the 550 hours of education required by the programme (Djuve, Kavli, Sterri, & Bråten, 2017, p. 124).

While work practice is an integral part of the programme as one of its pillars, the degree to which different municipalities offer such practice varies. The purpose of work practice is to prepare participants to be employees in Norway, but the measure is not quantified in terms of hours in the same way as Norwegian language and civics education. Providing participants with the opportunity to attend work practice has been reported to largely rely on good relations between the PSOs implementing the introduction programme and local businesses (Djuve et al., 2017, p. 77). To establish such relations, the municipal refugee services must watch out for opportunities in their regions to find businesses that have needs that match the skills and language levels of programme participants (p. 77). Municipal service systems working with refugee integration should therefore be aware of the opportunities that exist in their extended service environment.

A frequently reported challenge related to work practice as part of the introduction programme has been that participants are placed in positions where they have not been able to further practice Norwegian and otherwise become familiar with Norwegian work life (Lillevik & Tyldum, 2018, p. 78). This sometimes results from the type of positions that are obtained, and it has been reported that participants have been placed in positions that by default did not include much communication, such as cleaning or other menial and often solitary tasks.

The Organisation of Refugee Services in Norway

The organisation of refugee-related services in Norway is based on voluntary cooperation between the state and municipalities. The services can best be explained with a description of the process through which people arrive in Norway as refugees. People who are granted protection in Norway arrive in one of two ways: they either make their way to the country on their own and deliver an application for *asylum*, or they arrive as *resettlement refugees* organised through the UNHCR. Figure 6, from the IMDi's 2018 *Annual Report*, illustrates the two paths.
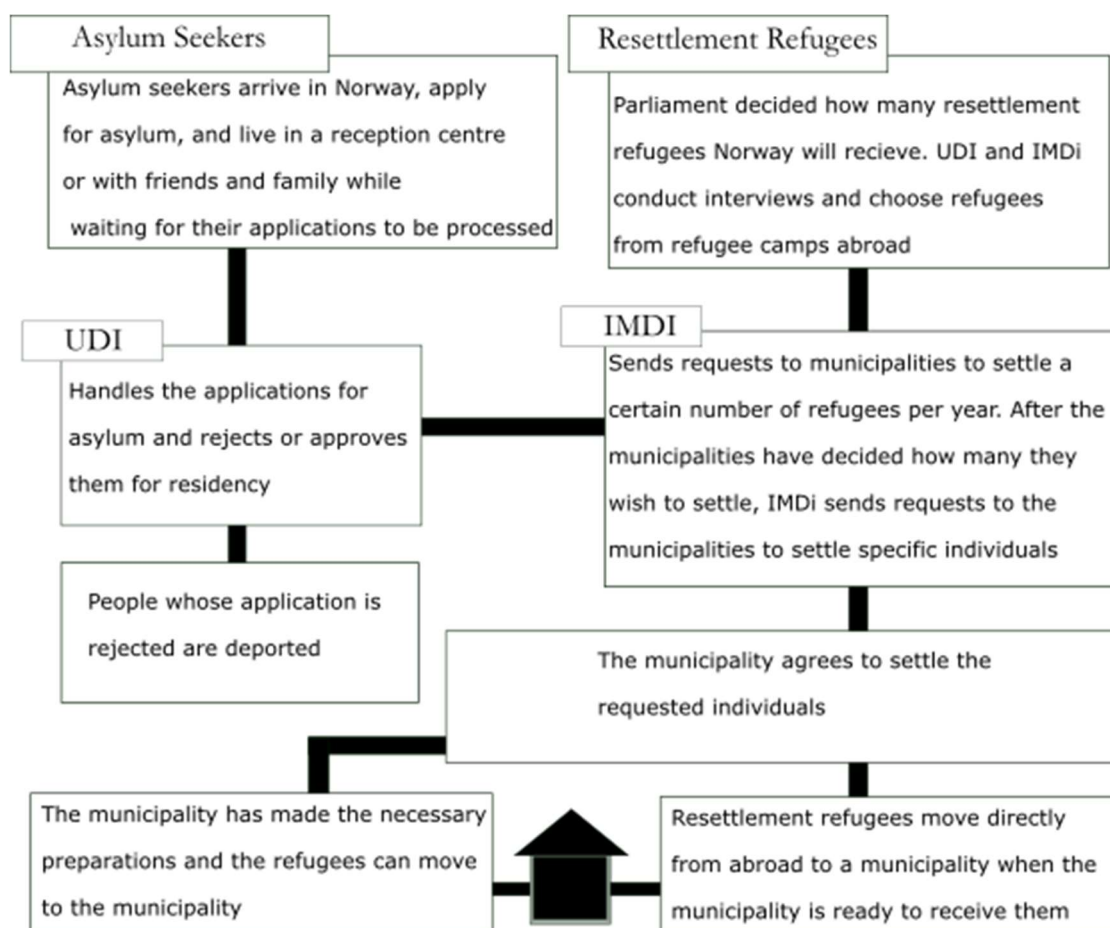
Figure 6: The process of refugee settlement; adapted from (IMDi, 2019, p. 23).

The number of resettlement refugees that arrive in Norway annually is decided by parliament. In 2018, when the fieldwork for this thesis was conducted, the number was set at 2,120 people.[18] Resettlement refugees differ from asylum seekers not only through how they arrive but also because their numbers can be accurately estimated. This has led to one report arguing that the admission of a larger number of resettlement refugees could help with future planning for public sector organisations on various scales (Søholt, Nygaard, Støa, & Hauge, 2018). As noted in the report, however, this remains a political rather than a practical question. People who have been chosen for resettlement from refugee camps abroad are interviewed by representatives from the Norwegian government prior to being flown to Norway. If chosen, many of the prospective resettlement refugees receive a cultural orientation course provided by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) under contract with IMDi (IMDi, 2019, p. 33). The course, which is aimed at adults, covers the settlement process, climate, housing, the introduction programme, and other topics that those to be resettled can expect to encounter in Norway. The

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[18]Regjeringen (2018), *Økning i antall overføringsflyktninger* [Increase in number of resettlement refugees). https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/okning-i-antall-overforingsflyktninger/id2614245/.

aim of the course is to cover customs and habits 'so that potential misunderstandings when meeting the Norwegian culture might be reduced, as well as to provide a basic understanding of Norwegian values, norms and rules' (IMDi, 2019). The course aims to introduce resettlement refugees to the social practices, norms, and laws that make up Norwegian society, and it was praised by several settled refugees interviewed for this project.

After refugees have been scheduled for resettlement in Norway, IMDi contacts the municipalities that have agreed to settle migrants during that year and asks if they can accommodate a specific family or person. Here, the person or family to be settled is described generically, such as a family of five with children aged two, five, and eleven. Any potential health issues are also described. Based on the information received, the municipalities – represented by the unit in charge of the introduction programme, be it NAV or the refugee administration – decide whether they are able to receive the individual(s) in question. The total number of refugees to be settled in a given year is decided politically, while the PSOs decide whether to settle specific people or families. Following a positive decision to settle someone, the responsible unit makes the necessary arrangements for housing, prepares the adult education centres for new students, contacts local primary schools[19] to tell them that new pupils are arriving, and performs other necessary tasks.

A date of arrival is set; when the resettlement refugees arrive at the nearest airport, they are greeted by representatives from the Norwegian Peoples' Aid at the gate, who guide them through the airport and lead them outside, where they make contact with representatives from their future home municipality. At this point, the process described in the prelude of this thesis begins, and the resettlement refugees are driven to their new homes.

Asylum seekers are people who arrive in Norway on their own and apply for asylum. Compared with resettlement refugees, the number of asylum seekers that arrive each year is unpredictable and influenced by state affairs far beyond Norway's borders. Whereas resettlement refugees have their cases processed while they are in a third country, asylum seekers stay in Norway while their applications are handled. Most commonly, a person who holds temporary asylum seeker status will stay in an asylum centre that meets their basic needs. Alternatively, people may opt to spend the waiting period with friends, family, or other acquaintances. The process of applying for asylum can be considerably more time consuming for the person seeking protection and may lead to an entirely different process from what resettlement refugees experience. Arriving on their own can make the task of confirming their identities and stories difficult for the UDI. Moreover,

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[19] In this thesis, primary school correlates to *Grunnskole* in the Norwegian education system and includes grades 1–10.

the time required to handle the applications is based on the UDI's capacity relative to the number of people who arrived during the same period.

After settlement, the Introduction Act mandates that refugees be enrolled in an introduction programme within three months. The combination of the settlement policy and the introduction programme marks the beginning of a period of temporary immobility for those enrolled. This lasts until the programme ends or they move on to either further education or employment.

Once in the municipalities, the settled refugees become part of municipal refugee service organisations that provide them with services to facilitate their transition to life in Norway. As noted above, the process prior to the refugees being settled in municipalities is facilitated by a range of public and private or non-profit sector organisations. The private and non-profit sectors have been made part of the service system through asylum reception centres,[20] while various public sector departments – especially the IMDi and UDI – are in charge of handling applications and providing those granted protection with a municipality where they can be settled.

Refugee Administration

Refugee-related services in the municipalities are usually divided into two units: refugee administration and adult education. The actual organisation of refugee services varies, as some have opted for a co-located solution, while others have organised these services in separate facilities. Three of the featured municipalities had co-located their refugee administration and adult education facilities, while Haugen opted for a solution in which adult education was provided through collaboration with another municipality. Refugee administration further differs by municipality, as some have opted to organise it as part of the municipal NAV department, while others have placed it outside NAV's purview.

The refugee administration units in the municipalities are in charge of all matters that are not purely academic. One important part of this mandate consists of programme advisors who are in charge of administering individual introduction programmes. Aside from the programme advisors, who usually make up the core administrative staff, the refugee administration units examined in this thesis included a manager in addition and other administrative and supportive staff. Some of these individuals were people in charge of areas like administration and nurses.

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[20] Asylum centres in Norway have been organised by municipalities, non-profit organisations, and for-profit organisations (Meld. St. 30, 2015-2016, p. 17).

Most municipalities employ programme advisors who serve as contact people for specific participants. This usually makes the programme advisor the first stop for a large range of questions from participants and the person to contact if the participants are ill or have other issues that need to be either documented or faced in some way or another. Reporting results and hours constitutes an important task for those employed as programme advisors. At the end of each week, the programme participants hand in timesheets on which they have registered hours at school or work practice, which comprise the basis for their monthly salaries and are used for assessing future applications for permanent residency or citizenship. Furthermore, programme advisors frequently reach out to businesses in the area to locate work or language practice positions for their participants.

Another function of the refugee administration is to ensure that the participants are able to spend their time doing what they are supposed to: working towards the goals in their individual introduction programmes. This includes issues of housing and sometimes supplementary financial assistance in collaboration with NAV, in addition to dealing with a number of unforeseen challenges. Moreover, the refugee administration is in charge of coordinating efforts with other public and private organisations – other departments, schools, kindergartens, and so forth – in addition to administrative tasks. These may include budgeting, estimating future arrivals, and coordinating responses to requests to settle refugees.

Adult Education

The adult education centre is the nexus of the municipal refugee service system, as it where those settled usually spend most of their time as service recipients. In the municipalities featured in this study, the adult education centres offered different tracks for students with different levels of language proficiency. These ranged from people who were illiterate through those practicing for higher-level qualification exams at the B1 or B2 level. All four of the adult education centres also provided primary school training for their students, through which the usual ten-year curriculum would be delivered over a two-year period; these years are called Primary School 1 and Primary School 2. Primary school is provided to all those who see a need for it and serves to qualify students for high school.

Adult education for refugees is often organised as a form of regular school, with the students starting at 8:30 in the morning and staying until 2:30 in the afternoon. Many of those who teach at these centres have a background in primary school teaching and may have additional qualifications as second language teachers. The task of those working at adult education centres

resembles that of those working in other parts of the educational sectors, but their duty revolves around preparing students for a variety of tests that must be passed to receive permanent residency or to qualify for citizenship. While daily life at an adult education centre is similar to the daily operations of any other school – people arrive, go to classes, eat lunch, have another class or two, and go home – it also differs in terms of student profile and what is at stake. Most of the students enrolled at the adult education centres I followed had been settled in the municipalities as refugees and had a clear idea of the fact that they would have to learn Norwegian and pass a civics test to be granted rights as permanent residents or full citizens. Moreover, as is further explored in Chapter 5, the adult education centre served as the primary arena of social interaction with people outside their family (if there was one) in Norway.

Political and Historical Background

In this section, I provide an account of the historical and political context of immigration in Norway; it consists of a thorough overview of developments since the 1970s and has been included as a means of situating this study in a broader historical context. This, I believe, is essential for addressing the main research question and the emphasis on embedded wicked problems, as the historical and political background of today's refugee integration policy has developed in response to events that have occurred outside the actual service field (i.e. in the extended service environment).

The historical and political context of immigration in relation to public services shows how it is affected by influences, thoughts, and beliefs that lie beyond – often well beyond – the organisation of such services. The composition of immigrants coming to Norway, and how those who arrive have been welcomed, has varied over the course of the last 50 years; Figure 7 shows a general tendency, as recent developments have shifted from the 1990s to the present following a notable spike in the arrival of labour migrants in the years after the EU's 2004 expansion. Except for 2015, the majority of immigrants who have arrived in Norway each year have come there to work. This, it will be seen, has caused a swift growth in the total number of people born in other countries who now live in Norway.
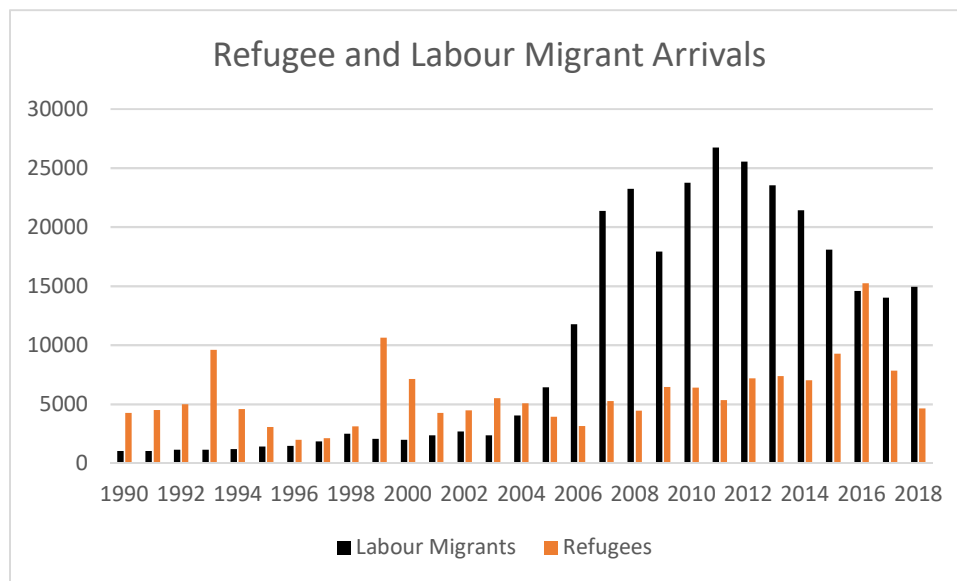
Figure 7: Refugee and labour migrant arrivals, 1990–2019 (Source: Statistics Norway).

The relationship between people who have arrived to work and those coming for protection has influenced Norway's history of immigration since the 1970s. This overview shows that the countries of origin of those who have arrived have served to create a wedge between people arriving from Europe and Western or other developed countries and those arriving from other countries. The latter have experienced subjective integration measures, whereas the former have not.

Since 1970, the population of Norway has increased from 3,863,221 to 5,374,807 (in the second quarter of 2020, according to Statistics Norway). During the same period, its demographic composition had changed radically; while 1.48% of the country's population were either immigrants or the children of two immigrants in 1970, 14.4% of the country's population belonged to those groups in 2019. While population growth has been rather steady over the last 50 years, immigrant population growth has rapidly increased since 2000, when only 5.3% of the country's population had an immigrant background.
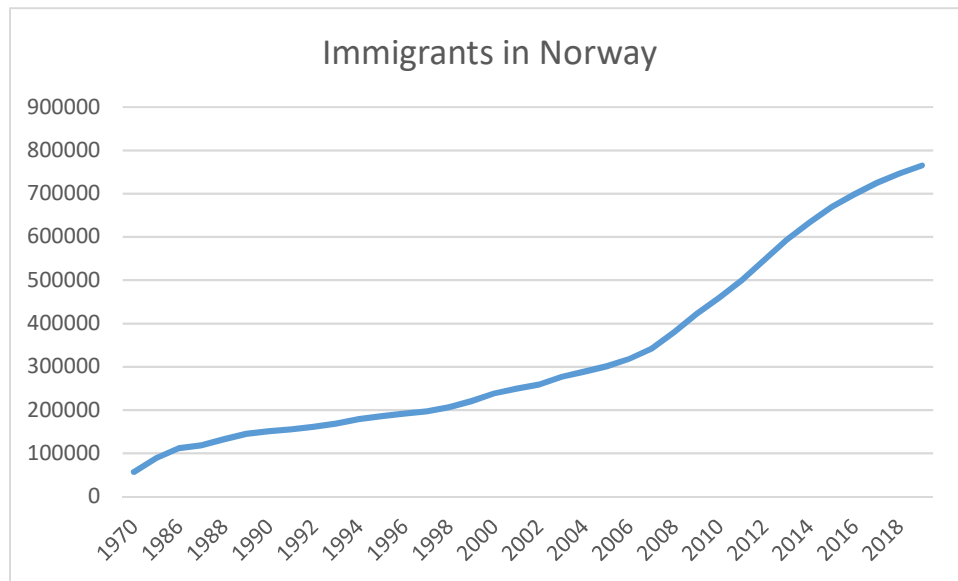
Figure 8: Immigration to Norway since 1964 (Source: Statistics Norway).

The rapid increase in immigration over the past 20 years shown in Figure 8 has been the source of political debate (Eriksen, 2016, p. 113). Immigrants, however, do not necessarily share any characteristic other than the fact that they have left one country and arrived in another. In figures released from Statistics Norway in 2018, immigrants were separated into five backgrounds that served as the basis for their residency permits. Out of 868,610 total immigrants, 291,852 had arrived as labour migrants, while 312,690 had come through family, with this category making up the largest portion of immigrants. The category of family immigration is broad and includes people married to Norwegian citizens and spouses of labour migrants and refugees.[21] Refugees made up the third largest category and amounted to 169,160 people, while 89,246 were in Norway on an educational visa. An additional 761 were registered as unknown, and 4,901 were in the 'other' category.

1970s: The Arrival of Overseas Immigrants

In a 1968–1969 government white paper, the matter of immigration to and emigration from Norway was characterised as more or less insignificant (St. Meld. Nr. 45, 1968-1969, p. 58). At the time, the only real problem concerned the 'acceptance of work permits for foreign musicians'

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[21] The category 'family immigrants' varies somewhat in different statistics, as IMDi's statistics distinguish between refugees and their reunited family and family immigrants. Such an explicit distinction is, however, not made in the categorisations offered by Statistics Norway.

(St. Meld. Nr. 45, 1968-1969, p. 60), which challenged the hegemony of Norwegian musicians due to the international characteristics of the music industry. Less than a decade later, a new white paper outlined the lessons learned from a temporary 'immigration stop'[22] that had been implemented on February 1, 1975 (St. Meld. Nr. 107, 1975-1976). Something had happened in the meantime.

The first government white paper dedicated to the issue of immigrants and integration was produced by the Ministry of Local Government and Labour in 1973–1974 (St. Meld. Nr. 39, 1973-1974) and was largely based on an ONR[23] from the Danielsen Committee of the prior year (NOU 1973: 17, 1973). The committee was established with the mandate of reviewing Norwegian immigration policy and reported that they had approached their task from a broad perspective. Nevertheless, among the key problems outlined in their introduction was the issue of 'foreign workers and jobseekers whom on the basis of their background have particular difficulties adapting to Norwegian conditions' (NOU 1973: 17, 1973, p. 10). One such practical difficulty was discussed in the associated white paper, where it was noted that 'specifically, the largest practical problem is biggest for the relatively large group of Muhammedanians [Muslims]' (St. Meld. Nr. 39, 1973-1974, p. 46). The issue outlined at the time was based on the perception that problems could arise because of differing confessional practices, including prayer times and nutrition, as many Muslims do not eat pork and choose halal meat. The section ended by noting that 'there is no reason to underplay that we have to deal with problems that represent a strong challenge to our tolerance and openness towards other people' (St. Meld. Nr. 39, 1973-1974, p. 47).

In an article reviewing migration research in Norway since the 1970s, Midtbøen summarises the change that occurred in the early 1970s in terms of how the number of Pakistanis employed in Norway increased from 14 in 1967 to 335 in March 1971 (Midtbøen, 2017, p. 132). Despite the relatively small numbers – Norway had a population of almost four million in 1971 – the increase was experienced as 'explosive', and Midtbøen describes how it was perceived as putting 'pressure on the borders' (Midtbøen, 2017, p. 132). In the 1973 Danielsen Committee ONR, the fluctuations in labour migrants employed in Norway since the 1950s showed that how the total number had remained stable at roughly 15,000 (NOU 1973: 17, 1973, p. 52). From 1969 to 1972, however, the total number increased from 15,750 to 20,320, out of which the number of labour migrants from Asia rose from 370 to 2,230. A minority of the committee argued that Norway had

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[22] *Innvandringsstopp.*
[23] *Norsk offentlig utredning* (Official Norwegian Report).

'reached the limit for a socially justifiable level of immigration' (NOU 1973: 17, 1973, p. 75). As a preliminary measure, they therefore suggested implementing a temporary halt in immigration to 'get the house in order' (NOU 1973: 17, p. 75). Following this first wave of immigrants from non-European countries, Norway imposed a temporary ban on immigration in 1975, which was enforced through a halt in granting first-time work permits (St. Meld. Nr. 107, 1975-1976, p. 5).

The second half of the 1970s saw an increase in refugee immigration, a large portion of which (614 of 1,258 individuals) came from Vietnam (St. Meld. Nr. 84, 1978-1979, p. 77). At the end of the 1970s, following the immigration stop of 1975, the question of refugees gained increasing attention. In a 1979–1980 white paper, it was argued that more attention would be required in the future regarding the integration of refugees (St. Meld. Nr. 74, 1980, p. 5). The authors argued that while it would be 'preferred that Norway could continue to lead a liberal policy towards immigrants as we did until approximately 1970', the new circumstances had made Norway an immigration destination for people from the 'developing world' (St. Meld. Nr. 74, 1980, p. 6). It was further stated in the white paper that 'Norway is about to become a multicultural society':

> Such a society has to be built on mutual respect between groups and cultures. For minority groups, special measures may often be required to create actual equal opportunities in housing and in the labour market, and to create equal opportunity for social and cultural practices and so forth. A range of such measures must be considered as temporary help to self-help. (St. Meld. Nr. 74, 1980, p. 6)

The white paper further outlined the era's policy by describing how the government would not set requirements for those who arrived to assimilate or become 'as Norwegian as possible' (St. Meld. Nr. 74, 1980, p. 6). According to the paper, 'it is amongst other things therefore important that they [the immigrants] are given the opportunity to maintain their own language, religion, culture, and so forth, while simultaneously providing opportunities for education in Norwegian language and society' (St. Meld. Nr. 74, 1980, p. 6).

1980s: Asylum Seekers and the Politicisation of Immigration

The increasing number of refugee arrivals in the late 1970s changed Norwegian politics on migration (Tjelmeland & Brochmann, 2003, p. 167). This change came resulted from the arrival of ad hoc or spontaneous refugees (NOU 1986: 8, p. 17) who showed up unexpectedly at the border and applied for asylum (Tjelmeland & Brochmann, 2003, p. 167). From 1985 to 1986, the increase in asylum applications more than tripled from 829 to 2,722 before rising further to 8,613 in 1987 (Bø, 2004, p. 35). A shift had occurred in the reasons for immigration from the early and

mid-1970s, when those who arrived came to work, to the mid-to late 1980s, when increasing numbers came in search of protection. With the increasing number of refugees and asylum seekers, Midtbøen writes, the country experienced increasing tensions, with cases of serious racism reported around the country (Midtbøen, 2017, p. 134). In 1987, the potential mobilising force of immigration as a political topic became evident when the leader of the Progress Party, Carl I. Hagen, presented what later became known as the 'Mustafa letter' during that year's local elections (Midtbøen, 2017, p. 134). In the letter, the alleged Mohammed Mustafa stated that Norway would soon be overrun by Muslims, thus propagating a belief that later served as a driver for the terrorist attack on July 22, 2011 in which 77 people were killed at a summer camp in Oslo. The actual origins of the letter remain obscure, but it was revealed to be a fabrication, as the real Muhammed Mustafa had not written the letter (Helland, 2014, p. 112). Despite the fraudulent nature of the letter, the message appeared to have gotten through to the electorate, and the Progress Party enjoyed their best local election results.

Immigration had also influenced the general election two years prior, when the Socialist Left Party became the first to introduce the concept of multiculturalism into a political programme in Norway (Tjelmeland & Brochmann, 2003, p. 191). However, 1987 was later described as the year when the political fronts on immigration first became a serious political topic, which was manifested through increasingly polarised fronts (Tjelmeland & Brochmann, 2003, p. 191). Growing concerns regarding immigration were presented through the proposal of alternative costs, according to which the country would have to make a choice between taking care of 'their own' or spending money on people who arrived from faraway countries (Tjelmeland & Brochmann, 2003, p. 194).

The politicisation of immigration that occurred during the 1980s served to transform the issue into a politically serious one. From its earlier status as an obscure topic in a 1977 election survey, concerns over the issue were acknowledged with five questions regarding immigration included at the time of the 1989 general elections (Midtbøen, 2017, p. 135). In an analysis of that survey, Valen, Aardal, and Vogt (1990) note how immigration remained an obscure topic for most parties except the Progress Party, which had 'the largest increase in municipalities with high unemployment. Finally, immigration [as a political topic] has made a positive contribution to the party' (Valen, Aardal, & Vogt, 1990, p. 63). Even if immigration remained a relatively minor issue during the 1989 general election, the survey analysis predicted that the 'question of whether immigration will be considered a liability on the social welfare system will be central in future analyses' (Valen et al., 1990, p. 68).

Despite a tendency towards increasing polarisation on immigration, it remained a minor political issue until the late 1980s. Over the course of the 1990s, the polarised fronts that had emerged earlier were consolidated, and the era was characterised by both multicultural optimism and the rise of neo-Nazism (Midtbøen, 2017). The latter culminated in the murder of Benjamin Hermansen, a son of Norwegian and Ghanaian parentage, on January 26, 2001 (Haanshuus & Jupskås, 2017, p. 162).

In 1993, some 12,000 people (11,000 of whom were Bosnians fleeing the Balkan wars) applied for asylum in Norway (Bø, 2004, p. 37). That year marked the single highest number of asylum applications over the course of the 1990s, with numbers otherwise remaining relatively low, except for 1998, when 8,500 applications were registered. Overall, the immigrant population grew from 155,333 in 1990 to 220,357 in 1999, a 46% increase; immigrants comprised approximately 5% of the total population in 1999, up from 3.6% in 1990. At the same time, Norway's total population grew from 4,233,116 to 4,444,329 people, an increase of 5%.[24]

Perhaps because of the increasing number of people arriving as immigrants who had found a place in Norway, the 1990s produced emerging debates on racism (Gullestad, 2002, p. 30). The debates appeared to arise in part due to an increasing realisation that a multicultural Norway was becoming a reality, and the population would thus have to figure out how to live in such a society (NOU 2004: 20, p. 39). The spark of the discussion, at least in academic circles, has been attributed to a 1990 report that concluded that 'the Norwegian population is not racist' (Midtbøen, 2017, p. 136). In response, the sociologist Ottar Brox published a book with the apt title *I'm Not Racist, But…* (Brox, 1991). In a later description of the book, Gullestad, herself a prominent figure in the 1990s immigration debate, argued that it drove a further wedge between different fronts on the matter through how it brought morality into the debate (Gullestad, 2002, p. 30). In short, her summary of Brox's book argued that it framed a 'moral elite' as a naïve and counterproductive force against practical solutions to immigration-related challenges (Gullestad, 2002, p. 30). As immigration and by extension immigrant integration became an increasingly debated academic topic during the 1990s, new academic communities appeared (Midtbøen, 2017, p. 139).

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[24] Numbers obtained from Statistics Norway reports.

Aside from the rise of immigration as an academic topic of interest, new political priorities appeared in the 1990s. One was the idea of a 'holistic refugee policy', in which the best way to deal with the issue of refugees was to solve problems in the emigrant-producing country or help neighbouring countries house those fleeing war and conflict (Tjelmeland & Brochmann, 2003, p. 299). This new policy was outlined in a 1994–1995 white paper suggesting that 'Norway alone and in cooperation with other countries must do what we can to prevent conflicts and consequently streams of refugees' (St. Meld. Nr. 17, 1994-1995). In addition to including the principles of avoiding conflicts and helping people in adjacent countries, it was furthermore argued that a principle of return should be central to Norwegian refugee policy. If people returned to their countries of origins after wars and conflicts were over, it was argued, Norway would be able to protect more people in need (St. Meld. Nr. 17, 1994-1995; Tjelmeland & Brochmann, 2003, p. 309).

The ambivalence of the 1990s was seen in both society at large, where questions of racism, multiculturalism, and the rise of neo-Nazism characterised the debate, and in politics, where the ambition to help was driven by a belief that those who arrived as refugees were to stay in the country only as temporary semi-citizens.

Early 2000s: Early Steps Towards Individualising Refugee Integration

In 2000, Norway had a total population of 4,478,497 people, of whom 238,462 had an immigrant background. At the turn of the millennium, the demographic composition had changed from the early 1970s, as the proportion of immigrants from countries in Africa, Asia, and South and Central America increased from 6% in 1970 to 50% in 1993 (NOU 2001: 20, 2001, p. 18).

A policy shift took place during the early 2000s, with the focus increasingly placed on individuals rather than groups (Brochmann, 2014, p. 403). In a 2001 ONR, the committee stated that 'the natural point of departure is that newly arrived immigrants first and foremost have the responsibility to find their place or be integrated into Norwegian society. Society, on the other hand, has to facilitate appropriate conditions to make this possible' (NOU 2001: 20, p. 48). This ONR came in preparation for the new policy measure that was to become the introduction programme and critiqued the current organisation of services provided to refugees: 'The structure in this system leads to an unwanted trajectory for many newly arrived immigrants. Newly arrived [immigrants'] socialisation is too concentrated on handling the social security apparatus', the authors stated (NOU 2001: 20, p. 48).

Policy documents from between 2000 and 2004 largely focused on preparing for and implementing the introduction programme, which followed something that could be characterised as a traditional innovation process path. A pilot project to secure salaries (*inntektssikring*) for newly arrived immigrants outside the social security system was initiated in 1998 and continued through 2000, involving 16 municipalities and city districts (Lund, 2003).

2004–2015: EU Expansion and Demographic Changes

Immigration is not a new phenomenon in Norway, and the issues discussed in present-day politics have deep historical roots. At the same time, the sheer number of immigrants in the population has altered the context. A notable development came in 2004, when 10 new member states joined the EU and thus opened the Norwegian labour market to labour migrants from Eastern Europe (Cappelen & Muriaas, 2018). The EU expansion led to rapid growth in the number of immigrants in Norway, as Figure 9 shows.
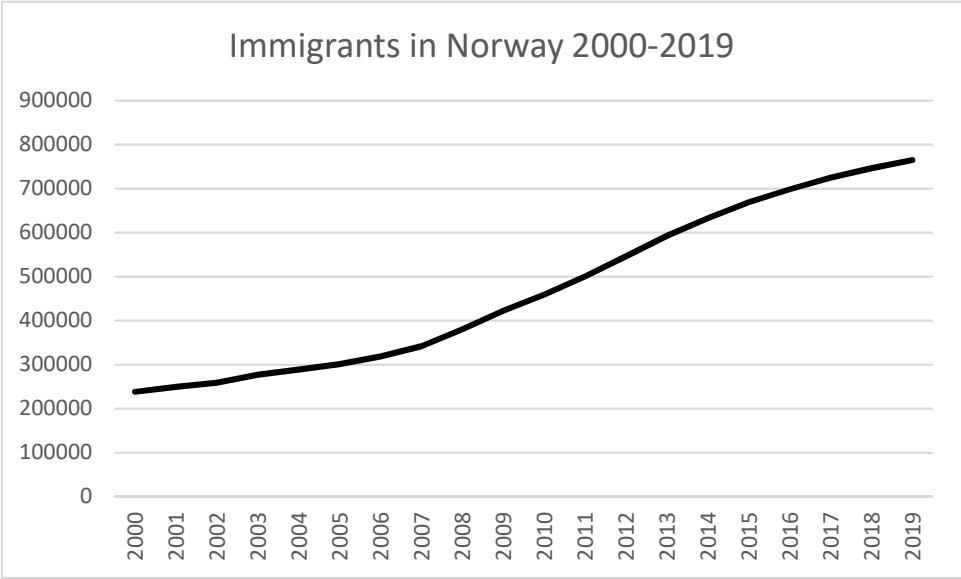
Figure 9: Immigrants in Norway, 2000–2019 (Statistics Norway, www.ssb.no).

Wage conditions in Norway, which are higher than those in most other countries, led to a large influx of labour migrants. Even though – as one article has noted – the wages and working conditions offered to the incoming labour migrants were below those offered to the native population, the potential absolute earnings still led to Norway becoming an attractive destination for people seeking work (Iglicka, Gmaj, & Wierzejski, 2016, p. 122). In addition to the advantageous wage conditions in Norway, other factors made the country an attractive destination for labour migrants. One of these was the fact that Norway, compared with other countries, went through the financial crisis that hit Europe in 2009–2010 without any significant

changes in unemployment levels (Iglicka et al., 2016, p. 122). In fact, the total number of immigrants in the country (Figure 9) nearly doubled between 2008 (380,644) and 2018 (746,661). The EU expansion had a direct influence on the immigrant population in Norway. In 2003, the top five countries of birth for immigrants in Norway were Sweden (32,973), Denmark (22,250), Iraq (14,689), Pakistan (14,624), and the United States (14,558).[25] By 2018, the composition had altered significantly, as the top five countries of origin were Poland (98,212), Lithuania (38,371), Sweden (35,813), Somalia (28,754), and Syria (27,392).

Besides Syria and Somalia, most of whose migrants came as refugees, the increase in the number of people born in Poland and Lithuania has been explosive, as only 6,716 people from Poland and 798 from Lithuania lived in Norway in 2003. There has thus been an approximately 4,708% increase in the number of people from Lithuania and a 1,362% increase in the number of people from Poland over a 16-year period. Those who arrived from Eastern Europe have largely evaded integration policy and discourse, as their arrival in Norway has been regulated through the transnational framework of the EU rather than through the government's immigration apparatus (Iglicka et al., 2016, pp. 127-128). This, it has been argued, has led to a scenario in which Eastern Europeans have been placed betwixt and between: 'They are not included in any regulation programmes, such as language-learning programmes, which are offered to non-Europeans' (Iglicka et al., 2016, pp. 127-128). Although part of the migrant population as a whole, Eastern European labour migrants have not been framed as a social problem to which an integration solution is required, as is the case with those targeted by the introduction programme. Eastern European immigration has, however, been widely discussed in terms of its impact on the Norwegian labour market and overall economy. When speaking of a wider service system for immigrants, it can thus be seen that Eastern European migrants have largely been kept outside as non-relevant actors, with many considered temporary migrants who might spend some time in Norway before returning to their country of origin (Bygnes & Erdal, 2017, pp. 104-105; Cappelen & Muriaas, 2018, p. 177). This type of temporary or circular migration resembles the migration patterns of the 1970s, when people from places like Morocco would travel to and from their home countries, where they would spend the money they had earned in Europe (McMurray, 2001, p. 41).

While several other factors shaped the history of immigration in Norway between 2004 and 2015, the 2004 EU expansion has been emphasised in this section because of the way it has influenced

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[25] Statistics from Statistics Norway: 'Foreign Born by Country of Origin' (Source: https://www.ssb.no/statbank/table/05185/).

the composition of immigrants now living in Norway. Over the past decade, the largest immigrant group has been Poles rather than Swedes, as had been the case in 2003. At the same time, the influx of European migrants to Norway has revealed varied perceptions of different immigrant groups, with the now largest group of immigrants virtually uninfluenced by measures designed to ensure integration with Norwegian communities.

The 2015–2016 European Migrant Influx and its Aftermath

In the spring of 2015, I witnessed a steady increase in arrivals at Europe's external border in the Spanish enclave of Melilla while doing fieldwork there for my master's thesis. Melilla is located in north-eastern Morocco and has been a sovereign part of Spain since 1497. Today, the city looks much like any other Spanish city, with a city centre characterised by Catalan modernist architecture and edifices and objects that attest to the city's long history as a Spanish outpost in Africa. In 2014, the city became infamous following a photo taken by local activist and photographer José Palazón. The picture featured a number of sub-Saharan migrants sitting atop the double six-metre high fence that surrounds the city on land while two golfers worked their way through the golf course situated directly in front of the fence. The golf course in question also surrounded the local temporary immigrant reception centre in Melilla, which at the time of my fieldwork had reached a population of more than three times its intended capacity of some 480 people. During my fieldwork, I spent hours with migrants in the parking lot between the temporary immigration centre and the golf course and fence. There, I listened to the hopes and dreams of those temporarily stuck in the Spanish city as their applications were being processed. For some, the journey would end at the extreme edge of Europe, as they would be sent back, while others would be allowed to transfer to mainland Spain from where most intended to continue their journey to other countries in Europe. Frequently, I would be asked whether it was possible to take the bus to Sweden or the best way to get to France. Frequently, I had to reply that I did not know.

Migration and refugee integration have long been high on the political agenda in countries throughout Europe. In 2015–2016, the issue became ever more prominent due to a rapid increase in arrivals. In part, the influx of refugees was due to the exodus from Syria and other countries torn asunder by war, conflict, or other difficult conditions. Chaotic scenes from railway stations throughout Europe, images of boat migrants, and reports of their deaths in the Mediterranean are now embedded in Europe's collective memory. Initially, the social perception of the refugee influx appeared to be articulated in numbers, as hundreds of people drowned on their way across the ocean from either Libya or Turkey to Italy and Greece. As the arrivals

continued, detailed reports and pictures followed, and the administrative difficulties of handling the increasing number of arrivals were given human faces. In particular, the picture of a dead child being picked up by a man at a Turkish beach became etched in the world's memory and served as a symbol that the crisis was profoundly humanitarian.

By the late summer and early autumn of 2015, the number of asylum applications in Norway had skyrocketed. Compared to 601 applications in January and 1,384 in June, 4,940 applications were submitted in September 2015. Between October and November, more than 16,000 applications were submitted. The rapid increase in numbers led to an administrative crisis that ran alongside the humanitarian one. By the end of 2015, 31,150 applications for asylum in Norway had been submitted, and the government and its agencies were suddenly faced with an unprecedented task of housing those who arrived, processing their applications, and resettling those who were granted asylum in municipalities around the country.
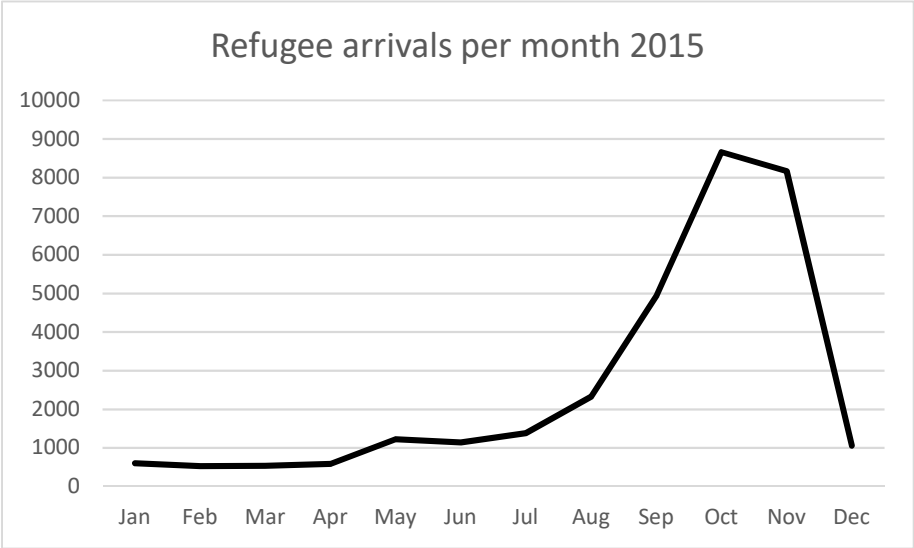
Figure 10: Refugee arrivals per month, 2015.[26]

Although systems were already in place to ensure the process of handling asylum applications, providing temporary housing through asylum centres, and settling those whose applications were granted in municipalities, the sheer number of arrivals caused the established service system to crumble. The influence of the extended service environment had become overwhelming. In response to the unprecedented scale of the situation, new asylum centres were established, many consultants were hired by the UDI to process the asylum applications, and new deals were made with municipalities to settle those who were granted asylum. While the refugee influx had an

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[26] Statistics from the UDI: 'Asylsøknader etter statsborgerskap og måned' (2015): https://www.udi.no/statistikk-og-analyse/statistikk/asylsoknader-etter-statsborgerskap-og-maned-2015/.

impact on most refugee-related services in Norway and society as a whole, the employees of the UDI were among those most powerfully affected – other than the new arrivals themselves. For example, Bjørn Fridfeldt, the Regional Director of the UDI's northern office, told the Norwegian newspaper *Aftenposten* (Olsen, 2015, December 23) about the sudden arrival of refugees over Norway's border with Russia:

> It was crazy. It escalated so quickly that the employees here were caught totally off guard.... One day we got a message from the police in Sør-Varanger [district] that they had just loaded up three buses with asylum seekers. Provide housing, was the message. We had to obtain several hundred beds over the course of a few hours. That became our every day for several weeks. (Olsen, 2015, December 23)

Suddenly, the country's attention became fixated on asylum seekers rolling in on bicycles over the northern border in Storskog, which, due to an agreement between Norway and Russia, cannot be crossed on foot. As a side note, it later turned out that the bicycles were not approved for use in Norway and had to be scrapped (Abelsen & Flyum, 2017, March 28). Moreover, in the aftermath of the influx, a 250-metre-long fence was constructed on that border to prevent future crossings. Later, it turned out that the four million NOK fence had been constructed up to 15 centimetres across the Russian border, so parts of it had to be moved and rebuilt (Quist, Wallenius, & Newth, 2016, September 29).

The UDI's 2015 *Annual Report* indicated that Norway had a reception capacity of 11,000 in asylum centres in July and August that year (UDI, 2015, p. 2). The rapid increase in arrivals that started in late August and September thus meant that they had to establish new permanent and temporary solutions for housing. Between August 1 and December 31, a reported 28,000 additional places were established (UDI, 2015, pp. 2-3). During the early autumn of 2015, however, the situation was still unpredictable and chaotic, and that 2015 UDI *Annual Report* stated that the reception capacity of the Norwegian National Police Immigration Service did not have the resources to register all those who were arriving (UDI, 2015, p. 3). Thus, an additional need emerged to house people who had yet to be registered. As several of the transit asylum centres – which serve as temporary accommodations before the asylum seekers are transferred to regular asylum centres – were already full, hotel accommodation was offered to people who were waiting to register their asylum applications (UDI, 2015, p. 3).

By the end of December 2015, the number of arrivals had declined by 7,000 applications compared to the previous month, and this rate was further halved by January 2016. Still, a massive task remained to settle those whose applications for asylum and residency were now

being processed and approved. In Norway, the settlement of refugees is based on a voluntary agreement between municipalities and the state, and there has been a long tradition of ensuring the dispersed settling of refugees (NOU 2017: 2, p. 129). The voluntariness of the agreement is primarily applicable to the individual municipality, and refugees who are offered to be settled in a municipality only receive one option, which they must accept if they are to receive financial support from the government. In practical terms, the settlement of refugees who have obtained a claim for asylum and temporary residency is managed through a process in which the municipalities are asked to settle a certain number of refugees, after which they must reply with an indication of how many they wish to settle. This number may be the same the number in the request, or it might be less or even more depending on capacity. In 2015 and 2016, a record number of people were settled through the agreement (IMDi, 2016, p. 46). In 2016, 411 out of Norway's then 428 municipalities settled 15,291 refugees. In the UDI's *Annual Report*, the success in settling refugees is ascribed to political and public attention, national political leadership, and, crucially, additional funds for the municipalities that chose to settle refugees (IMDi, 2016, p. 46).

For municipalities that chose to settle refugees, the sudden rise in arrivals entailed a simultaneous upscaling of the services they had to offer. In addition to housing, municipalities that accept refugees are mandated to offer those settled an introduction programme within three months of their arrival (Introduksjonsloven, LOV-2003-07-04-80, p. § 3). In Endefjord, the rapid increase in arrivals combined with the establishment of an asylum centre in the municipality meant that the adult education centre had to establish additional educational facilities to accommodate the rapidly increasing number of refugees. Within months, funds were acquired, and an old building – where I would later have my office during the fieldwork – was refurbished for this purpose. In addition to physical space to accommodate those who arrived, several municipalities further scaled up their services by hiring additional staff to take care of administrative and educational tasks.

In 2018, the people who had been settled in municipalities following the government's call to action in 2015–2016 were nearing the end of their two- or three-year introduction programmes. While the UNHCR (UNHCR, 2017) reported that there were an estimated 25.4 million refugees in the world in 2017, the number of arrivals to Norway has remained low and steady, with 3,560

applications for asylum having been submitted in 2017 and 2,655 in 2018.[27] The media coverage of refugee issues has likewise declined since 2015, with nearly 50,000 articles related to the keyword 'refugee*'[28] published in 2015, a number that dropped to 14,941 in 2018 and 5,617 in 2019.

The refugee influx of 2015–2016 marks a watershed moment in Norwegian refugee reception history. In response to the arrivals, record numbers of municipalities, organisations, and individuals stepped up to face the unprecedented task of handling people who crossed the Norwegian border in both the southern and northern regions. The refugee influx came as an exogenous shock to the systems that already existed to handle asylum seekers and refugee arrivals. Through monumental efforts, new systems and arrangements were made in record time to house and handle the applications of those who arrived. The refugee influx of 2015–2016 shows Norway's latent capacity to settle, house, and otherwise take care of people fleeing conflict. However, much has happened since the chaotic months of late 2015, and the number of refugee arrivals has stabilised at a level that no longer matches the capacities of the municipalities that scaled up in response to the shock. Through the remainder of this thesis, I present empirical data and analyse the situation in four municipal refugee-related services given the current low level of refugee arrivals.

In this chapter, I have presented the locations where I did my fieldwork and introduced Norwegian refugee integration. Further, I have described the political and historical context of refugee and immigrant integration in Norway. The chapter contributes to the study by exploring the wickedness embedded in the history of immigration to Norway through a description of the development of service offerings provided to immigrants, a description that shows how the problem-solution complex defined in policy has changed multiple times over the past 50 years. Furthermore, the political and historical context has highlighted the importance of studying how unforeseen events and externalities are crucial to understanding and discussing the impacts of the extended service environment impacts on local service provision.

Chapter 5 is the first of three empirical chapters that are based on the data produced in the fieldwork. Specifically, it addresses the experiences of settled refugees who were participants in the municipalities' introduction programmes.

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[27] Numbers gathered from UDI: https://www.udi.no/statistikk-og-analyse/statistikk/asylsoknader-etter-statsborgerskap-og-maned-2017/ (2017); https://www.udi.no/statistikk-og-analyse/statistikk/asylsoknader-etter-statsborgerskap-og-maned-2018/ (2018).

[28] Search conducted in the Norwegian media database Retriever with the keyword *flyktning**.

Chapter 5: Settled Refugees as Service Recipients

When I came here, I realised I had to get my act together, and that I had no one. I figured I had to work here or else everything would have gone to hell. (Bassam, interview)

After fleeing military service in Syria and making his way to Greece, Bassam[29] found himself stuck at the airport after missing a flight to Germany. Bassam and his friend had acquired fake passports that allowed them to travel within the Schengen Area and had bought tickets for Germany. As his flight boarded, however, Bassam continued to sit, lost in thought. Surely, he later told me, this must have been a sign that he was not supposed to Germany. A couple of days later, Bassam's new flight stopped in Germany on its way to Sweden, from where he caught a bus to Oslo. Like hundreds of thousands of others in 2015, he had found himself on a dinghy from Turkey to Greece a couple of weeks earlier and like hundreds of thousands of others, he had left most of his belongings behind. What could he bring? 'Only the clothes you wear, a safety vest, money, passport, and important documents. Everything else you have to throw away', he said. When he got off the bus in Oslo after a long and hazardous journey, Bassam immediately went to the police station to register his application for asylum. Upon arriving the at the station, he found it packed with others with a similar plan as his own. Due to the maxed-out capacity of the asylum reception system in the early autumn of 2015, Bassam was placed in a hotel during his first three days in Norway, 'and they had all types of food and a buffet and … I thought, so this is how it is, it is amazing'. After three days, reality crept in; Bassam was sent to an asylum reception centre outside the Norwegian capital, 'and there it was awful'. Less than a month after arriving, Bassam was fed up with his newfound situation and decided to opt out of the formal refugee service system. He then went to live with a friend on the west coast of Norway.

Introduction

For most of those employed in municipal refugee services, work with refugee integration is roughly equivalent to the hours of a regular workday. After holding lectures, seeing to administrative tasks, and coordinating efforts with service system partners, service employees can go home and go about their lives. For people who arrive in a new country, whether as refugees or for other reasons, however, the work of finding one's place in society is a continuous struggle.

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[29] Bassam and all other names in this study are pseudonyms.
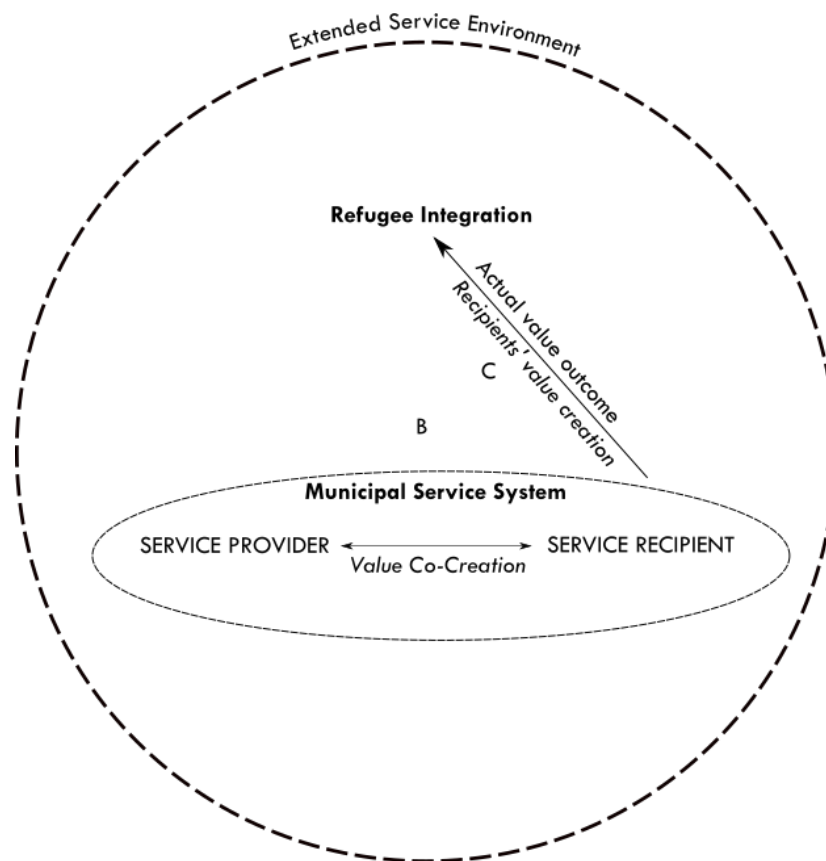
Figure 11: Resource integration and value co-creation.

In this chapter, I present the ways in which settled refugees were able to benefit and create value from municipal service offerings (Greer, Lusch, & Vargo, 2016; Osborne, 2018, p. 227) and how their lifeworld situations affected these processes (Helkkula et al., 2012; Osborne, 2018). Following the adaptation and alteration of concepts described in Chapter 2, the analytical approach acknowledges that refugee integration is a process that occurs in service systems and the extended service environment (Figure 11). By considering actors and events that exist and occur outside the formalised setting of municipal refugee services, I aim to show how the subjective lifeworlds and experiences of settled refugees must be understood in a broader context than that of formal service systems. In addition to the theoretical contribution, this chapter offers empirical data on the experiences of settled refugees and the process through which they are settled and find their way in a new society. The chapter aims to inform the main research question by investigating the first sub-research question:

How are settled refugees' lifeworlds affecting their value creation?

This chapter addresses this question through the theoretical proposition that the value of a service is created (Grönroos, 2019, p. 777) and valued (Vargo & Lusch, 2016, p. 6) by its recipients. While a certain theoretical disagreement prevails over whether value is co-created

between the service provider and service recipient (Vargo & Lusch, 2016) or created solely by the service recipient (Grönroos & Voima, 2013), a relative consensus among scholars has been reached in focusing on the end-user experience (Grönroos, 2011, p. 282; Osborne, 2018, p. 227; Vargo & Lusch, 2016, p. 6). From a purely theoretical perspective, the recipients of service offerings – here, the settled refugees – are then given the prerogative to determine the value of a service. Thus, the question of how settled refugees experienced their transition and integration into a new society relates directly to an ongoing theoretical debate while also serving to elaborate on the ways in which an extended service environment perspective can be used to explore services characterised by wicked problems. The extended unruliness caused by recipients' lifeworld situations is particularly emphasised in this chapter.

The chapter is based on field notes from both the fieldwork and interviews conducted with people settled as refugees in three of the four municipalities featured in this study. To ensure anonymity, the location of each interviewee has been left out, so municipal pseudonyms have been replaced with generic names such as 'the municipality' and 'the village'. This has been done in recognition of seeing my interlocutors as connected to a vulnerable future in which they have yet to obtain full rights as Norwegian citizens.

A Country at the End of the World: Departures, Arrivals, and Initial Period

Eight of the twenty-two settled refugees interviewed for this project had never heard of Norway before they decided, or were forced, to flee their homes. Consider the following:

> First, I wanted to go to Canada. They [someone] told me that Norway is the last
> country in Europe. I did not know Norway; in the whole of Europe, I had only heard
> about Germany. But someone told me that a boat departs from Bergen [in Norway]
> to Canada; it takes some 26 days. (Mahmoud, interview)

The interviewees reached Norway in one of two ways; they either travelled through Europe and applied for asylum when they arrived or were transferred from a third country (e.g. Lebanon or Sudan) as resettlement refugees through the UNHCR or through family reunification. Out of the 22 formal interviews conducted with settled refugees, 12 arrived on their own and applied for asylum, 6 were settled through UNHCR, and 4 came through family reunification. What they had in common was the fact that they had left their countries and pasts behind and were all venturing into new and unknown futures in Norway. Over the few next pages, I describe some decisions and processes that led to their ending up in one of the four municipalities studied here.

Departures

The subject of departure was difficult to discuss for several interlocutors, as their journeys had often consisted of events that they did not want to revisit. After I asked a man in his twenties – whose pseudonym I have chosen to omit – if he had anything he wanted to add towards the end of our interview, he stated, 'It was difficult on my way here. I do not want to remember because it was difficult for me to get here'. While the traumas of migration understandably had profound effects on many of those interviewed, some were more open to talking about their journeys than others. As an important note that can be seen in the interview guide (Appendix 1), the design of this study did not intentionally aim to collect stories of departures. Nonetheless, perhaps due to the semi-structured form of the interviews and a certain degree of language confusion, several interviewees related stories about their departures, routes, and experiences. These provide an important structure to the larger processes, as they help create an understanding of what had shaped the settled refugees' current lifeworlds. A keen understanding of the ways in which those settled had come to Norway is important in the later analysis in which I discuss how their lifeworlds affected resource integration and value creation.

Adil

Prior to the war, Adil was attending university while managing a local school. His life had been good, he said, as he was able to earn a stable income while also employing a number of teachers. One day when he arrived on campus, he found that the building had been occupied by terrorists. 'I opened [the door] with my key and was surprised that people were sitting there. Terrorist people and they had guns. And they told me, "Get out, go away"'. He left, but after two weeks, the terrorists – as he described them – told the people in his neighbourhood that those who lived there needed to go elsewhere. He complied and started searching for a new job. A while later, his entrepreneurial drive led him to become a merchant who was engaged in buying and selling food to stores from his two warehouses. Once more, his life was good, and he was earning a lot of money. The war, however, raged on, and after a while, the conditions in the city he was now living in had deteriorated severely. One day, a group of people confronted his father, stole his car and money, and killed him: 'Four shots to his heart and he died', Adil recollected. Every day after the event, Adil was worried that he would not come back home in the afternoon after saying goodbye to his wife and kids. 'After that, my wife and I discussed and decided we would go to Europe', he said.

One of the teachers he had hired for the school that had been occupied by terrorists had already made her way to Norway and, after hearing what she had to say and comparing it with the signals he heard from people in Sweden, Adil and his family packed up and took the land route across Europe to reach Norway. According to Adil, 'It only took some 20 days to get from Syria to Norway'.

Even though Adil had tried to continue living in Syria despite the war, a string of incidents finally led him and his family to leave. In casual conversations I had with Adil and his wife, they maintained that they still hoped to go back one day, but for now, the prospect of a future in Syria seemed bleak.

Ibrahim

Before the war in Syria, Ibrahim had worked in an exchange office ten hours a day, six days a week. He had established a life with his wife, with whom he had four children. After the war started in 2011, he had gone to a building that used to produce fabrics, in which one of the machines had been broken. His story regarding the broken machine came after I had asked him whether he had any hobbies in Syria that he had not been able to pursue after migrating, such as football.

> Actually, I was in the building … I used to work during the war; I tried to work fixing fabric machines. I had an idea of how to fix them, so I went to one of the factories in the industrial area where I used to live…. And, eh … the aeroplanes came, and they were bombing around it; the next building to me collapsed and was destroyed. But my building was damaged, and the floor collapsed. And I was there on the first floor, and I broke my legs. (Ibrahim, interview)

Soon after, Ibrahim – with two broken legs – and his family made their way across the border to Turkey, where they lived for the next three years. There, he was able to get a job in a textile factory, as he had some experience with denim fabrics. 'And I survived in Turkey for more than three years', he said. With his family, he registered with the UNHCR and asked if he could go to the UK, where he had a brother and had previously lived. He visited the British embassy, where his fingerprints were taken, and everything seemed to work out in accordance with his plan for the future. Suddenly, however, it had been decided that the family was going to Norway. 'I didn't expect that one day I would come to Norway. The end of the world! But it is a very nice country'.

When he first heard the news in Turkey, he initially declined because he had been waiting for three years to go to the UK. The authorities he spoke to, however, said that he had no choice:

'You accept Norway, or we will send you back to Syria'. With no other choice, he gradually accepted the decision but explained that his wife was not happy: 'She doesn't like cold weather, and she doesn't like hot weather, so I do not know where to take her', he said cheerfully. Finally, they accepted the offer and were flown out of Turkey to start their lives in the country at the end of the world.

Elefenesh

After marrying her husband, Elefenesh moved in with his family in another part of Ethiopia. Before her marriage, she had completed her six-year education and helped her family out on the farm. 'It was nice when I was with my mother and father because I did not think I just helped. When you are married, you think a lot about life and your family … a lot of thinking', she said.

After she had given birth to their two children, her husband had left Ethiopia to attempt to lay the foundation for a new life for them elsewhere. When in Norway, he would frequently call her and otherwise help her out through his relatives in Ethiopia. 'He said Norway was very nice. Yes, and the people living there were nice. But he told me that when I came, I would be very scared because there are not a lot of mountains and stuff like that in Ethiopia. Or, there are mountains, but not where I lived'. Finally, after some time, her husband was able to arrange family reunification, so she and their two children got on a plane and arrived in Oslo. 'And when I came here, I was very scared', she said. 'How do people live up there in the mountain? But it is better now'.

Elefenesh's move to Norway was enabled through family reunification, as her husband's asylum application had already been processed. Her husband's earlier arrival allowed her to be prepared for life in Norway because she had been told some of the differences between Norway and Ethiopia that her husband had identified.

Abdukadir

One day, al-Shabaab called all the young people in Abdukadir's village and told them they needed people. Members of the group then came to his village and started taking names. Abdukadir asked them if they could wait two days so he could think about it. At 3:00 in the morning a few days later, members of the group came to his house and picked him up. After being brought to some sort of camp, he was detained and repeatedly asked if he was ready to join. 'But my mother told me do not join al-Shabaab', so he continued to decline. 'After two days, at four in the morning, we started *salah* (prayer). Me and seven others, and two from al-Shabaab'. One of the

two was an imam, while the other was keeping watch, according to Abdukadir. According to Abdukadir, 'After we started *salah*, a car came. They were scared – al-Shabaab – they were scared of the car. The one person [guard] went to the car, and the other, he is the imam. I was thinking, "You have to run". I was thinking a lot, and then I said, "Ok, I will run"'. While Abdukadir ran, he could hear the gunshots behind him and jumped into a river to get away. Afterwards, he walked for two days in the forest. At last, he came to a house and said he was scared and had not eaten for two days. 'Are you running from al-Shabaab? Go away!', he was told. He asked for water, but his plea was refused. Abdukadir then continued his journey and was able to stop a car. He told his story and indicated that he had not eaten for two days.

'Where are you going?', he was asked, and did he have any money? After negotiating with the driver, Abdukadir was able to convince him to take him to a nearby city where his relatives could pay. In the city, he was locked in a house until he had procured money for the driver. Finally, he was able to flee Somalia for Kenya. There, he met another distant relative to whom he told his story. His relative said he was going to talk with the rest of the kin and try to figure something out.

'You – give me some identification papers!' he heard. Abdukadir had been stopped by a police officer after about three months in Kenya and suddenly found himself in a new and difficult situation. He did not speak the language and was brought to detention in handcuffs. The situation for Somali refugees in Kenya, which most likely contributed to his arrest, has been covered elsewhere (e.g. Horst & Nur, 2016, p. 546). After Abdukadir spent two weeks in a prison cell shared with about 90 other people, his relative was able to track him down and bail him out. Suddenly, Abdukadir found that he was in debt to his family. He managed to contact his mother, who had some extra property that she had to sell to cover the expenses. 'After this, they said to me, "What are you thinking?" I said I think I should go to Europe', he reported. OK, they then said, but Europe was going to be very expensive. After raising the cash to leave, Abdukadir met up with a man who took his picture and made a fake passport for him. He was told that he was now going to London. After first travelling from Kenya to Turkey, Abdukadir arrived at what he believed to be London. There, he stayed with some other Somalis, and one night as his handler was asleep, Abdukadir asked them where he was.

'This is Sweden', he was told.

During his retelling of the events, he was now able to laugh about the fact that he had been brought to the wrong place, but at the time he confronted the man who had brought him and

said, 'This is Sweden? I want to go to London!'. 'You want to go to London?', the man had asked. Yes, he did. Soon after, they got into a car and the man said they were going to drive to London. When they arrived, Abdukadir was told they were finally in London and was led to the door of a police station.

'I saw the police and wanted to go back' he reported. 'But they said, "No, come here"'. With no common language, he somehow understood that they were asking him if he wanted anything to drink, and he said, 'Water. I remembered that word'. After a while, an interpreter arrived and he asked them, 'Is this London? England?' They told him it was not; he was in Oslo, Norway.

These four stories reveal some of the reasons why those I interviewed had ended up in Kryssfjord, Endefjord, Varmdal, or Haugen. While distinctive, all four stories reflect how people who are forced to flee respond to external changes in their local communities that in various ways affect their ability to live safely, let alone prosper. Stories of departure are important for this study, as they situate an understanding of the different experiences that frame individual lifeworlds and remind us of how people become refugees: they are forced to flee due to war, conflicts, persecution, and other reasons. The experiences of Adil, Ibrahim, Elefenesh, and Abdukadir have different characteristics that likely affected their mental and physical well-being upon their arrival in Norway. The analytical emphasis on lifeworlds (Helkkula et al., 2012) and life experiences (Osborne, 2018) means that these trajectories are likely to influence their experiences as service recipients in a variety of ways. Below, I present a selection of stories related to arrivals and initial periods in Norway.

Arrival in Norway and Early Days

After finding out he was in Norway, Abdukadir registered as an asylum seeker and was enrolled in the asylum system. After two weeks in a facility near Oslo, he had been able to get in touch with a man from Somalia who came to visit him and brought him some necessities. Abdukadir was later relocated to another asylum centre as he waited for his asylum application to be processed. One day at that centre, he and his friend engaged in a discussion after they had heard that municipalities were more eager to settle two or more people at once than to settle individuals. They had become impatient with the houses and lives into which they were currently locked, sharing a large house and a number of duties with people who often did not do their fair share: 'Some people did not wash the tables and floors. That is not good; it was a bad life', he said.

Acting on the information they had received, Abdukadir and his friend went to the management of the asylum centre where they were living and told them that they wanted to be settled somewhere else and that they were willing to be settled as a duo. A few weeks later, they were transferred and settled in the municipality where Abdukadir still lives.

Samar

Prior to departing for Norway, Samar was living in Lebanon with her family. They had fled a year earlier from a Syrian city that was badly damaged during the war. Prior to the war, she had been a homemaker and reminisced about a life with which she had been very content. 'I would buy and cook food, clean, and wash clothes. Visit my neighbours, family, and my sister.… It was a very good life', she indicated.

In Lebanon, her family was registered by the UNHCR and was soon selected for resettlement in Norway after being interviewed by representatives of the Norwegian authorities. While in Lebanon, they attended a five-day course on Norwegian culture and society, and she was thus somewhat prepared when she finally arrived in Norway. Even though she felt that the course had given her a general understanding of life in Norway, actually coming to the country had been challenging due to cultural differences and the difficulties of learning the language.

In several ways, Samar and her family's arrival in Norway was less strenuous than it may have been for people who had made their way there by themselves and applied for asylum. Crucially, the difference in not having to wait for an asylum application to be approved after arriving in the country appears to have positively affected the early experiences of people resettled from a third country. At the same time, Samar and her family faced the same obstacles as people who had arrived as asylum seekers: they had to learn the language, obtain qualifications that would enable them to obtain permanent residency or citizenship, and secure work that would allow them to become financially self-sufficient. As service recipients in the introduction programme, Samar and other resettlement refugees faced the same challenges as people whose asylum applications had been approved.

Mahmoud

After a year and five months of waiting while living in an asylum centre in western Norway, Mahmoud had approached the staff at the centre and said he wanted to go back to Syria. 'My friends got their residence permits and I did not.… It was boring, and all my friends had received their permit, and for me it was boring. I was waiting and waiting', he said.

Waiting, being transferred between different facilities, and waiting some more constituted the primary activities for many of those interviewed who had been through Norway's asylum system. Based on the interviews, the role of asylum seekers consisted largely of waiting and eagerly expecting what was to come without having any more influence than their asylum interview. Even though most centres had some sort of language course available to asylum seekers, this had not yet been made mandatory and was only offered a few times and for a few hours a week. Other than that, the people enrolled in the system spent their time waiting either for their asylum interviews or to receive an asylum decision that would allow them to be resettled in a municipality.

Mahmoud's subjective experiences from his early days in the country were characterised by frustration over the forced passivity of his existence. This, he stated, had been exacerbated by how many of his friends had their applications accepted before him. For Mahmoud and many others who spent time in the asylum system, the service offerings appeared to provide a foundation for merely being rather than having a meaningful existence. After waiting for almost a year and a half, Mahmoud's application was finally accepted, and he was settled in the municipality where he now lives.

Qasim

For Qasim, the prospect of waiting without doing much was not very appealing, and due to his skills in both Arabic and English, he soon found himself a spokesperson in the asylum centre where he was located:

> There was a period where many had waited seven or eight months for their interview. So I talked to everyone there and told them we had to do something. I talked with the centre management and said, 'We need this [interview] — can you talk with the UDI?' Because it was a difficult time, as we did not speak Norwegian; 90% did not speak English or just a bit of English. And we got a reply from the asylum centre: 'We cannot do anything; we are not allowed'. So we went on strike. (Qasim, interview)

The strike caught the attention of the news media. Following the strike and Qasim's repeated run-ins with the management at the centre, he was moved to another asylum centre before his application was finally approved, and he was settled in a municipality where he was to take part in the introduction programme.

Qasim's story is illuminating with regard to the expectations that exist for asylum seekers as service recipients in the Norwegian asylum service system. Most are left without options and are thus stuck in whatever situation they find themselves. At times, however, some shared stories of their attempts to work 'against the system'.

After being sent to an asylum centre in 2015, Irshad heard stories from other residents who had lived there for five to six years. Fearing a similar fate, he told the people working at the centre that he wanted to go back to Oslo. 'I came and talked to the people at the office the next day [following his arrival]. No, I don't want to live here', he recalled.

The people working there, however, told him that he would lose his right to financial support if he left. Disregarding their warnings, he called up a person who he had met in Refstad – a relatively well-known asylum centre due to its function as a common arrival transit centre in Norway[30] – and asked him where he was staying. After inviting himself to join this individual in a city in south-eastern Norway, he packed his things and left. Soon after, he was offered a place in another asylum centre on the west coast, where he moved and stayed for a while. Six months after his application had been approved and he had started his introduction programme, however, he wanted to return to the place he had left. 'I wanted to go back', he said.

He called up the programme advisors in the municipality where he was now living after realising he did not like the city because he would meet people from Sudan every day with whom he would talk and play cards, 'so I thought that if I talk Arabic and play cards every day, I will not learn to speak Norwegian'.

From Passive to Active Service Recipients

People who arrive and are settled in Norway as refugees have unique biographies, as their paths to becoming service recipients are all characterised by dramatic – but different – circumstances. The excerpts of departures, arrivals, and initial days in Norway provide an important backdrop for understanding refugees' lifeworlds and their experiences of the services provided to them in the municipal refugee service systems. The stories show how their previous experiences and reasons for fleeing shaped their current lifeworlds. At times, those lifeworlds were powerfully influenced by experiences related to their departure, while time in the asylum system could sometimes also shape their general experience of life.

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[30] Refstad Asylum Centre closed on August 31, 2020.

Although it has been argued that asylum seekers may, to various extents, have the ability to 'co-produce' services (understood as being able to influence the types of services rendered) (Strokosch & Osborne, 2016, p. 674), the stories related here suggest that the extent of user involvement is often limited by the agency providing the service to the asylum seekers. Previous studies have found that bureaucracy serves as a barrier to asylum seekers' influence (Bygnes, 2019), as they are put in a limbo that leaves them with little control over their lives.

The case of Qasim, in particular, shows an instance of active resistance against his ascribed role as a passive service recipient during his time spent in asylum centres. While increasing requirements – such as language acquisition and the introduction to 'Norwegian culture and Norwegian values' (Introduksjonsloven, LOV-2003-07-04-80, § 20a) – have been implemented in recent years, service offerings provided to asylum seekers appear to rely heavily on their passivity. This was also reflected in Mahmoud's story of waiting. The most important operant skills to be applied by those enrolled in the asylum system can hence be argued to be patience and trust in the process. The lack of influence over one's life was further revealed in how several of those who had gone through the asylum system reported that they were frequently relocated to different asylum reception centres around the country. While in the centres, the asylum seekers were obliged to do as they were told, which was to wait; not doing so would result in their losing financial support. A family in one municipality reported that they had spent 11 months in a reception centre right next to the municipality where they were finally settled. After those 11 months, that asylum reception centre had been closed down, and the family was sent to another facility that was 2,000 kilometres away before receiving an offer to be settled in a municipality 20 minutes from where they had spent the previous 11 months.

For Mahmoud, the prolonged stay in the asylum system almost caused him to give up, as the lack of influence over his own future resulted in his telling the people at the centre that he would prefer it if they sent him back to Syria:

> They said, 'Why do you want to go back?' and I said one year and five months is enough, and I can't wait. It is boring and all my friends have got it [their applications approved], and for me it is only boring. And I waited and waited. (Mahmoud, interview)

While service offerings for asylum seekers during their time in reception centres appeared to limit their ability to influence their own present and future, the interviews also revealed an interesting side effect. When discussing the social networks of my interlocutors, it became clear that those who had regularly spent time in asylum centres would have a larger social network in Norway

than was the case for people who had arrived through UNHCR resettlement or family reunification. Due to the Norwegian settlement policy of the time, many therefore knew people all over the country. During a class I held as an assistant teacher, I discussed social networks with four participants. Initially, the participants limited their social networks to include only local connections: friends in the municipality, neighbours, and so forth. 'Do you not know people in different places in Norway?', I asked.

'No', one replied, and it became clear that the group had thought I meant Norwegian citizens. After clarifying the issue to include all people in Norway, the answer changed: 'Yaani![31] I know people in Kristiansand, Oslo, Drammen, and Smøla!'

Such networks proved valuable for many, as they could exchange information on the situation in their different municipalities. The networks serve as by-products of the public service offerings to asylum seekers, which has a natural explanation in the fact that groups of people with a common language spent prolonged periods of time together in judicial limbo, thus creating a form of community through their shared experience (see Turner, 1969). The extensive networks, furthermore, seem to help diffuse information between people who had been settled in Norwegian municipalities. For example, a rather obscure change in residency requirements that exempted those enrolled in primary school education from a salary condition to obtain permanent residency was disseminated quickly to the introduction programme participants in the different municipalities. Commenting on the issue, one of the headmasters I spoke with stated, 'rumours often start to spread when it comes to things like these; people find out quickly and the word gets around'.

Driver's licences and differences between municipalities was another frequently discussed topic, as some municipalities provided opportunities for testing and even paid for participants' licences, while others did not. According to Qasim, 'they get permissions in other municipalities, but here, no. You have to take [it] without [extra] money. And it's expensive'. Comparisons across municipalities and different service offerings influenced the settled refugees' experience of service where they lived, as the promises inherent in the service offerings of other municipalities – such as financial support to obtain a driver's license – could be more beneficial than the service offerings they received.

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[31] This is an Arabic expression that roughly translates to 'you know', 'umm', and similar interjections.

Although the service offerings that are provided through the public refugee service systems are extensive, they were also often seen as restricting the possibilities of those who had settled. The degree of freedom and ability settled refugees have over control their own lives is particularly restricted during the initial period in Norway. After the participants have had their applications for asylum accepted or people are resettled from other countries as resettlement refugees, their freedom over their lives grows. First, this is manifested in that they are able to move out of asylum reception centres and into their own apartments and make a number of choices about personal matters. As settled refugees in the municipalities, furthermore, people have the right to influence their own futures through individualised introduction programme plans and are also relieved of the prospect of being deported if their asylum application is rejected.

Below, I explore the ways in which settled refugees in the municipalities were able to integrate their resources with the municipal refugee service offerings.

Settled Refugees as Recipients of Service Offerings

> I like the place where I have my work practice. However, I do not decide; the boss [of the introduction programme] decides. I do not decide. (Amr, interview)

The primary service rendered by countries that settle refugees is protection. The 'right to seek and to enjoy in other countries' asylum from persecution' (United Nations, 2015, Article 14) is an established part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a global agreement that has been incorporated into several international treaties. As the historical context presented in Chapter 4 shows, however, the issue of refugees and people seeking protection has wider implications when countries come to the realisation that those who arrive in need of protection are going to stay. Since the beginning of service provision for refugees and immigrants in Norway, which has primarily consisted of language education, those who arrived have been treated as service recipients in a variety of ways. In the 1970s, the reimbursement of fees for Norwegian courses framed the then labour immigrants as largely capable of economic self-sufficiency, while it was deemed advantageous that they would get to know the language and become acquainted with the culture. At the time, as shown in Chapter 4, the culture and customs of those who arrived were considered resources that could serve to influence people already in Norway, just as those who arrived would be influenced by Norwegian culture and customs (St. Meld. Nr. 39, 1973-1974, p. 36).

Following the implementation of the introduction programme and its later evolution, the framing of newly arrived immigrants as service recipients had been altered. In this context, Djuve and

Kavli have argued how 'the policy initiatives' that had been implemented to develop the programme 'seem to focus more on control and sanctions than on programme content and quality' (Djuve & Kavli, 2018, p. 13). The increasing use of sanctions in the introduction programme has limited the capacity for user involvement, and programme advisors and other employees are stuck between a rock (the legislation and its requirements) and a hard place (service recipients' needs). How, I ask in this section, was this experienced by the participants as service recipients of municipal refugee services?

In general, the core elements of the introduction programme are those provided in accordance with the three pillars of the Introduction Act: language education, a civics course, and language and work practice. Adult education and work practice depend on a supportive system provided through the refugee administration offices and adult education centres, which are in charge of making sure the programmes are administered in accordance with the refugees' individual plans. Those plans are an embedded part of the introduction programme and define the goals and measures towards which individual participants should work. The refugee administration takes care of practical and administrative matters concerning the weekly timesheets, housing, organisation of work practice, and contact with relevant partners in the service system; at times, they also establish connections with potential new partners in the extended service environment. The aim of PSOs working with refugees is to fulfil their lawful obligations, which in turn should help those settled to become integrated, particularly by gaining employment and becoming self-sufficient.

From a PSL perspective, public service offerings are made to facilitate the co-creation of value through 'how the citizen uses this offering and how it interacts with his/her own life experience' (Osborne, 2018, p. 228). This indicates that individual service recipients are likely to have different experiences based on their interaction with service offerings, as their current lifeworld situations – in addition to their general resources and skills – are apt to affect their value creation. If the introduction programme as a comprehensive service offering from the municipality to individuals is considered an aggregation of its components, the threshold for benefitting from it can be supposed to be lower than from others. In the case of housing, for instance, the service recipient is able to interact with the service offering by having a key to the house or apartment in question. However, the experienced value of the housing provided can vary. In the rural context of this study, where villages were often spread throughout a municipality, those who arrived and settled as refugees would sometimes be expected to make do with what they had received. Qasim,

who upon arrival had been settled outside the main village, had complained about this to his programme advisor:

> I do not know the language, and in the beginning, I needed to live closer to the village centre. He [programme advisor] said to me, 'You come from war and have to be thankful for a house and food and the things we give you'. I said OK, but it was difficult for me. (Qasim, interview)

While Qasim's complaints about being settled outside the village centre were not necessarily detrimental to his ability to make use of the municipality's service offerings, the situation did affect his self-perceived benefit: the discrepancy between his self-perceived needs and the offering of the municipality affected the value outcome for him. Ibrahim, who lived in the same municipality, shared a similar impression of the service offerings it provided and stated, 'I appreciate the things the municipality is doing for the refugees and the people who come here. You know, they are doing their best. But sometimes, you know, we need more help from them'.

The self-perceived needs of those who had settled were also discussed among the employees who sometimes lamented that their hands were tied and that legislation, time, and resources prevented them from doing everything the service recipients reportedly needed. Nonetheless, the configuration and practices associated with the municipal refugee service offerings were scrutinised by the people who had settled and were supposed to integrate their resources with these offerings in order to co-create value. Sometimes, the needs of the service recipients did not match the service offerings provided in their local contexts. Misaligned value outcomes between those articulated in policy (intended value) and those determined by the service recipients (actual value) thus intensified the gap between the two types of value outcomes.

From the participants' perspective, the adult education centres served as the primary service offering arena in the municipalities. The facilities were thus an important part of the municipalities' value facilitation:

> I think it is a very good place; it is very useful, and I think the introduction programme is very useful for people who come from abroad, especially people who do not know how to manage their lives. Every week we have an hour and a half [the introduction hour], and every time they bring somebody to give us information. Which is … we need it! (Ibrahim, interview)

Ibrahim had come from a middle-class life in pre-war Syria and had only been in the municipality for about six months when I met him. As he had lived in England in his younger days, he spoke

English fluently and quickly became a resource at the adult education centre, where he would translate the teacher's English translations of Norwegian words into Arabic for his fellow participants. His emphasis on the utility of the programme indicates how it, in addition to serving as a qualifying scheme, provided a sense of security to a group of people whose lives had been completely upended. The introduction hour, which was a 60- to 90-minute session given in Ibrahim's municipality every week, was also framed as particularly important in how it provided a window into the participants' new society. During the introduction hour, representatives from throughout civil society, from dentists and police to the local football team, came to the adult education centre and presented their work.

The integral use of participants in local service offerings, such as the role as translators, was common in the different municipalities. While a prevailing norm suggested that it would be preferable for students to speak Norwegian in the classroom, most teachers seemed to allow – and even facilitate – the participants' mutual aid through translating for the teachers. The practice of allowing classroom translation, despite a norm that stated Norwegian should be the only language spoken in that space, arose as a pragmatic approach by the teachers through acknowledging and activating bilingual speakers as important resources in their service offering. Classroom cooperation between teachers and advanced students or students who were bilingual and had a language in common with the teachers (such as English) revealed the discrepancy between the formally defined service offerings and the enacted practices. Participants as service recipients were, at times, included in the provision of the service offering in which they themselves were to take part. This example frames the fluidity in the roles of the participants as service recipients and the way in which differing knowledge foundations – as operant resources – influenced how they could benefit from the local service offerings.

Education and previous language knowledge were one of several resource-integrating skills among the participants in the various programmes that separated one from another. At the adult education centres, estimations of progress in learning are based on education and language knowledge (Djuve et al., 2017, p. 223). As a result, different educational tracks are designed for different participants. For some of those interviewed, however, the prospect of learning the language in the classroom was considered to slow their learning progress. Tariq, who had previously worked as an electrician in Syria, stated the following:

> I do not think it is good with adult education, but I think that if I work and talk to
> people and listen to different dialects, my ears will get used to the sounds, and I think
> I have to concentrate at work to understand people. (Tariq, interview)

Scepticism regarding the municipal – and government-mandated – service offerings was sometimes expressed by participants who did not understand that things had to be done in a certain way. That is to say, there appeared to be a discrepancy between the standardised components of the introduction programme as a way of providing basic qualifications and the settled refugees' preferred ways of learning. Sadiq felt that the school was not sufficient to learn Norwegian. 'I have been to school for a year and a half, but I don't think I learned anything at school', he said. For Sadiq, the service offering provided did not correspond to his wish (and need) to talk as much as he possibly could. While he stated that he had not learned anything at school, Sadiq had been able to connect with actors and organisations outside the municipal refugee service system: he was part of a local football team and helped a man out with an after-school activity. At the football field, he had been required to learn efficient communication and said, 'I have to talk with them in Norwegian so that we understand each other'.

For fast learners, the standardisation of the introduction programme could sometimes be seen as a hindrance rather than a way to facilitate their full entry into Norwegian society. Here, standardisation refers to how most students were part of groups that included people with very different language levels and educational backgrounds. Even though efforts were made to differentiate the language tutoring, this was often difficult to implement in the municipalities because they had relatively few participants. For other participants, however, the programme was beneficial in the way it allowed them to spend the time needed to learn a new language. Elefenesh, a woman who had come from Ethiopia, initially thought that the idea of learning a new language through the programme would be difficult: 'It was stressful, coming to school without knowing Norwegian', she indicated. During the first period at the adult education centre, participants who do not have a language in common with their teachers are left trying to figure out what a new set of letters is supposed to signify while listening to the unintelligible gibberish that comes out of the teacher's mouth. Even though she was struggling with the sounds that filled the classroom, Elefenesh considered herself lucky because her language also used the Latin alphabet. 'When I came here', she said, 'it was not difficult to read'. She added, 'I can read but did not understand anything. Later, I started to understand little by little'. In addition to the actual provision of education, the time (in hours, days, and weeks) offered was an important component of the service offering, as the programme and income security offered for those participating allowed them to take the time required to learn the language. Although disagreeing with the hours spent in the programme, Amr, a Syrian man in his forties, had positive things to say about the language education component of the services provided:

> They make sure everyone speaks correctly and sometimes help me with what does
> this mean, what does this mean, what does this mean, what does this mean? Yes, I like
> the teachers a lot, but there are too many hours [at school]. (Amr interview)

Unleashing and Wasting Settled Refugees' Operant Resources

> When I live in Norway, I have to be useful; I did not come for Norway to help me,
> just for protection. Help with protection but not with money. I have an education, a
> vocation, and experience. I will be useful. (Tariq, interview)

Settled refugees as service recipients who interact with service offerings, I have argued, do so based on thresholds and requirements established for them to be able to create value from those offerings. Housing and financial assistance, as part of the service offering, have been argued to be an essential part of the basic service provided to people who arrive as refugees. Although some people struggled to become acquainted with using new appliances, for instance, having money to buy food and a roof over their heads does not require the intensive use of personal skills. Some service offering components thus had a lower threshold for resource integration and consequent value creation.

Prior to the war in Syria, Tariq had worked as an electrician in an industrial plant for approximately six years. After his arrival and subsequent settlement in the municipality, he applied to the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) to become qualified as an electrician in Norway. For a while, both Tariq and his programme advisor believed his application to NOKUT would be approved, and he started a work practice position with a local electricity company working with high-voltage projects. There, the manager had been pleased with his work, but stated that despite Tariq's skills, they would not have been able to hire him at that point. His application to NOKUT was later declined, and he was then reconsidering his future. Despite this setback, Tariq remained optimistic: 'I have an education, vocation, and experience. I am going to be useful'.

Tariq's story resembled those of several other interviewees. Previous surveys have identified people with experiences like Tariq's, in which vocational or university degrees from the country of origin have been fully or partially declined by Norwegian authorities either because they do not have the standards required or do not have the necessary documentation (Djuve et al., 2017, p. 195). Because of the setback caused by NOKUTs rejection of his application, Tariq had come to realise that he would have to start anew. As a result, he had applied for a vocational education programme to work as an electrician at the local high school, which he hoped to start during the

next school year. 'When I live in Norway, I have to be useful for society. I did not come here for [financial] aid, only for protection', he insisted.

People with previous professional experience who were enrolled in the programme reported that they were eager to start working. As is argued in the previous section, this can in part be explained by how people with professional and higher education backgrounds have skills that supersede the future promise of value embedded in the municipalities' service offerings. Here, the rural setting is an important factor, as several of the adult education centres reported difficulties in providing a thoroughly differentiated and customised programme. Consequently, people capable of rapid progression would sometimes be held back to accommodate those on a slower track. This resonates with a previous survey which reported that the level of ambition – as reflected through individual plans – differed between highly educated participants and the advisors responsible for their programmes (Lillevik & Tyldum, 2018, p. 7). For example, the report cites how the aim of the introduction programme for people with higher education was to learn the language properly and participate in work practice as unskilled workers in an unrelated profession. Part of the justification for holding back or slowing down the progression of programme participants was the idea that learning the language properly would help them translate – and deploy – their skills in a new context. For someone who had once worked as a doctor in another country, the skills associated with this practice necessitate advanced language proficiency in a new language if they are to be used in another country.

The relationship between unleashing and wasting participants' operant skills is a balancing act to be negotiated between the programme participant and those in charge. For Tariq, the electrician from Syria, his future prospects had made him reconsider his previous vocation due to the time it would take to acquire the appropriate documents that would allow him to keep his job. Despite having worked for several years with the same electricity voltage, he had started to think about working with food. As a self-acclaimed 'good chef' who had noticed an influx of tourists to his village during the summer, he had applied for a certificate to sell food from a kiosk during the summer. 'I can make it very cheap, for 50 Norwegian kroner maybe, and I can sell a hundred falafels every day because there are a lot of tourists here with little money, and they don't want to pay a lot in a restaurant', Tariq reported.

Tariq had thus designed a potential service offering based on the availability of customers during the tourist season and the cost of food in his village. From an extended service environment perspective, a potential way to aggregate latent resources that could have a competitive advantage had thus been articulated. Eager to start his business venture, and with the support of the local

refugee advisor, he had completed an application to the municipality so that he would be able to operate legally. 'I applied before May to start in July, but I never got an answer', he sighed in November. 'I don't know why I never got an answer'. Nonetheless, he was still positive about the idea – and other ventures – and was already starting to plan to send a new application in February.

'I could not imagine what it would be like if I did not have this [work practice], and what would happen to me', Qasim said. Reflecting on how he had worked as a veterinarian in Syria before the war and later in Dubai until the situation there became unbearable due to ever-lower wages, he reported, 'they told me you have to work for 1,000 US dollars a month. And it was difficult to say no because I would have to go back to Syria'. Following his time between various asylum centres in Norway, he was settled in his municipality where, after some time, he was offered a work practice position in a veterinary clinic. His application to NOKUT had been approved with reservations, and he would have to complete two additional semesters to qualify as a veterinarian. At the clinic, he had established a good relationship with his boss and was able to learn and practice Norwegian while doing something he was already trained to do. He was ambitious about the prospects of finishing his education in Norway, but due to a recent change in the laws regarding permanent residency, he had started to think that he might have to postpone those plans. The change added exemptions from an income requirement for people enrolled in high school but not for university students, as far as he understood. Thus, Qasim indicated, 'I had a plan last year … to go to university and continue. But now, if I go, I will not get permanent residency. Therefore, if I go to high school my chances are better'. Prioritising obtaining permanent residency had gotten in the way of completing his education, even though the latter course could have resulted in him getting a relevant job sooner. For Qasim, the self-assessed benefit of obtaining permanent residency was prioritised over his ability to finish his education and obtain a stable job over the near term.

The actual legal difference that appears to have been decisive for Qasim is the legislative wording, in which students at primary school or high school are stipulated to have a valid exemption from the income requirement from the moment of enrolment, while university students must have attended university or college full-time for the previous 12 months.[32]

Abdukadir had been in Norway for five years at the time of our hour-long interview and was finished with his time in the programme. He would come to school whenever he had time off

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[32] https://www.udi.no/ord-og-begreper/krav-til-a-forsorge-seg-selv-for-a-fa-permanent-oppholdstillatelse/?in=3.

from the various jobs he was working on a temporary basis. He was the only one of the interviewees who had finished the programme and thus provided a different perspective. In Somalia, the country from which he was forced to flee, he had received only minimal schooling, although he could write and read Somali and Arabic, which he had learned at Quranic school. During his time in the programme, he had lived with a friend who had progressed more rapidly, and Qasim that he had been reliant on his support and help from the people at the refugee administration and adult education centre. Now, he felt a sense of emancipation:

> Especially after my friend moved, that was good. Before when I had to call the police or bank, I would be afraid to talk with them, in case I needed help. I would say, 'friend, can you help me?' Now that I am alone, I can do everything. (Abdukadir, interview)

Through the programme, Abdukadir had been able to spend the time needed to learn the language, which later laid the foundation for his ability to do everything he wanted.

The 'one-size-fits-all' design of the introduction programme (Lillevik & Tyldum, 2018, p. 37), in which participants have to follow and fulfil certain requirements to get their paycheque, can be seen as an instrument of equal opportunity. The participants' perceived benefits from the municipal service offerings, however, have now been shown to differ based on the resources and skills that each brings to the process of interacting with these offerings. For some participants with previous vocations or higher education, the extensiveness of the introduction programme – combined with the 'de-skilling' that ensued as a result of their not being able to continue working in their former sectors – made them report a feeling of wasting their time in the programme. Similar findings have been reported elsewhere (Bygnes, 2019). However, while ambition and motivation might have made the length of the programme seem like a waste of time, the idea of wasting operant skills was balanced by the need to learn the language to apply these skills in an entirely new linguistic setting.

Participants interacting with the introduction programme as a municipal service offering are thus likely to benefit differently based on the skills and resources they bring with them. For some, the programme may be perceived as slowing down their process of becoming part of and useful to the community. For others, however, the egalitarian design of the programme provided new opportunities.

Egalitarian Service Offerings: New Opportunities for Women?

Certain gendered challenges have been reported in association with the introduction programme, as women who arrived with families often had their programmes delayed or postponed due to child-care responsibilities (Djuve, Kavli, & Hagelund, 2011, p. 60). The fieldworks revealed that this resulted from a lack of available kindergarten openings in the municipalities, the presence of very small children, or pregnancy during the programme. While different municipalities have tried a variety of solutions to ensure that women away from the programme for parental leave have an opportunity to learn Norwegian, this has yet to be implemented nationwide. Elefenesh, an interviewee who had recently returned from parental leave reported how it had marked a break in her language learning process, as she would 'only watch [Norwegian] TV, and sometimes read it in a book'.

Despite the gendered challenges that exist, which may be influenced by certain regional customs and cultures, several of the women interviewed reported the advantages of the programme's egalitarian design. Here, egalitarianism is understood as referring to how the programme is offered to all newly arrived refugees regardless of their previous education, professional background, or gender. As the introduction programme is aimed at all newly arrived refugees, it provides a new opportunity for women with little education that they seemed unlikely to have had in their countries of origins.

Tsehaytu had completed six years of primary school; later, she got married and did not continue education or start work. In 2014, her husband escaped Eritrea to find a new life for himself, Tsehaytu, and their children, and she had gone to stay in a refugee camp in a nearby country while waiting for family reunification. While in Eritrea and the neighbouring country, access to schooling for her and later her children had been barred due to the expense of school fees and school uniforms: 'Books and uniforms are expensive. For one year and six months, my children did not go to school. We just sat home and went to church', she told me. After her husband had arrived in Norway and begun the process of bringing his family over, he had told her that she would have to go to school – that is, the introduction programme – when she got there. 'He told me that when you get to Norway, you have to go to school. "Yes! Yes, I want to go to school", I told him', she reported. At the time of the interview, Tsehaytu was planning to finish her Norwegian training and attend primary school so she could qualify to attend the local high school for vocational training as a health worker.

Hawa told a similar story, except that she had completed eight years of primary school and two years of high school in Sudan. She did not complete the third year of high school, got married, and later reunited with her husband, who had left to establish a new life in Norway. At the time of the interview, she had been part of the programme for nine months, but she spoke decent Norwegian without the need of a translator during our interview. 'I like learning Norwegian, and I want to learn Norwegian', she told me in clear *Nynorsk* (New Norwegian), the educational language of her municipality. The opportunity to obtain an education had instilled a steadfast motivation in her, and she was now planning to complete both primary and high school and hopefully continue her education at a university in a nearby town. 'I want to become a nurse', she said.

For both women, their previously truncated education appeared to result from high fees combined and marital and maternal duties after they were married. When in Norway, however, the service offerings provided through the introduction programme – notably free education – combined with Norway's domestic, cultural, and economic preferences for dual-income households meant the women would not have to – or perhaps be able to – stay home as homemakers. While Hawa and Tsehaytu – who were both relatively young – seemed to be excited about the prospects of continuing their education and obtaining paid work, others were more reluctant.

Samar had finished six years of primary education in Syria and had later worked as a homemaker for some 20 years. 'I was a housewife, and it was a very good life', she told me through a translator. 'We had no problems before the war [in Syria]. My husband worked and I took care of the kids and did housework'. Before being flown to Norway as resettlement refugees through the UNHCR, Samar and her husband had attended a five-day course that provided them with basic insights into Norwegian society. Responding to a question regarding the cultural differences between the two countries, she replied that 'first of all, women have to work here. In Syria, all women do not work'.

The translator, who came from another country in the region, elaborated and stated, 'because of this it is a bit difficult for the Arab women to work when they have not done it before. And they come here with many kids, so it is difficult'.

Samar was not overly excited about going back to school but realised that 'I have to learn Norwegian'. Despite her initial reservations, she was now starting to get used to the idea of having to work and wanted to transfer her household skills to a professional environment by

becoming a cook. Once more, however, she found an obstacle to her plans, as she was afraid she would have to handle pork. 'She wants to become a cook', the translator said, 'but because of pork – she can't touch pork [as a Muslim] – and therefore it is difficult to choose that job'.

The (largely) non-gendered service offering provided to those who had settled and enrolled in the introduction programmes had gendered consequences that surfaced through the service recipients' experienced benefits. For Hawa, the ability to benefit from the educational component was not only enabled through her personal skills as an avid learner but also facilitated additional opportunities to continue her education, opportunities that she may not have had in her own country. Similarly, but from a different perspective, Samar had been hesitant about the prospect of having to work based on her previous life experiences as a housewife, which was a life she had enjoyed. Now, the obligation to be part of a dual-income household had left her in a country in which her previous arrangement with her husband would not be sustainable, and she would have to find work. Her skills would then have to be used differently than before and for a different purpose: earning money rather than making a home.

The service offerings provided through the municipal introduction programmes are shown here to be differently conceived by different people. Adding to the variations in previous education and skills, the gendered perspective appears to be of importance through the way previous opportunities – or the lack thereof – were replaced. At the same time, earlier studies have highlighted how underlying gender differences in societies with a more traditionally gendered division of labour can make it difficult for some onetime homemakers like Samar to make the shift from working at home to a wage-earner (Djuve et al., 2011, p. 108).

Refugees' Position in the Community

Settled refugees make up a peculiar social group in how their presence in their local communities results from their being enrolled in global, regional, and national service systems related to their refugee status, such as the UNHCR, IOM, and the EU. Once settled in a municipality in Norway, they have most of their needs covered in full by the municipalities that have agreed to settle them; while they are enrolled in the municipalities' introduction programmes, they live their lives in close symbiosis with the service offerings and the people who offer such services. For the municipalities, the relationship is established through the decision to settle and offer an introduction programme for refugees, for which they receive additional financial support from the central government.

Whether to operate in relative isolation or engage with the broader society is a dilemma faced by both municipal refugee services and settled refugees. From the interviews conducted with those who had been settled, it became clear that many felt that their time at the adult education centre or in work and language practice took up most of their day. With only a few exceptions, this resulted in only a few of those interviewed engaging with the communities of which they were supposed to become part. As a curious side effect, the services rendered to refugees with the intention of integrating them into the local communities thus served as a wedge between them and their future local communities and fellow citizens.

Community Integration: 'It Is Very Difficult to Integrate in Norway'

> I usually speak to my neighbours, and we had coffee a couple of times. I have very nice ladies — two ladies downstairs — where I live. And that is all, because I noticed that the Norwegian people, they are very careful with new people. So they are very careful, and they do not want new friends. (Ibrahim, interview)

People who are settled as refugees and arrive as immigrants are often expected to become integrated into a country, and the fieldwork revealed persistent attempts at refugees' one-way integration with their local communities. Even though my interlocutors wanted to get in touch with locals and made repeated attempts to do so, many felt that their attempts were not reciprocated. Community integration, as distinct from the organised integration facilitated by the municipal refugee service system, proved to be more of a challenge due to the absence of clear-cut and explicit agreements that provided a foundation for communication. Moreover, the process of making friends was perceived as challenging. For some, such as Ibrahim, the difficulty in finding friends was attributed to a sense that Norwegians were 'very careful' and did 'not want new friends'.

Youssef, a Syrian man who lived in the same municipality and had a similar impression, stated, 'often – I may be wrong – but often I think Norwegians are difficult'.

'Difficult how?', I asked him.

'Difficult to be friends and visit you.… Difficult social life in Norway', he replied.

While language was often cited as the key to integration – 'language is the key; you have to have very good language', said Yared – this key only seemed to open certain doors.

Through the interviews, I explored the question of sociality and Norwegian language practice outside the adult education centre through a series of questions regarding the interviewees' leisure time (see Appendix 1). Rachid, who had previously lived in Russia and learned Russian, had encountered different challenges in Norway. While in Russia, he was immersed with Russians, as no one there spoke his native Arabic, and he had started working straight away. As a result, he had soon become fluent in Russian. Now, the translator told me, 'he has no one to talk to' in Norwegian and would only speak Arabic during his leisure time. Towards the end of the interview, he asked me – as a representative of Norwegians – if people from Norway did not like people from Syria. He had a persistent feeling of being lonely and had been trying to figure out the reason why no one wanted to talk to him.

The feeling of skewed reciprocity and an overt burden on refugees to integrate resonates with a particular mode of sociality in Norway and, while that phenomenon appears to be understudied, previous reports have revealed similar findings. In an ONR from 1986, a Hungarian couple who came to Norway as refugees 'described the Norwegian lifestyle as cultivating loneliness' (my translation, NOU 1986: 8, p. 145). The findings from the report further indicate how 'it is seldom that anyone takes the initiative to talk with strangers on the bus. One can even stand in an elevator with a group of Norwegians without anyone saying a word' (NOU 1986: 8, p. 145). More recently, a survey of participants in the introduction programme – in other words, newly arrived refugees – found a similar trend, as many of those enrolled in the program experienced not having anyone to speak with and thus improve their language skills outside the activities organised by the municipality (Lillevik & Tyldum, 2018, p. 70). 'I actually wish that I had Norwegian friends. If I had, I think I would have learned Norwegian a long time ago', an interlocutor is cited as saying (Lillevik & Tyldum, 2018, p. 70). The actual influence of a lack of social arenas and the ability to create social networks for people settled as refugees has not been explored in depth in this study, but it seems probable that it could have a profound impact on integration.

The perception of a different kind of sociality was present, to various degrees, in all the interviews I conducted. Reminiscing about their lives in their home countries, variations of the sentence 'those were very social days' – as Sadiq put it – occurred again and again. The statements were frequently mirrored by descriptions of life in Norway, where the perception of a social life was that people 'say hi, hi and go', as Elefenesh indicated.

Qasim made similar statements and noted, 'social life there [in Syria] is very different from here. We have more friends; we have more colleagues. We go more to visit each other, and that is

normal. I can't remember a day when I stayed at home'. Reflecting on the differences, he further reported how 'here, people [are] busier with their work and their lives than having contact with others'.

While the refugees experienced different benefits and value outcomes from the introduction programme and municipal service offerings, most experienced some sort of beneficial outcome from going to school and attending some form of work practice. Local communities, in contrast, were not organised as a service offering into which they could simply go and 'integrate' their resources by talking and spending time with people. Notably, the absence of arenas to meet other people was reported to be a challenge, as most of these arenas were either 'hidden' in the volunteer sector or out of reach for a variety of reasons.

The settled refugees told me how they saw contacts that were latent in their community as a pool of potential actors with whom they could interact but found a lack of arenas that could facilitate such meetings. In terms of the analytical language of value co-creation, there were no places that could function as a joint sphere. Sometimes, this could refer to the lack of a physical place; at other times, a particular type of social behaviour (such as the social barriers to striking up a casual conversation) seemed to hinder the processes of integration between settled refugees and local communities.

Generally, there was a lack of places for people to meet in the municipalities. In one municipality, a Syrian man in his twenties who had been able to establish a stable network among other Syrians there noted that there was a café in the municipality. However, he told me, 'I can see that it is always closed'. In another municipality, a man in his fifties had taken a pragmatic approach to the absence of physical locations where people could meet and cited the grocery store as a place where he could practice his Norwegian. There, he would engage with the employees to learn the names of the different ingredients he needed.

> I go to talk in the grocery store. If you come and don't remember where something is, you have to ask … One day, I forgot the name for ginger. Yes, I needed ginger. I walked around and could not find it; What is the name? I wrote ginger in Arabic in Google to find a picture, but I didn't know the Norwegian name. I showed the picture to someone in the store and said 'I need this'. No problem. Sometimes I ask and learn words many times. (Yared, interview)

While mundane examples like searching for an ingredient and finding the right word in Norwegian may seem trivial in the grand scheme of refugee integration as a process that is

supposed to make someone part of a new society, it is in fact at the centre of a larger process for those doing the searching. This example also shows a certain peculiarity related to sociality and the way some arenas are better suited to social interactions than others, such as the store versus the streets. Locating suitable places for social interactions served as a major obstacle for several of those interviewed, who often found themselves in a transnational conundrum. In the country Yared came from, for instance, he explained how 'if you are new in my country the neighbour comes to say hi and brings some food and coffee. Then we sit for three or four hours to talk and then we go home. But here, you are alone, and it is very difficult'. In the absence of neighbourly connections, a woman from Ethiopia described how she had established a network with other women from the same region, whom she invited to afternoon coffee gatherings and walks.

In addition to the difficulties of learning a new language and acquiring new skills that would make their integration 'successful' from the policy perspective of becoming full-fledged – and taxpaying – members of society, the lives of settled refugees were characterised by the efforts required to find their place in a new society. These individual and experiential aspects broaden the meaning of refugee integration beyond the policy demands that define who has or has not been successfully integrated.

'I have been baptised for integration in [a nearby city]', Adam reported in an interview. He had come to Norway towards the end of 2015, during the height of the influx of arrivals that year. Some years later, he had been baptised in a Christian congregation where he had gotten to know some people. 'Sometimes they call me, and it is very nice for me, since I learn more Norwegian', he said. At the time of the interview, he was a participant in the introduction programme, and dreamt of becoming a car mechanic. He had fled political prosecution in his homeland and was eager to become part of Norwegian society, a society with which, he repeatedly emphasised, he shared common values. 'Hi', he told me he would say to people on the street, 'My name is Adam, I am a social person and kind.… I believe in democracy and my ideology is the same as yours'.

During his time at an asylum centre in one of western Norway's larger cities, he had become friends with a family. Whether he was baptised due to this relationship remained somewhat unclear, but the act reflected his motivation to be integrated. As part of the effort, he had left his previous name behind and adopted a new one. 'They [people from the congregation] call me sometimes, and it is very nice for me', Adam stated. 'I learn more Norwegian. If you do not have contact, you cannot learn!'.

For settled people, the difficulties of establishing a social network in the local communities had profound implications for their experience of the process of social inclusion.

The Pursuit of Mundanity

While the introduction programme serves as an extensive government scheme that requires effort from both the municipal refugee service systems and those settled as refugees, the lives of the latter carry on after the bell signals the end of the school day in the afternoon. The 'de-skilling' and 're-skilling' process described earlier in this chapter transcends into everyday subjective experiences, as expectations are replaced by new realities. There was hence no longer what has been termed a quasi-perfect fit between expectations and reality (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 164), and the predictable existence they had known prior to war and conflict had been replaced by uncertainty. The unknown aspects of Norwegian society made the country appear as a sort of uncontrollable externality in which expected reactions to various actions had been erased:

> When I came to Norway, the day I moved to [the village], I wanted to celebrate. So that is the same; we celebrate a lot. We [Bassam and a friend] went to the local hotel [bar] and got to know a girl. We met and said hi, and I told her I spoke some English. She said she had two kids, and I said, 'But where is your husband?' She said, 'I am not married'. This would be impossible in Syria. To have kids and not be married, then it will be honour killings and so forth. (Bassam, interview)

Anecdotes of cultural epiphanies were plentiful among the interviewees and were – it appeared – handled in very different ways. Reflecting on the differences and the ingrained moral compass that comes with a culture embedded 'in thousands of years', Bassam stated: 'I get that it is a different culture, and that I have a different culture. So I cannot say what is done is wrong.… So I just … I think it is weird'. The influence of culture served as the most striking marker of differences between their former countries and Norway, and they affected the settled refugees' processes of becoming accustomed to life in a new country in different ways.

For Amr, a man in his forties who had also come from Syria, the transition had been more of a rude awakening. When he and his family first arrived in Norway, they had watched Norwegian television. By the time of his interview, however, they had stopped:

> Me and my kids liked to watch Norwegian television, but I have.… My kids and I are Muslims. I don't like everything on TV, because everyone is not a proper person. One time when, I was watching TV, maybe half a month ago, a person did not have clothes on. (Amr, interview)

At the time of the interview, the reality TV show *Ex on the Beach* had just started to air, where a group of people are gathered in some exotic location to be – in Amr's words – not proper people, and at the time of the interview I suspected he was talking about that show. He then said, 'we just read books, just talk, read and write, in addition to watching some Arabic TV and following the news'.

While differences and cultural disagreements regarding what it means to be a proper person are frequent among Norwegians and thus not always the result of coming from another country, the stories of Amr and Bassam represent different strategies in coping with alternative realities. For Bassam, who was notably younger than Amr, the differences encountered were met with an understanding that things were not the same in Norway as they were in the country he had left. Reflecting further on the issue of coping with change, he stated, 'I am sure that not all of them [Syrian refugees] will be here their whole life, especially families with girls'. Due to the disagreements regarding social behaviour, he believed some would probably never adapt, 'and then it is better to go back to Syria.… I feel sorry for them, but I do not think about them'.

The balancing of past and present, continuity and disruption, was a continual exercise for many and affected their general lifeworlds. Some, however, had made conscious decisions to make a clean break with the past and get on with the future. When he arrived in Norway, Bassam 'stopped contact with everyone'. To learn the language, he figured, he would have to think like a child and be spontaneous. Furthermore, he stopped following the news, as 'there is always something happening and something bad, and then you will be down there [in Syria] all the time'. This, he argued, would have made it difficult to focus on learning the language, as would continuing to have contact with friends in Syria. A conscious decision was thus made to alter his lifeworld context, and he figured that for a while, he would have to focus on himself because there was no one who could help him where he stayed. 'Since I left Syria', he said, 'I have become a completely different person. I have had to take responsibility'.

Qasim described his situation along similar lines. Describing his transition and initial period in Norway, he stated, 'I had many threads [going back to Syria] when I got here, but I have had to cut them now. I am almost finished with that situation'.

Relocating to a vastly different cultural region comes with the challenge of learning how to adapt to the society. Such adaptation could be articulated through a balancing of lives past, present, and future. For people with families, this balance was sometimes manifested in language and the perceived need to speak their mother tongue to their children so that they would not forget it:

> Sometimes I try to speak Norwegian with my kids because I want to learn Norwegian. The kids learned Norwegian – it is easy for them. I think that when they speak Norwegian all the time, they forget my mother tongue…. I mostly speak to them in my language, but when they speak together, they only speak Norwegian. It is difficult when the kids don't speak their mother tongue. (Elefenesh, interview)

For Elefenesh, the language proficiency of her children has left her in a double bind. While she could become better at Norwegian by speaking it with her children, this would come at the cost of their forgetting their – or her – language: 'And I say to the children, "don't speak so much Norwegian", but they forget [not to speak Norwegian]', she added. The benefit of having children was reported by other parents as well, who would sometimes use them as translators in stores and other public places.

Nonetheless, the inherent reluctance to speak Norwegian in the home was prevalent due to its consequences for children. 'I think if I talk to the children in Norwegian, they will forget Arabic. They learn Norwegian in school; I have to speak Arabic at home so they do not forget', Adil said.

While recognising the benefit of their children's language proficiency, their ability to communicate with them was seen as threatened. 'My youngest forgot Tigrinya and only speaks Norwegian. When I talk, he says, "No mom! I don't understand Tigrinya!" He forgot…. But it is good, all is good', Tsehaytu noted. Other times, when she wanted to watch Tigrinya shows or movies on TV, her child would cry out, 'No, I don't like Tigrinya!' However, responding to whether she thought it was a bad thing – as others had reported – she said, 'No it is not bad. I say, "OK, I will change the channel afterwards"'.

Rural Municipalities as Future Homes

> I wish I could find a job here; the people are very kind people, and [this is a] peaceful place. But I don't think there are many opportunities for a job, so it is better to go to a big city. Where I can find, you know, a job. I don't want to stay like this, you know. If I find a job in another big place or city, I will move straight away. Because, you know, I am wasting my time. (Ibrahim interview)

The rural population in Norway is increasingly getting older, with the younger population having moved to the larger cities (Meld. St. 5, 2019-2020, p. 29). With the exception of Haugen, the municipalities featured in this study all had populations that were predicted by Statistics Norway to decline by 2040. Facing an ageing population and a birth deficit, several municipalities are only able to maintain or increase their population through immigration (Meld. St. 5, 2019-2020, p. 27).

Thus, for these municipalities, it is important to remain attractive to immigrants, preferably as a location for permanent settlement. To the refugees, the rural and relatively remote character of the municipalities may have pros and cons.

For Samar, the serenity and safety of the municipality in which she had been settled were emphasised as two of her most important reasons for staying. Prior to coming to Norway, she and her family had lived under rugged conditions in Lebanon, where it had not been safe. The transition from a precarious life in Lebanon had made her appreciate her Norwegian village, and she further highlighted that she, her husband, and her children all enjoyed living there. Her husband, who was interviewed separately, concurred and noted that they had managed to establish a new life in Norway. He had planted some vegetables in his front garden: 'In the summer, I go out and sit with the kids who play in the garden. We have a trampoline and swing for the kids'. They had also gotten to know a family from Palestine who had come to the municipality in the 1990s and helped them with some things. Because they had arrived in Norway as resettlement refugees through the UNHCR, they did not know many people outside their home area. This might have further affected their willingness to stay there rather than moving elsewhere.

For most, however, the prospect of a future life in the municipality depended on their ability to get a job there: 'If I get to go to school and get a job here, of course I will stay here. If it is difficult to get a job, I have to move somewhere else. That is life; if you get a job [elsewhere] you have to move', Mahmoud said.

The job market, however, was not always perceived to be greener on the other side; by talking to his friends, Abdukadir had learned that people living in other municipalities did not always obtain work. 'They said "We have no job, but we have many kids!"', he told me. At the same time, he now liked the place he was living in. 'I like [the village]. If I get a job, I will just die here!', he said.

While many of the interviewees reported that they had grown fond of the villages and places they were now staying, there was simultaneously a pragmatic attitude towards the prospect of moving to get a job. Bassam, a Syrian man in his twenties who by all accounts had benefitted the least from the introduction programme (as he already exceeded the language levels offered at the adult education centre when he enrolled and 'graduated' after three or four months), had already been working in the municipality for a couple of years. During that time, he had held three or four different jobs and now wanted to leave: 'I hate physical labour. I had offers from people working

in the factories … but I said thanks, but no'. As a young person without family commitments in his village, Bassam wanted to take a chance and make a good life for himself in Norway.

The prospects of imagining a future life in the municipality highlighted how the settled refugees' integration into society was acknowledged to consist of an aggregation of components and opportunities. Even though the refugee services would be able to help them learn Norwegian and become familiar with a new society, their experiences with the local communities and the possibility of getting a job were just as likely to influence their decision on whether they would be able to stay. With scarce opportunities for work, the efforts of the refugee services can thus sometimes be argued to create a type of waiting room for the settled refugees before they have to move elsewhere to fulfil the goals of the introduction programme: get a job and become full-fledged, taxpaying citizens. Individual experiences in the local communities in combination with job availability were important factors in municipal refugee integration and thus help reinforce the importance of the broader social and community context in which much refugee integration actually takes place.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has contributed to the recent literature studying service recipients' value creation and experiences in the service process (Helkkula et al., 2012; Medberg & Grönroos, 2020; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020). In doing so, it has investigated the first sub-research question of this thesis:

> How are settled refugees' lifeworlds affecting their value creation?

Specifically, it has focused on how settled refugees were able to create value from the municipalities' service offerings and explored how individuals' lifeworlds influenced their value creation. In relation to the theoretical framework, it has concentrated on the service recipients' sphere of value co-creation. To understand the refugees' lifeworlds, the chapter begins with a series of accounts about fleeing homelands and arrivals in Norway, which showed how the settled refugees each had distinct biographies. This, I have argued, is important to recognise when attempting to understand how previous experience may affect their ability to interact with service offerings in different ways.

Through my descriptions of their early days in Norway, I have emphasised the differences between asylum seekers and resettlement refugees. The former, I argue, are cast as passive service recipients during their initial period in Norway because the primary skill expected of them is

patience while their applications are handled. For Mahmoud, the period of waiting had led to depression and the view that he would rather go back to Syria. Even though a promise of future value awaited him after his application had been processed, he found his current state to be unbearable. Qasim, in contrast, made unexpected use of his resources as bilingual in Arabic and English by taking on the role of mediator between the residents at his centre and those employed there. His efforts, he believed, had not been rewarded, however, as he had been sent to a new centre shortly after organising a strike.

After asylum applications are accepted or people are flown in from a third country through either resettlement or family reunification, the Norwegian refugee integration system is characterised by a marked shift in expectations towards service recipients' resource integration. As introduction programme participants, the settled refugees are enrolled in a full-time, year-long programme through which they are to satisfy a number of requirements for residency and citizenship while also attaining basic qualifications to get a job.

The shift in the refugees' roles as asylum seekers when compared to their roles as participants in the introduction programme shows that individuals' value creation is affected by the agency that they are given as service recipients of different service offerings. While the asylum seeker role afforded the refugees little ability to make proper use of their resources to improve their well-being, the introduction programme sets high requirements for individuals' resource integration and interaction with service offerings. This insight is important for future studies on value co-creation as it shows how this process may serve as both an obstacle to and a vehicle for individuals' value creation.

In this chapter, I have substantiated previous research on the link between value co-creation and lifeworlds (Helkkula et al., 2012; Trischler & Scott, 2016). Refugee integration has served as a useful field to explore how lifeworlds function as mediators of service recipients' value creation. This is due to the rather extreme circumstances that often characterise this group of service recipients. First, the fact that refugees have had their lives completely uprooted and are now forced to establish themselves in a new and profoundly unfamiliar location represents a total change in their lives. In addition to learning a new language and earning the qualifications required to find a job, many of those featured in this chapter had to balance their new lives with those they had left behind. This emphasises the inherent unruliness of refugee integration services as a field in which PSOs provide services to people in vulnerable and complex life situations.

This chapter has further emphasised the fruitfulness of focusing on service recipients in public service provision and value creation (Osborne, 2018; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020), as different people were found to benefit differently at different times from the same service offering. While the findings presented here are primarily relevant to refugee integration, they can also be generalised to other public service fields, as it should be assumed that different people may have different value outcomes from interacting with similar service offerings.

While a PSL analytical framework puts the service recipient at the centre of the analysis (Osborne, 2018; Skålén et al., 2018), this chapter has highlighted how PSOs' value facilitation plays an important role through the potential future value promised through their service offerings. As such, value co-creation – as a process that occurs in the joint sphere where service recipients integrate with PSOs' service offerings – has been shown to be a complex process in which a number of factors are likely to affect the actual value outcome.

In the next chapter, I focus on the PSOs' value facilitation and discuss how it provided and improved their service offerings through innovation and adjustments.

Chapter 6: Refugee Integration as a Public Service Offering

Previously, people were put on social security straight away, and now people are made active shortly after their arrival so that people are prevented from staying at home. So, the Introduction Act has been very important and is rather unique in Norway, I think: I don't think there are many places with such an extensive programme as we have. (Adult education centre employee, pre-study interview)

Introduction

Refugees' increased well-being as a result of being part of introduction programmes has now been shown to differ based on their individual skills, resources, and lifeworlds. However, the service process, as described in the model presented in Chapter 2, emphasises how value co-creation occurs through the interconnection of service recipients' value creation and PSOs' value facilitation (Grönroos, 2019, p. 783).

In this chapter, I focus on how municipal PSOs worked to configure resources to facilitate value creation by their service recipients: settled refugees. The PSOs' value facilitation is characteristically distinct from that of the service recipients, as their resource integration consists of providing service offerings which are defined as a configuration of resources with an embedded promise of future value. Further, as Chapter 5 shows, 'organizations can never guarantee that the value propositions [service offerings] they offer their users will be realised' (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 703). In other words, organisations may offer a service – or future value – to their service recipients, but the realisation of that value through value co-creation is the prerogative of the service recipients.

To explore service offering provision and practices, this chapter presents and discusses the ways in which municipalities work to configure such offerings and, by so doing, facilitate value creation for their users. It includes examples from the municipalities studied that are aimed to inform the theoretical framework. Furthermore, it shows how local resource availability affected the PSOs' value facilitation, as the four featured municipalities had developed distinct service offerings for their user groups. It begins with a presentation of a number of innovation projects that had been initiated in the different municipalities and discusses the complications encountered through the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2. Following a presentation of innovation and bricolage as a strategy, I discuss how the municipalities worked to match their

service offerings with the service recipients' skills and resources. Finally, the chapter includes a description of the role of volunteers and the volunteer sector as a service system partner.
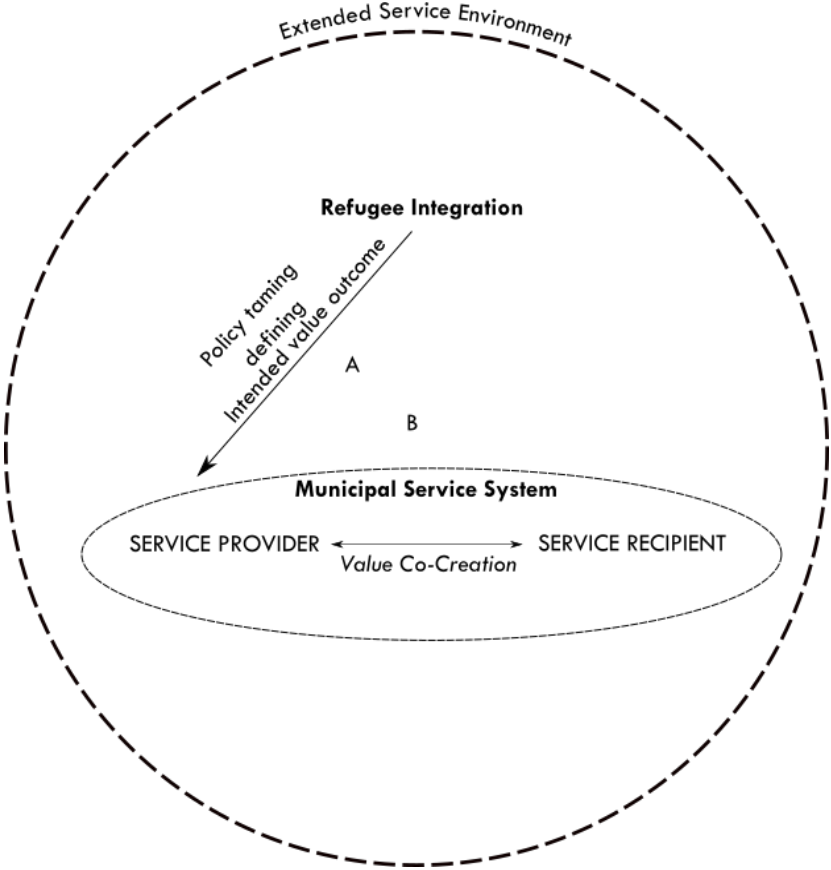
Figure 12: Value facilitation and the provision of service offerings.

Figure 12, which is part of the service model presented in Figure 2 in Chapter 2, shows an excerpt of the processes to be explored in this chapter, which focuses on how PSOs interpreted and implemented policy as it was developed through the process of policy taming. Further, this chapter discusses how the PSOs' value facilitation was influenced by interactions with service recipients and how the PSOs worked to improve their value facilitation in a way that could lead to increased value creation for the recipients and by extension society as a whole. Innovations emerging from the process of value co-creation (i.e. interactions between service providers and recipients) are explored through the bricolage concept (Fuglsang, 2010; Witell et al., 2017).

Bricolage serves as an analytical lens to capture how PSOs worked to improve their service offerings by drawing on existing resources in response to new problems; this constitutes the key innovation contribution of this chapter. However, I also discuss the ways in which other types of innovations were pursued and how they affected local service provision, such as policy and service system innovations. The latter involve situations in which the configuration of actors and

organisations in the service system are changed to provide new or improve existing service offerings.

This chapter addresses the second sub-research question:

How do PSOs provide service offerings and engage in public service innovation?

This question relates to the main research question of how PSL can be used to understand refugee integration as a wicked problem through a discussion of PSOs in value co-creation. The question makes it clear that the main ambition of this chapter is to understand PSOs' service offerings and how they adjusted these offerings to improve their value facilitation.

Aside from its theoretical contributions, the chapter enhances the literature on refugee integration and public services by showing the difficult position in which municipal PSOs operate. The wickedness embedded in public services' refugee integration efforts, I show, includes different expectations from policymakers and service recipients, as well as a number of uncontrollable and unforeseen events that in various ways disrupt their service provision efforts.

Innovation and the Development of New Service Offerings

'Previously', Kristin – the headmaster in Kryssfjord – told me, 'the work with organisational change was different than it is today, as one process of change would be implemented and finished before a new process was initiated'. At the time of the interview, she noted that the situation had changed because everything had become more intertwined: 'If something is changed in one place, this creates consequences elsewhere, and change becomes a continuum'. Kristin was nonetheless fond of change, as it created new opportunities.

Change as a continuum was also described in the strategic plan of the future municipality that would come into being following the merger of Haugen and Varmdal in 2020:

> Global developments such as political and civil unrest and climate change have the result that the challenges we see today can change character and intensity when it comes to, for instance, the settlement and integration of refugees and contingency. (Municipal Strategy Plan)

Drivers for change, it seemed, came from every direction, and the municipal refugee services were as likely to be affected by alterations in European policy towards refugees as they were by municipal budget negotiations and new national demands for public sector efficiency. As the

world became increasingly intertwined, changes in one place were likely to affect the people located elsewhere.

Throughout the fieldwork, incidents large and small led the employees of the refugee services to think differently about their efforts at providing services. Sometimes, new ideas would emerge in response to higher-level reform; other times, the immediate needs of an individual or group of service recipients would spur the employees' imagination. One such example of a bricolage process – in which employees tried to figure out a solution to a specific issue – occurred in Haugen when programme advisors in charge of a group of single underage refugees (*enslig mindreårige*) tried to figure out new ways for them to buy groceries. Since underage refugees who arrive alone are subject to extraordinary control by the municipalities, these youths had usually gone to the grocery store with a programme advisor or other employee. There, they would calculate the final amount while going through the store and add it to a general bill at the counter, which would later be paid by the refugee administration.

As the young men turned 18, the surveillance inherent in the previous regime was increasingly considered superfluous, not the least for the employees who had to follow these now technically adult refugees to the store. An alternative solution would free up time and allow them to use their resources differently. To resolve this issue, a programme advisor in Haugen had contacted the local NAV office – which was in charge of the underage refugees' finances (as far as I understood it) – to ask if they could get them cash cards (*Kronekort*). Such cards are provided to people who are not eligible for regular debit cards or do not have Norwegian bank accounts and are frequently provided to refugees. Cash cards were, for instance, given to the newly arrived families described in the prelude of this thesis. Due to administrative difficulties, the request for cash cards was rejected, and the issue turned out to be difficult to resolve. The rejection was reportedly the result of an ongoing merger between different NAV offices that did not want to initiate new projects before their merger was complete, a position that was outside the control or even influence of both the programme advisors and the formerly underage refugees. One day, however, one of those young people suggested that they could simply be given the designated amount in cash, an idea that appeared to have escaped the mind of the programme advisor, who like most of the country had spent had the past decade in cashless bliss. Although suboptimal, the idea was soon implemented; a programme advisor would stop by the bank once a week to collect cash that was later redistributed among the (technically adult but still administratively underage) users.

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The challenge of providing the young men with the means of taking increasing care of their own finances represented a problem that became difficult to solve due to changes in the service system. The solution of providing the men, who were ineligible for regular debit cards, a cash card was temporarily unavailable in the spring of 2018 due to ongoing mergers of various municipal NAV offices. The failure to provide cash cards represented an unwillingness on NAV's part to integrate resources (Laud et al., 2019, p. 870) at that time. Coming up with a new way for the young men to buy groceries was considered a potential improvement, as it would both empower them to take care of their own finances and free up time for the refugee advisors to attend to other duties. As the immediate solution was unavailable, an alternative solution came through the suggestion of a service recipient and is thus a type of bricolage innovation. The new solution would make use of readily available resources – available funds and a local bank – and distribute the money in cash rather than on the plastic cards that have become common for retail transactions. This idea, it seemed, had not been considered by the refugee advisors. This might have been due to the differing lifeworlds of the young men and their advisors, as the latter – if they are like the Norwegian population at large – seldom use cash for purchases. Nonetheless, a return to cash rather than debit cards solved what had been a tricky – yet important – problem in a relatively easy way.

Pitfalls and Possibilities of New Ideas

Each municipality featured in this study had a prehistory of innovative solutions that had served as an extension to the basic content of the introduction programme. Some of these projects had been among the reasons why I chose these particular municipalities, but many had been abandoned or completed before my arrival.

In 2017, Haugen initiated an agricultural project that sought to create employment opportunities for programme participants. The project had come to life after the municipality received funding to develop a project in which participants would grow agricultural products for later sale. At an early stage, an abandoned greenhouse in the municipality had been located and rented for the project. In addition to agriculture, the project involved forestry. The project received positive mentions in local and national news media, but after a short while, a relative of the people who had rented out the greenhouse returned with the intention of continuing the family business. Suddenly, the project went back to step one, and ideas about how to continue were discussed. These included the possibility of revitalising abandoned farms and fields, but this had not materialised. Finally, two weeks prior to my arrival, Kåre, the leader of the refugee administration in Haugen, informed me that the project I had wanted to follow had been shut down.

While the agricultural project had been a novel extension of Haugen's service offering for settled refugees, a combination of uncontrollable externalities (such as the son who wanted to continue the family business) and service system dynamics appear to have led to the project's abandonment. These dynamics, which cover the relation between different PSOs, politicians, service system auxiliaries (such as businesses and facilities), and the entry of a competing actor with interest in a central tangible resource (the greenhouse), upended the stability of the service system. The underlying idea behind the project was commendable in how it sought to create jobs in the municipality, particularly for settled refugees. At the same time, the project revealed how vulnerable novel solutions are to fluctuations and setbacks.

In Varmdal, a similar project had proved more sustainable as the refugee services had successfully established two 'in-house' (i.e. public sector) work practice businesses. The first was a janitor service primarily aimed at employing men who would work together with municipal janitors to fix potholes, cut down trees, and do other types of manual labour. The second business was a café for employees in the municipality that prepared and sold food once a week. The in-house organisation of work practice businesses had resulted in Varmdal having one of Norway's highest percentages of people enrolled in work practice as part of the introduction programme. The businesses were lauded by employees and participants alike. However, certain pitfalls in the café business were reported, as it consisted almost exclusively of women who spoke the same language. A Kurdish woman who had spent time working at the café, for instance, once noted that she had been able to learn a lot of Arabic while participating in the work practice scheme, while her Norwegian skills had not improved significantly in that context. In her case, the work practice position had resulted in an unintended value outcome, as she had indeed been able to improve her skills in another language, but it had been the wrong one.

Nonetheless, the schemes were efficient because they supplemented the academic aspects of the introduction programme and helped the refugee services provide a full-time, year-round programme for their participants. The sustainability of Varmdal's work practice businesses, when compared to the agricultural project in Haugen, are likely related to their in-house origin and the decreased possibility of external risks. Reducing risk by organising the scheme with the use of existing service system resources resulted in a more stable service system that was less vulnerable to external influence, such as the withdrawal or entry of new actors.

Following the rapid increase in arrivals in 2015–2016, the local community in Endefjord had organised an increasing number of events and opportunities for settled refugees and asylum seekers. One such project was organised by the local library and was dubbed 'Borrow a local'; it

involved locals residents spending time with settled refugees. The use of the library as the host had been considered natural, as it was one of only a few low-threshold arenas – and thus a 'joint sphere' – in which people could meet in their municipalities (Berg & Kermit, 2015, p. 37). As part of the project, the participants were given a coupon to a local café where they could go to have coffee and were otherwise encouraged to go for walks in the village. Once again, however, the project had faded away following decreased attention to the issue of refugee arrivals and integration, and it was no longer active at the time of my fieldwork. In a later report on the plan, one of the key challenges identified was the financial resources demanded from local librarians to match locals with refugees in the hope of finding a good fit. Securing a good match was believed to be crucial, as it could lay the foundation for relationships to continue beyond the duration of the plan. Furthermore, it was questioned whether the idea had reached particularly vulnerable groups, such as women and children, or if it had primarily been a service offering for male refugees.

These and the other projects that had been implemented or attempted in the municipalities show how refugee integration may include a combination of different components and measures. At the same time, the experiences in the municipalities also reveal the difficulties associated with implementing and keeping new projects and solutions alive. The process of implementation is frequently cited as a crucial aspect of innovation (Chen et al., 2019, p. 4). Through both successful and failed attempts to implement new projects in the municipalities, the importance of ongoing bricolage adjustments was shown to be a vital means of confronting unexpected challenges.

Service offerings as promises of future value for service recipients highlight the importance of sustainable service solutions that can actually live up to what is promised. In the above excerpts, the risks associated with the novel solutions were relatively small due to the comparatively minor significance of the value outcome promised. Innovation is largely assumed to involve risk (Brown & Osborne, 2013), and the development of new service offerings comes with the potential risk of ultimately not providing what is promised. Nonetheless, the importance of taking risks is acknowledged because of the opportunity it presents for service providers to improve their value facilitation through new or better service offerings (Brown & Osborne, 2013, p. 187).

Developing a New Educational Programme

The introduction programme has largely been successful in 'activating' those who have settled in the municipalities in their early years. It has, however, been challenging to ensure those same

people's self-sufficiency after they leave the programme. Previous studies have revealed a tendency for people with refugee backgrounds to obtain work for a couple of years following their participation in the programme before becoming unemployed (Bratsberg, Raaum, & Roed, 2017, p. 4). One of the aspects that has led to this negative outcome is the fact that the jobs available for low-skilled refugees are susceptible to fluctuations at both individual firms and in the broader economy (Vrålstad & Wiggen, 2017, p. 109); their positions are likely to be the first to go in times of duress.

In Endefjord, the adult education centre had experienced how other unskilled migrants – such as women from Thailand and the Philippines who had married local men – often got the jobs for which their participants would otherwise have been qualified. As a result, the centre had come to terms with the fact that the best way for participants to obtain and keep a job that could ensure their self-sufficiency – a crucial aim of the Introduction Act – would be to get a vocational education and thus qualify for skilled positions.

In recognition of the time required for refugees to obtain a vocational degree, the Endefjord adult education centre initiated an experimental vocational training scheme in 2015. This pilot project was based on what has become known as the 'Helsfyr model', through which refugees receive a combination of language training and a vocational high school education over four years. The model serves as a fast-track alternative to the usual educational trajectory of people who arrive as refugees. In the conventional model, refugees are subject to a two-year period in the introduction programme, after which they should have reached a certain level of language competency. If a person has not had their primary school education approved or had not received primary school education, another one-to-two-year intensive period ensues that leads to a primary school diploma and qualification for further education. After receiving the diploma, students can finally start high school or a vocational programme, with the latter consisting of two years of theoretical training and two years as an apprentice. In total, the conventional track for a refugee to obtain a vocational degree spans as many as eight years. For people who arrive in Norway as adults with long working lives behind them, this is often considered excessive; for anybody, it is at the very least a daunting prospect.

The vocational fast-track programme was further developed to ensure continuity for the refugees in their transition between the adult education centre and the high school where the vocational education took place. Previously, Irene, the woman responsible for the scheme, told me that the adult education centre in Endefjord had simply sent their students to high school and thus cut off their ties and responsibilities. Inspired by the Helsfyr model of vocational education for refugees,

Irene contacted the local high school to see whether it would be interested in closer cooperation. Together, Irene and the school started working with the tentative question, 'We have refugees who need jobs; what does Endefjord need?', which laid a foundation from which they sought to match existing needs with the refugees' educational trajectories. To find the answer, Irene started contacting businesses in the area and found that some local factories needed skilled labour and that there was also a demand for such labour in the health sector. Having mapped out the local needs, the adult education centre began a recruitment process among its users. The recruitment process resulted in approximately 10 students being assigned to each sector that had reported a need for skilled labour.

While she was conducting the interviews, Irene told me they had decided to focus on the refugees' motivation rather than their previous formal education. The course differed from the traditional vocational training in Norway in that it did not strictly separate the theoretical and practical parts of the educational programme. A regular vocational education consists of two years at school with work practice for limited periods, followed by a two- to three-year apprenticeship. In the new educational trajectories, the participants would both attend school and engage in work apprenticeships over the entire four-year period, and a teacher from the adult education centre would follow them closely throughout the programme. Rather than a strict separation of theory and practice, a balanced approach between the two would thus be followed, with the first years covering more theory and the later years more practical training.

Initially, Irene had received positive signals from a local factory (Factory 1) that had agreed to host participants by offering apprenticeship positions. When the project finally reached the point where the students were to start their apprenticeships, however, the people with whom the adult education centre had made the agreement had either retired or changed positions. Without warning, the students enrolled in the industrial worker programme found themselves at a standstill, and things became more difficult than Irene had hoped. At the same time, the future health workers had been able to continue their education and apprenticeships as planned because the health sector was operated by the municipality and was thus in closer organisational proximity. Following the complications encountered with Factory 1, Irene was still in conversations with the business that had initially agreed to host students who were part of the programme. During autumn 2018, Factory 1 changed their requested language level for the students. While the adult education centre had initially set the language requirement for becoming part of the project to A2, the factory now required a B2 language level for students to work

there.[33] The employees I spoke to at the adult education centre reported that they found this requirement excessive, as B2 corresponds to an academic level of language proficiency. Furthermore, questions were raised regarding the large number of workers from Eastern Europe employed in the factory, many of whom were unlikely to have a Norwegian language proficiency corresponding to the B2 – or even A2 – level.

Tobias, head of the adult education centre in Endefjord, said that they had witnessed a general increase in language requirements for various jobs that placed them out of reach for most participants at the adult education centre. In one instance, he had seen a job advertisement that included the requirement that people applying for a job were to have at least a B3 level of language proficiency, which does not exist in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Faced with changing demands from the local factories that were perceived as unrealistic, Irene considered a solution whereby the adult education centre could hire someone who had worked in a factory to teach certain students 'Industrial Norwegian'. The idea resonated with the development of a 'Health Norwegian' course in neighbouring Kryssfjord, but there did not seem to be any discussion between the two municipalities on how to proceed. Even though they had not yet found an appropriate candidate for the job, the idea of teaching the students the relevant terminology and slang terms used in factories was considered promising.

Part of the alleged reasoning behind the factories' strict language requirements was that they are not arenas for language learning and would have to be certain that the students would be able to understand what they were being told. Throughout autumn 2018, an alternative solution to the problem of proving and improving language comprehension was discussed in relation to virtual reality (VR) technology, which was increasingly being adopted at the local high school and in the upper-grade primary school (*Ungdomsskolen*). During a meeting between the headmasters and other interested teachers at the upper-grade primary school, high school, and the adult education centre, Tobias presented the issue to the other participants:

> We have a project with the high school to educate skilled workers, but some things have not worked out as planned. In particular, this has to do with language proficiency and a dangerous work environment. The message from the factories is that it is not a language learning arena, and they [the students] have to deal with potentially dangerous things. Therefore, we have started imagining the adoption of VR technology to educate our students on working in such an environment. By doing

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33 The language levels cited were developed by the CEFR, with A1 the lowest recognised level of language proficiency and corresponding to beginner ability and C2 defined as having mastered the language. B2 refers to university level. Source: Council of Europe (https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages).

> so, they can practice with walkie talkies and similar devices in a loud environment.
> (Tobias at a meeting)

Although the idea represented a potentially disruptive change in the service offerings for settled refugees in Endefjord (and for the students at the local high school), the idea never materialised during my fieldwork and has – so far as I am aware – yet to be implemented.[34]

The difficulty encountered in obtaining apprenticeships for the industrial worker students had resulted in what Irene perceived as a marked shift and negative feedback loop when comparing the language proficiency with those enrolled in the health worker programme. Whereas the health worker students had been able to start their apprenticeships on schedule and thus been able to practice their Norwegian language knowledge from 'day one', the industrial worker students were trapped in a situation in which they had not been able to practice or improve their language skills. The combination of increased language requirements with a lack of arenas in which they could speak Norwegian resulted in their being in limbo. To develop their Norwegian skills, they would have to find a place where they could speak it, and a workplace would certainly qualify; however, to find a place where they could speak more intensively on a daily basis, they would first have to improve their language.

Service System Partnerships and Heartbreaks

In an attempt to find a solution for the students in the industrial worker programme, Irene and Tobias, in collaboration with the local NAV office, arranged a meeting with one of the relevant factories (Factory 2). Prior to the meeting, Irene and Tobias had been in contact with a NAV representative, and together they had worked out an agreement: NAV would provide certain funds that were needed by the businesses to provide tailored apprenticeships for people with Norwegian as a secondary language. The idea, or at least how Irene and Tobias had understood it, was that the funds provided could be used by the businesses to pay for certain services, such as a course in sector-specific terminology and language, that would ideally be provided by the adult education centre. On the day of the meeting, however, their contact at NAV was suddenly unable to attend the meeting, and a replacement followed them to the factory instead; it was quickly realised that the replacement had not been briefed about the specifics of the agreement. The new representative told Tobias and Irene that it would not be possible to present the agreement in its current form to the factory they were going to visit. Specifically, the representative was later

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[34] As a brief editorial comment, the idea still strikes me as the single most intriguing proposal encountered during this study in terms of its potential for innovation in refugee integration services.

reported to have said that it was not possible to give away money that had not been earmarked for specific purposes. The misunderstanding made it clear that the service system partners were not on the same page regarding what they were going to offer the factory as an incentive to become a service system auxiliary.

The confusion caused by the different understandings of the agreement resulted in its not being presented to the factory they were going to, and the meeting demonstrated that Factory 2 would be an unlikely candidate for providing apprenticeships under current conditions.

With a number of students already enrolled and ready for their apprenticeship periods in the industrial workers programme, the employees at the adult education centre in Endefjord reset and continued working towards a solution for the apprenticeships that had once been promised. Factory 1, which had increased the Norwegian language requirement, had not yet categorically refused to provide apprenticeships for the students and had lowered the requirement to B1 rather than the academic B2 language level it had previously demanded. The next step would be to clarify the agreement regarding apprenticeships with the local NAV office and establish contact with the factory. In addition, two other factories in the region that needed skilled industrial labour were mentioned, and there was a possibility of concluding an agreement with one of them.

The path of the new educational programme was simultaneously paved with its provision. Even though an initial project idea had been outlined, the implementation was hindered by changes in the local service system of the adult education centre in Endefjord. This once again showed the relation between service system innovations and bricolage, as the employees at the adult education centre searched for new solutions through new combinations of available resources. As the search for apprenticeships continued, the staff at the adult education centre continued the search for someone who could train the students in the sector-specific language of industrial Norwegian. The urgency to find someone to offer the course was emphasised, as the students enrolled in the industrial workers programme had started to show signs of impatience. If nothing happened, the employees feared that the students would believe that they had been tricked into a programme that was supposed to provide them a job when they graduated. The students had already put time and effort into their education and had thus fulfilled their part in the value co-creation process, yet they had now started to realise that the PSO did not seem to be able to provide what it had promised.

In addition to the necessity of locating a person able to teach a sector-specific language course for the factory context, another language issue arose and threatened the success of the

programme. Settled refugees who go through regular vocational education as part of their qualification programmes in Norway are obliged to earn a passing grade in both English and Norwegian to graduate. For many settled refugees, English was just as foreign as Norwegian, and their subsequent English language studies were thus characterised by their struggles to learn an additional language through one that they had not yet mastered, which in this case was Norwegian. Irene had tried to find a loophole that would allow the students to get their letter of apprenticeship (*fagbrev*) without a passing grade in English, but so far, she said, that did not seem possible.

The implementation of a new vocational education scheme for refugees in the introduction programme in Endefjord constituted a disruptive shift in their service offering to a selected group of service recipients. The innovation was enabled by a reconfiguration of the service system through either intensifying current relationships (with the high school) or by involving community actors as partners (e.g. the factories and health care sector). Inspired by the Helsfyr-model, the programme had tweaked its contents to suit locally available resources and needs and identified the sectors that would most likely end up employing those who took part in the programme. The intended outcome of the programme was thus well articulated. As a pilot project in Endefjord, the implementation of the programme had not gone entirely to plan for the industrial worker students. In retrospect, Irene regretted that they had not concluded a written agreement with Factory 1. The fallout with the factories halted progress for both the students and the other stakeholders (the adult education centre and high school) that were part of the programme, and new solutions were sought to address each new problem that emerged.

The new educational programme in Endefjord was ambitious, as it was based on a reconfiguration of service system resources and an extension of the system through formal agreements with local businesses. The programme aimed to solve a specific problem related to time required to obtain a vocational degree in Norway. To shorten the time of the educational trajectories for refugees, which can otherwise take up to eight years, the Helsfyr model was used as inspiration for providing a new service offering in the local context. While not new in itself, the model, which had been identified through diffusion, was new in context (Hartley, 2005, p. 27).

The adoption of the Helsfyr model was achieved through a service system rearrangement in which previous relationships were renegotiated and new partnerships with the municipal health care sector and local factories developed. Consequently, the development was initially a service system innovation, with existing and new resources configured to provide a new service offering.

Even though an initial plan had been laid out, however, the implementation of the programme met with problems that had to be handled as the service offering was provided.

As the project was implemented and time went by, further challenges led to processes of bricolage, in which existing resources were used to come up with solutions to the problems that arose. These included partnerships with NAV to create incentives for the factories to accept apprentices and the search for a resource in the local community who could teach industrial Norwegian. Implementing new service offerings, therefore, was both an effort of recreating the structural conditions (or service system) in which the new service offering would be provided and some micro-adjustments (as bricolage) that were required to solve different obstacles that emerged as the project went on. The emergence of obstacles during a pilot project is to be expected, and the process further highlighted the importance of the service employees' capabilities to adjust on the fly and employ bricolage. Through the descriptions of the implementation of the educational programme in Endefjord, a dynamic between problems and solutions emerged, as novel problems caused Irene, Tobias, and the others involved in the scheme to search for new solutions. Bricolage has been described as a process of 'adjusting the protocol to unforeseen events' (Fuglsang, 2010, p. 74), which is exemplified by how the issues that arose were met with searches for new solutions.

The necessity of engaging in bricolage during the implementation of the fast-track educational programme was interlinked with the programme's novelty. In both literal and poetic ways, the pathways of the programme were paved during its implementation, and unforeseen events should have been expected. Bricolage, as a way to readjust protocols based on available resources, was, however, also a modus operandi for the refugee services, as changes in their group of service recipients, in the overarching policy, and their local community required ongoing tinkering with their service offering provision.

Matching Offerings with Service Recipients' Skills

In Chapter 5, I presented the ways in which the settled refugees as service recipients were able to create value from the municipal service offerings. Value co-creation, in which service recipients interact with PSOs service offerings to create value, is central to a service-oriented understanding (Skålén, Gummerus, et al., 2015, p. 139). That chapter shows that different recipients were able to benefit differently from the service offerings of the municipalities based on their individual intangible skills, lifeworlds, and needs. In the rural context of this thesis, differentiation in language education was challenging, and limited opportunities for tailoring the programme

implied that the service offerings were not suited to supporting value creation among those with the most rapid progression and highest levels of skills. At the same time, some of those with little previous education appeared to benefit from the same service offering and reported high satisfaction with the possibility of returning to school.

Service offerings are dynamic configurations of resources (Osborne, 2018, p. 227); in the public sector context described in this thesis, I found that such offerings are created in the intersection of policy design and local service implementation and resources. These steps are illustrated through the value facilitation and service offering phases in the service model (Figure 2, Chapter 2). The Introduction Act dictates the design and provision of service offerings to newly settled refugees. Its three pillars are language education, a civics course, and work practice. In addition, its content is guided by the aim of the Introduction Act and by the requirements participants must fulfil to obtain permanent residency and citizenship.

The wicked problem component of migration and refugee integration comprises a multilevel phenomenon in which the introduction programme and associated policies are stretched across different levels: from the central government through county councils to municipalities. At each level, a problem-solution complex is (re-)articulated and an attempt to diminish the gap between what is and what ought to be is advanced. Even though there should be a quasi-perfect match between policy service design and local implementation, this is not always the case. As the problem-solution complex is translated between different levels, it is subject to repeated reinterpretation by either the solution or the problem. To alleviate the gaps that arise from these reinterpretations, innovations that alter either the problem statement or the measures that are part of the solution may be introduced.

A prominent example of such reinterpretation in implementation was seen in the language education programmes in the municipalities and the way they worked to differentiate language education based on participants' existing competence levels.

Passive and Active Learners

Kristin, the headmaster in Kryssfjord, explained that they had adopted a strategy of collaborative learning because 'level-based differentiation would have blown the budget. We simply cannot afford it'. Collaborative learning has been defined as a 'situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together' (Dillenbourg, 1999, p. 1) and is sometimes used to describe situations in which more advanced students are used to help less advanced students. Prior to initiating my fieldwork, I interviewed a manager at a centre in a larger municipality, who

informed me that they enrolled students into fine-tuned educational courses based on preliminary testing. In addition to the regular CEFR levels, ranging from A1 to B2, they had 10 sub-levels corresponding to A1, A2, and so forth. This was done 'so that [the student] can be in a class with people at the same level'. Size appeared to matter and, while acknowledging the potential benefit of a more finely tuned differentiation, Kristin found that it was simply not feasible in the smaller-scale context in which her centre operated. The idea behind the introduction of collaborative learning at the Kryssfjord centre was, however, not only a result of budget and resource restrictions, as Kristin argued that they had an underlying pedagogical strategy.

In Kryssfjord, the centre had organised their students into two classes, both of which covered language levels from A1 to B1. The idea was to make use of the available resources by having students learn together and thus take advantage of their differing language levels. This, however, had caused some difficulties, as cultural differences regarding how to learn caused tension between the teachers and their students. 'Many of the students', Kristin said, 'come from countries where they are used to a different form of education than that which is normal in Norway. The teacher stands at the blackboard, and the students write down what is written'. In Norway, however, such practices are now largely considered antiquated, as active participation is generally required in the classroom.

Collaborative learning as a service offering had become an obstacle, and the students did not seem to fully comprehend their role as resources in that offering. The centre had made a service offering that the service recipients did not understand: their resource-integrating skills did not correspond with the service offering; hence, they were unable to create value. A misunderstanding of how resources should be integrated in the joint sphere of value co-creation had emerged (Laud et al., 2019, p. 870). When placed in a group to work together, individual students would work alongside one another rather than together. While the teacher-student relationship in the countries where they had previously attended school had involved what can be described as a passive transfer of knowledge, they were now subject to an unfamiliar form of learning that demanded their active participation.

Coincidentally – or perhaps not – the manager I spoke with at the centre in the larger municipality had made a similar observation and interviewed students to learn more about the issue. Through those interviews, she had found that many students were not aware of this cultural difference, so a gap had formed that hindered learning. The teachers, on the one hand, tried their hardest to mobilise students and make them active participants in the classroom. The students, on the other, had not understood how to properly benefit from this foreign form of

education and sat patiently, waiting to receive the teacher's knowledge. The value co-creation process, in which service recipients interact with service offerings to create value, had thus failed because the settled refugees did not understand how they were supposed to benefit from a learning environment in which they were supposed to learn (partly) from one another rather than solely from the teacher.

To overcome this obstacle, Kristin and the teachers in Kryssfjord had begun using collaborative learning in the classroom to facilitate the participants' benefit from the strategy. Their strategy illuminates a way in which value co-creation as an outcome of service offerings and resource integration can be facilitated in different ways. Either the adult education centre could have rejected the philosophy of collaborative learning in favour of adopting learning strategies that involved more passive forms of knowledge transfer to which their students were accustomed, or they could have – as they did – worked to increase their students' learning capabilities by focusing on teaching them how to learn in accordance with the current service offering. That decision has implications for the theoretical understanding of service offerings as promises of future value and the way in which this is created by service recipients through resource integration. The decision to teach the participants at the centre a crucial skill that would enable their future potential benefit from collaborative learning represents a situation in which a more difficult route was chosen for its potential to increase participant benefits. By increasing the participants' learning abilities, the gap that had formed between the providers' and recipients' spheres in value co-creation was lessened through establishing a common understanding of what was to happen in the joint sphere (see Grönroos, 2019, p. 782). In the end, it was assumed that the strategy would pay off, as the service offering would include more internal resources from which participants could benefit.

This example shows how value co-creation as a process that involves both service providers and recipients necessitates a good fit between value facilitation in the providers' sphere and the operant skills and resources of the service recipients (Grönroos, 2019). The initial error made in Kryssfjord was assuming the service recipients' acquaintance with collaborative learning as a pedagogical strategy. Consequently, a failure in the joint sphere, in which value co-creation or co-destruction occurs, emerged. Individuals' lifeworlds and previous experiences are likely to influence the ways in which they create value from service offerings; in the case of collaborative learning detailed here, the service offering was misunderstood (Laud et al., 2019, p. 870). This led to an unintended value outcome in which the students initially became worse off due to their inability to benefit from collaborative learning as a service offering.

This example illustrates how the roles of providers and recipients were mingled, as the recipients became an integrated part of the service offering. In the face of resource scarcity, the Kryssfjord adult education centre had managed to reflect on and figure out how to make optimal use of the resources they had available. Among these resources, the competencies and skills of the advanced students were recognised and an attempt made to better use their skills to facilitate value creation for less advanced students.

Housing and the Accuracy of Value Facilitation

The cross-cultural context in which refugee services work has led to an increased emphasis to the fact that value creation and benefitting from service offerings require a process of learning how to 'benefit appropriately' (i.e. as defined through policy). This determines whether there is an alignment between intended and actual value outcomes. Interestingly, the discrepancy between the participants' abilities to benefit from local service offerings was more frequently discussed among service employees than among the settled refugees. This, it can be assumed, was often a result of the employees' recognition that their participants did not properly make use of the service offerings in a way that corresponded with the employees' perception of how to benefit best from them. Furthermore, the notion of an expected outcome is interconnected with the policy foundation and the definition of the intended outcomes towards which the PSOs work. In this study, the intended outcome has been argued to be defined by policymakers, who leave it to the PSOs to achieve results that may be measured through a variety of indicators. As such, a distinction between intended and expected outcomes is apparent, as the expected outcomes and benefits from service offerings were entangled in lifeworlds that differed between the PSOs as providers and the participants as service recipients.

Another example of a mismatch between intended and actual value creation related to service offerings arise in the municipalities' work with what is termed living guidance (*boveiledning*). Every person who is settled as a refugee in a Norwegian municipality is provided with housing, usually an apartment they rent, by the local services. Housing is a crucial component of local service offerings, as it enables the participants' use of other service offering components by providing the basic emotional and practical security of a place to stay. For refugee service employees, however, housing was regularly thought of as something more than having a roof over one's head. Having a home, they largely felt, was not simply a matter of having somewhere to live but included certain expectations on *how* to live. In Haugen, a programme advisor explained how many users came from places in the world where they were accustomed to cooking over an open fire: 'Many people are just used to taking the kettle away from the flame rather than turning down

the heat on the stove; this is just one of many small things people have to learn in their everyday life'. Additionally, there were an unexpected number of water damage issues in the apartments, which they figured was likely connected with an unusual handling of water in a Norwegian context. Living guidance was also an issue in Varmdal, as the refugee administration had received objections from a neighbour who had called them to complain that it felt like 'he was living on the Gaza Strip'. The complaint had to do with waste recycling, as either waste would be placed outside the bin, or the wrong type of waste would go into the wrong bins, and the fault was attributed to his immigrant neighbours (who were not even Palestinian). In response to the complaint, Johanne, the head of the unit, figured that the service would have to do a better job in mobilising neighbours as service system auxiliaries by connecting them with settled refugees. Here, service system auxiliaries are understood as actors and organisations that can assist service systems reach their goals through different means but are not under no formal obligation to help. By informing and encouraging neighbours to speak with those settled, some work for the refugee administration could be alleviated. For now, they would have to send out a letter of warning to the settled refugees to ensure that they were appropriately handling their waste. If that waste were not handled correctly in the future, someone would be sent to clean up, and a bill would be sent to the residents. In the absence of immediate solutions, sanctions were thus suggested as a way to encourage the settled refugees to learn appropriate recycling behaviour.

Language education and housing have been chosen as examples to discuss value co-creation in this chapter. A similar pattern could be observed in how service offerings have different characteristics in policy documents and in local, real-world contexts. In the Introduction Act and other relevant legislation, for example, it is stated that participants in the introduction programme should receive at least 550 hours of language education. While courses have curricula that should prepare the students to pass different levels of language tests, the practical details of how they are to be taught are left to local organisations' discretion. The work of the local services consequently became a task of figuring out how they could configure the available resources to design the best possible service offering; that is to say, the offering that would most benefit their users. In Kryssfjord, a solution had been worked out at the juncture of resource scarcity and the pedagogical philosophy of collaborative learning. The underlying idea of collaborative learning resonates with the theoretical approaches described in this thesis, as it attempts to make optimal use of the available resources in a local service. By including participants as co-teachers and educational resources for people with less skill, those with a higher language level effectively became an integral part of the local service offering. The role of advanced language learners was altered, as they were simultaneously cast as both service providers and service recipients. This

inclusion of resources to improve the local service offering also occurred in Varmdal, where complaints regarding the quality of the residents' recycling were met with the suggestion to improve practices that would make neighbours part of local refugee integration efforts at an early stage. At the time, however, the neighbour who felt as if they were living on the Gaza Strip remained external to the local service system and was thus a purely latent resource in the local extended service environment. Altering the roles of actors within the service system or wider service environment can thus be used to change service offerings through resource re-configurations.

Volunteer Engagement as a Service System Partner

Refugee administrations, adult education centres, and NAV make up the core of municipal refugee service systems. The importance of these core organisations in Norwegian refugee integration efforts is evident in that those who are settled spend most of their early years in Norway in adult education centres and otherwise interact with refugee advisors and NAV.

Chapter 5 shows how settled refugees reported difficulties with establishing social networks beyond the adult education centres, apparently due to a combination of the time spent at the centres and fatigue from learning a language all day and a general lack of arenas in which they could meet people. Moreover, the unwritten rules of sociality in Norway compared to their countries of origin were cited.

While a general gap between settled refugees and local communities was reported, there were some arenas that served as an extension of the public service offerings. These venues, such as language cafés, provided spaces in which integration as an administrative process and the social process of adjustment would partially overlap.

All four municipalities had some sort of language café or meeting point that was specifically aimed at people who had arrived and been settled as refugees. In Haugen and Varmdal, the local chapters of the Red Cross arranged homework help evenings once a week. These evenings had been made an integrated as part of the local service systems through formalised arrangements between the local refugee administration and the Red Cross. In Endefjord, the volunteer centre hosted a similar event once a week, while the adult education centre in Kryssfjord had reached an agreement with the local library to host a language café every other week.

The rural status of the municipalities in this project meant that there was generally a low level of services and social arenas. Endefjord and Haugen did have pubs, but there was an overall lack of

social arenas where people could meet in the afternoons and evenings. Furthermore, as a programme advisor in Varmdal described it during a weekly meeting with the participants, the informal rules of socialising in Norway were different from those in many of the countries from which the refugees came. 'Many of you', he said

> come from countries with a typical square or street culture. That is, being outside is a sort of informal social arena in itself. In Norway, this informal social arena is 'hidden' in volunteer work. Many people meet new friends and are social through volunteer work. (Programme advisor, Varmdal, spring fieldwork)

During my fieldwork in Haugen and Varmdal I frequently attended the language cafés that were organised once a week in each municipality. In Varmdal, the café had been established by a group of three women who had attended the language café in Haugen for two to three years prior to the establishment of its Varmdal counterpart. A decade ago, one of them told me, she had made the decision to do something for refugees for 10 years, and she was now contemplating whether she would continue. On the day of the language café, she would show up early and prepare coffee and tea for the attendees. The language café programme was usually divided into two sessions, with one lasting for an hour and the other for 45 minutes. The 15 minutes in between was a break for coffee or tea, snacks, and informal conversation.

The café in Varmdal was hosted in a facility the local Red Cross had rented from a local church congregation, and the man in charge of the local Red Cross assumed that the majority of the volunteers who attended had some sort of affiliation with that congregation. Additionally, an agreement had been made with a local 'Folk High School' (*folkehøyskole*) to ensure that a number of students attended each week. Prior to moving the language café to that location, there had been discussions internally in the Red Cross on whether renting facilities associated with the church could either be at odds with Red Cross neutrality or prevent people with other religious beliefs from coming, as many of those settled were Muslim. In the end, it had been decided that the agreement primarily had to do with the renting of facilities, so the religious affiliation of the buildings' owners was considered irrelevant. Importantly, the religious affiliation of the facilities was largely invisible, and I did not notice any overt symbols or pictures that revealed the building's religious status. Furthermore, the village in which the language café was held did not have many alternative venues that could be used; thus, they would have to make do. A general lack of resources to be included in in the language café as a service offering was thus also influential. The agreement was furthermore described as beneficial for the congregation, as it covered some of their monthly expenses. 'It is a bit expensive to rent the facilities from the

congregation', the leader of the local Red Cross told me during an interview, 'but it is important revenue for them, and they charge what they can. And I get that.' A representative from the congregation similarly emphasised the importance of the income generated through the language café, as it had faced growing expenditures in recent years that had not been matched by increased income.

On a typical evening, the volunteers would show up more or less on time, while the programme participants would often arrive a bit later. This was true in both Haugen and Varmdal, where I experienced volunteer helpers leaving due to low attendance, only to have more settled refugees arrive later. Typically, language café volunteers and some settled refugees arrived at 17:00 in the afternoon. After greeting the people they knew, the volunteers would pair up with people needing homework assistance and start working. The volunteers had various backgrounds, and there was reportedly a high percentage of retired teachers with plenty of experience. The tasks could involve anything from analysing poems to dealing with more or less difficult mathematics, and the person in charge often tried to pair participant needs with volunteers who had the right skills. Questions like 'Who here is good at math?' or 'Is there anyone here who knows English well?' would often be asked at the beginning of the café. Following the initial meeting and coupling of needs and appropriate resources, the pairs would sit down and work steadily for an hour or so. Sometimes, there was an approximate match between volunteers and the people in need of homework assistance. Other times, the assistants would circulate between two or more people to cover the needs of those present.

In Varmdal and Haugen, a formal partnership between the refugee administration and the local chapter of the Red Cross had been established. While the language cafés were reported to be efficient and highly appreciated efforts by the local refugee services, some teachers had also noted that it could often be easy to figure out which students had attended the language café. This, I was told, would become clear to teachers who noticed that homework was suddenly completed at a language level that surpassed the students' established competence. When I interviewed the head of the local Red Cross chapter, he indicated that 'sometimes the volunteers help them [the students] a bit too much, because they make use of the help they get. And we have received feedback from the adult education centre that we need to let them [the students] work more independently'. Attempts to instruct or limit the degree of help provided by the volunteers, however, were simultaneously considered to be something that should be handled carefully, as those in attendance had donated their time to participate. In both Varmdal and Haugen, many of the volunteers were reported to be former schoolteachers who sometimes may have taught their

students in a pedagogical style that differed from what was now used at the adult education centres.

In addition to providing academic support, the language cafés served as one of the few social arenas where settled refugees could meet local residents. Many times, these meetings evolved into friendships that extended beyond the café hours. One of the volunteers in Varmdal, who effectively ran the event, argued that the language café was one of a few – if not the only – low-threshold social arenas for settled refugees in the municipalities. 'Many of the refugees speak Norwegian in school, but not anywhere else', she noted. She considered it obvious that the refugees needed additional social arenas where they could speak Norwegian, but for now, the language café was more or less the only place available in the municipality.

The people who showed up at the cafés reported that they were happy to spend their time on something they perceived as meaningful. At the same time, Kari, who ran the café in Haugen on behalf of the Red Cross, noted the challenges that could sometimes be encountered as a volunteer. In response to the challenging circumstances she and other volunteers were bound to encounter when working with this particular social group, she had adopted the following philosophical principle:

> Everything we are able to do is a bonus. We should not think too much about what we are not able to do. What does not work does not matter, but everything we achieve is good. That way we can keep going and not grow tired. (Kari, informal conversation)

Kari's statement and the above discussion of the language cafés in Haugen and Varmdal reveal an important difference between the services provided by the public sector per se and those offered through the café. Even though many used the language cafés to receive assistance with homework and language improvement, the volunteers at the café did not enter the event with an expectation regarding the type of value outcome they would create, as was the case at the adult education centres. Sometimes, the only goal of those attending would be to talk together. The absence of a specific intended value outcome of the language cafés created an atmosphere in which the outcome was entirely defined by those in attendance, who sought help with homework or simply conversation. Further, both the volunteers and settled refugees reported experiencing satisfaction with the scheme, which was based on voluntarism. As an arena of flexible value outcomes, the language cafés constituted spaces in which people could meet, and – as Kari noted – everything that was accomplished could be considered a bonus. Most important, however, was

the wish to meet different people and spend a couple of hours together in a controlled and semi-structured environment.

The language café in Kryssfjord was organised by the local library every other week during the middle of the day. The time of the café had been set by the adult education centre and was offered as part of the participants' introduction programme, making it mandatory. Due to its being held during the middle of the day, it was usually only attended by volunteers who did not work, which meant largely retired people. The language café in Kryssfjord had been in operation for almost five years, and the librarian in charge told me that it had been among the first rural municipalities in the country to host such cafés. Every other week, she prepared for the language café by coming up with a set of questions or games the attendees could play to initiate conversations. When people showed up, the librarian's preparations proved valuable, as the volunteers and refugees were able to converse around pre-arranged topics.

The timing of the language café sometimes led to low attendance, as people with ordinary jobs were unable to come. Moreover, the librarian who hosted the café told me that she had observed an unfortunate tendency in which medical and dental appointments would often be scheduled at the same time as the café. One time when I arrived, there was no one present.

The library and language café in Kryssfjord represented a social arena that offered a joint sphere in which settled refugees and locals could meet; it was thus an arena for value co-creation. Furthermore, the librarian's efforts in preparing for the events represented active value facilitation for the participants through questions and activities. The combination of low attendance from both the local community and students from the adult education centre, however, seemed to be an obstacle that prevented the language café from reaching its full potential in terms of individual value creation. Even though a joint sphere was established and the librarian facilitated value co-creation through her preparation, no benefit would result from through the event unless people actually attended.

Even though the language cafés were organised by actors who cooperated with the core actors in the refugee service system, they provided auxiliary services by offering an arena in which introduction programme participants could practice their language in an organic environment. Moreover, the cafés were a type of service offering that assisted the settled refugees' value creation as introduction programme participants and their broader social integration into local communities. The latter was particularly evident through how the language cafés offered an arena in which refugee centre hierarchies are not operative, as people engaged with one another simply

as old and new residents of a community. Attending language cafés hence had the double benefit of assisting settled refugees in practicing their language and creating social relationships with people in the municipalities that might grow outside the café context.

The unpredictability of value outcomes from voluntary organisations' activities has been widely discussed. For instance, Echeverri has argued that such organisations do not necessarily offer 'tailored predefined services *for* individuals with specific need[s]', but rather often engage in a process of co-creating sociality (Echeverri, 2018, p. 299). In my empirical data, the importance of value co-creation at voluntary events, when compared to value co-creation in the refugee services, is evident as the actual value created at the language cafés and similar events depended on negotiations between the attendees. The purpose and ambition of such voluntary events can thus be said to be defined *in situ*, and the potential creation of value that occurs is the result of on-site negotiations regarding what the service offering should be. Sometimes, such offerings could be assistance with a difficult math problem; at other times, they could be casual conversation that might lead to prolonged social relations.

Cooking Potatoes in Syria and Norway: A Rural Women's Event

In Endefjord, the language café was hosted at the local volunteer centre in cooperation with the refugee advisor in the municipality. Both at the height and in the wake of the 2015–2016 influx, I was told the event had been popular among both volunteers and refugees, but in the autumn of 2018, the engagement of both groups had dwindled. Most times, the café would be frequented by one refugee and the centre manager, the refugee advisor, and a man who was there to wait for the chess club that started after the language café.

During my fieldwork, the local chapter of the Rural Women's Association organised an event at the volunteer centre to which they invited women who had been settled. The event had been inspired by similar events hosted by the association elsewhere in the country, and women who had been settled were to be invited to cook with local women. The event was part of a partnership between the adult education centre and the association and aimed to create a social arena in the municipality. During a meeting prior to the event, employees at the adult education centre discussed how a similar arena should be introduced for men; for the present, the proposed initiative was met with enthusiasm.

On the day of the first event, I arrived at the volunteer centre in Endefjord expecting to attend a regular language café. Upon my arrival, I was told that the evening was going to be for women only, but I was allowed to attend despite my gender. About eight women from the association

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had already showed up, so I introduced myself and explained what I was doing there. Only one participant from the adult education centre had arrived at that point, and there was some concern whether more people would show up. Soon after, however, more women students started arriving; in the end, there was an equal number of settled refugees and women from the association.

The aim of the event was to prepare and share a traditional Norwegian trout dinner. First, groups of women were formed to take care of different tasks: cooking potatoes, making salad, preparing the fish, and making dessert. The tasks at the event reflected how the women were to share an experience that was based on what may be called traditional gender roles. In the kitchen, one of the Syrian women remarked that they usually cooked their potatoes with more water than what appeared to be the case in Norway. After some women from the association checked the amount of water used, it quickly became evident that more water would likewise be customary in Norway. This mundane observation was an important experience that helped alleviate preconceived differences.

One of the settled refugees had brought her children to the event, and they received much attention from the elderly women from the association. At one point, one of the women from the association remarked that the youngest child seemed to have cold feet. 'It is cold in Norway!' she remarked, which caused the group to share a laugh. Soon after, someone found a blanket that was used to keep the baby warm.

Both the women from the centre and those from the association shared joy over the event once the evening had ended. After the settled refugee women had left, one of the women from the association stated that she hoped the event would lower the threshold for saying hello to one another in the municipality.

The Rural Women's Association event offered a type of informal arena through a service offering that differed from what was provided by the public refugee services. Through the event, local and settled women were able to interact on a level field and work towards a common goal: a nice trout dinner. Although the event had been organised in cooperation with the adult education centre, the idea had come from the association, and the event was voluntary for the women to attend. As such, the event as a service system auxiliary's service offering did not have the characteristics of coercion through sanctions that could be enforced by the centre.

The mundanity of the Rural Women's Association event had some important implications that had been reflected upon by Kari during the spring fieldwork. There, she told me that she would invite women she was responsible for as a refugee advisor back to her home. Although she admitted that this was frowned upon by many public sector employees, the experiences of the women she had invited had convinced her of the importance of inviting them into her kitchen and letting them look through her drawers and cupboards:

> If there were four or five women who were allowed to go about in my kitchen and ask questions about "'What is this?', there were some epiphanies, because how would they know if they were not allowed to pick things up and look at them? I mean, it becomes self-evident when you have been in that situation. (Kari, interview, spring fieldwork)

Kari's emphasis on inviting people into her home serves as an example of how those settled could be shown what a typical Norwegian home might look like. In so doing, Kari, who worked at the volunteer centre in Haugen, blurred the boundaries between her professional and private selves by including those she worked with into her own lifeworld. Becoming part of a whole through a process of integration, she thereby emphasised, includes the necessity of being aware of what that particular whole – in this case, Norwegian homes – look like. 'So I believe in the simple things' she added, and wished to

> get as many as possible into Norwegian homes. People say, 'Oh look at that house, it is easy to see that there are immigrants living there because they tie up their curtains'. How many houses do you think they have been in that allow them to see other practices? (Kari, interview)

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have explored how municipal PSOs interpreted and worked to implement service offerings in the context of the introduction programme and have thus addressed the second sub-research question:

> How do PSOs provide service offerings and engage in public service innovation?

This chapter has discussed how PSOs worked to implement policy in their local context by striking a balance between their legal requirements, local resources, and feedback from the service recipients. The need to adjust policy requirements in a local context can be interpreted through the wicked problems literature, especially the ways in which front-line services are required to

cope with policy that has been articulated at higher levels of government (Daviter, 2017). Coping with policy in a local context reflects potential discrepancies between the types of resources that are assumed to be available in the articulation of a policy and the actual resources and possibilities available in local contexts.

The featured municipalities were continually engaged in improving their service offerings. Sometimes, this consisted of assisting the service recipients with basic living guidance, such as how to properly sort their waste and use common home appliances. Other times, more substantial changes were made in their core service offerings to improve their facilitation of value. All the featured municipalities had developed and engaged with large and small innovation projects. A common denominator for these projects was found in how the fundamental aim had been to better facilitate their service recipients' value creation. The most substantial project discussed took place in Endefjord, where the local refugee services had engaged in what may be termed a service system innovation. To provide a fast-track educational scheme that could provide vocational degrees for their participants, the adult education centre in Endefjord had established partnerships with the local high school and local businesses. This represented a reconfiguration of resources in which previous practices and collaboration between actors had become more closely intertwined to ensure an integrated process. The same example, however, further showed how the implementation of larger-scale innovations entails a consequent process of smaller adjustments. The need for adjustments in Endefjord had come as an inevitable result of changes occurring in their planned collaboration, as one of the featured factories had withdrawn. In response, the adult education centre searched for new solutions in their local community that could help alleviate their problems.

Providing service offerings, it was thus shown, requires continual adjustments. Extrapolating the findings of the chapter to PSL in general, I have shown how service offering provision requires a process of ongoing adjustments. Importantly, these adjustments are due to changes in the expectations, needs, and skills of the service recipients. Following the position that it is the service recipients who create value through the service encounter (Grönroos, 2019), this chapter has shown why it is important for PSOs to review and consider how service recipients are able to make use of service offerings. Providing such offerings requires a continued sensitivity to the needs, expectations, and capabilities of the service recipients. This sensitivity was illustrated by the Kryssfjord centre's attempt to implement collaborative learning as a pedagogical strategy. Having witnessed how the students did not fully grasp the logic of collaborative learning, thus leaving them worse off than prior to the implementation of the scheme, the centre's teachers

initiated a process in which they sought to teach their students how to learn together before continuing the strategy. The lessons and readjustments made by the centre represent an important lesson from a PSL point of view, as they show how service development consists of more than simply altering service offerings. Rather, engaging in efforts to increase the service recipients' skills may represent a constructive step in their value facilitation efforts.

Chapter 7: Public Refugee Services and Society

> *I wish I could find a job here; the people are very kind people, and [it is] a peaceful place. But I don't think there are many opportunities for a job, so it is better to go to a big city. Where I can find, you know, a job. I don't want to stay like this. If I find a job in another big place or city, I will move straight away because, you know, I am wasting my time.* (Ibrahim, interview)

Introduction

Public service provision and value co-creation do not occur in a vacuum. Rather, they are embedded in a variety of discourses, community influences, and different types of social institutions such as languages, practices, and norms (Strokosch & Osborne, 2020, p. 4). By default, refugee integration services are provided in a broad social field, where what occurs between the service provider and recipient is inextricably connected to society at the local, national, and global levels. The close connections between the services provided to settled refugees and society are explicitly mentioned in the aim of the Introduction Act: the act is to prepare newly arrived immigrants for work and social participation in Norway (Introduksjonsloven, LOV-2003-07-04-80).

The previous chapters have focused on the ways in which employees as service providers and settled refugees as service recipients experienced the service process and worked together to co-create value that more or less aligned with what is articulated in the Introduction Act. This effort, I have argued, was influenced by a number of endogenous and exogenous factors that altered service provision and the ways in which settled refugees were able to experience advantages or disadvantages from the programme. In this chapter, I shift my gaze beyond the dyadic service process by using the notion of the extended service environment as the context in which all services are provided. 'No public service is an island!', Strokorsch and Osborne have recently proclaimed (Strokosch & Osborne, 2020, p. 13) and in this chapter, I discuss how factors external to the service system affected local service provision. This is explored through the third and final sub-research question:

> How does the extended service environment influence the process of local service provision and value co-creation in a municipal service context?

The notion of the extended service environment used in this thesis is inspired by previous service environment research (e.g., J. Baker et al., 2020; Bitner, 1992; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011), but

the objective here is to extend the boundaries of the social and physical service environment beyond the immediate surroundings to capture broader external influences. In Chapter 2, the extended service environment was defined as a concept that can be used to capture how various external dimensions affect service provision and value co-creation. These, I argue, include physical, social, and technological dimensions (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011), and the approach based on the extended service environment differs from previous service environment and servicescape literature by widening the field that may influence the services. Methodologically, I further demonstrate that the potential influence of the extended service environment is not found in static factors and incidents but must rather be investigated through empirical studies.

This chapter explores how the extended service environment influences local service systems and value co-creation. In relation to the service model (Figure 1, Chapter 1), extended service environments have been illustrated as the wider contextual environment in which service systems – including the service recipients – operate. As such, a range of influences are considered for their potential to affect the processes of value co-creation that occur within service systems.

Refugees as a Scarce Resource

In 2018, the number of refugee arrivals to Norway had declined, and refugee service organisations throughout the country pleaded with the government to settle more refugees.[35] For the municipalities, refugee settlement meant not only that employees working in refugee-related services would be able to keep their jobs, but also that the municipal budgets would continue to receive additional funds. An incentive had thus emerged in which settling refugees was increasingly perceived as beneficial, and a decline in future requests was likely to affect both refugee services and overall municipal budgets: 'We who operate out in the "bush" have to be proactive when faced with the increasing tendency of centralised refugee settlements', one employee stated in a meeting with reference to the future settlements. While funds were received for settling refugees, all the refugee services featured had experiences with money transfers for settling refugees that would either 'disappear' prior to reaching them or expectations from the politicians in the municipality that the services should operate on a revenue model so that money received for settling refugees could be used elsewhere. This was the case in Varmdal, where the municipal budget revealed that the refugee administration and adult education centre (which operated as a single unit) was expected to save money. Interestingly, the refugee service was the

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[35] News articles on the subject: https://www.nrk.no/norge/xl/na-er-det-en-kamp-om-a-fa-flyktninger-1.13753780; https://www.ks.no/fagomrader/innvandring-og-integrering/flyktninger/bykommunene-vil-bosette-flere-flyktninger/.

only unit except for renovation, water, and sewage (all of which collect fees) that was expected to operate on a surplus. This surplus money, I was told, would be used to balance the budgets of other services. Even though it had been stated that the money was supposed to go to PSOs that worked to assist refugees in various ways (such as primary schools and health centres), uncertainties about where the cash was actually going were reported. Kåre, the head of the refugee administration in Haugen, told me that the refugee services would only receive part of the money allocated by the state for settling refugees. Out of the nearly 20 million NOK allocated a few years earlier, he showed me in a PowerPoint that the refugee service and NAV – an important service system partner – had only used half, while the rest had gone elsewhere. Thinking about it, he told me the following:

> I do not have any problems facing the politicians with a straight back [directly] and telling them that we are doing our job quite well based on the fact that we only get to use half of the money received to integrate [refugees].

This statement reflects the refugee services' ability to work under financial resource restrictions. The tendency to financial resource scarcity was also indicated at a meeting organised by the county council during the spring fieldwork, where an employee from another municipality had the impression that the refugees themselves were rarely seen as resources by the municipalities that agreed to settle them. Rather, they were resources because of the monies that came with them, funds that were used to balance municipal budgets. In Endefjord, this attitude had been taken to the extreme by a municipal council member from a small right-wing party who had argued for using all the money received to settle refugees on other public services. This, however, had not happened, and the municipality had established a refugee fund in which surplus money from funds received to settle refugees and house asylum seekers had been placed. Regardless, the Endefjord adult education centre had experiences similar to those in Varmdal and Haugen and had witnessed money going out of the fund that they could not explain. Brage, a teacher at the centre, lamented how the centre could have done more if they had control over the money placed in the fund. 'Today', he stated during a meeting, 'the [refugee] fund is a distributable reserve that can be used for everything with the excuse that all municipal services are refugee related'. While acknowledging that this justification was not erroneous – settled refugees have same right to services as all other municipal residents – Brage nonetheless considered this a misguided approach, as public services should be provided to all residents, regardless of origin.

In 2018, all four municipalities accepted requests to settle 10 refugees over the course of the year. Among these refugees, some were expected to be parts of families, under the age of 16, and thus

projected to be enrolled in primary school, rather than participants in the introduction programme. As an estimate, it could therefore be expected that the settlements that year would result in some five to six additional participants to be enrolled in introduction programmes. Kåre, the Haugen refugee administration manager, had noticed a recent change in the process of settlement. It had previously been possible to go to an asylum centre and choose people who were considered easy to integrate, which resulted in many people with disabilities – for example – remaining in the asylum system. Problems with settling people or families with disabilities have been reported as common (Pedersen, 2020, June 17). In 2018, Haugen had filled two of its ten-person quota from a nearby asylum centre, but they were still waiting for requests from IMDi regarding the eight slots that remained. The situation had changed as the supply-and-demand curve had been skewed. Whereas previous years had a high supply of people waiting for municipalities to accept them, there was now a general shortage of available refugees, and the municipalities were consequently competing to get their share. In Kåre's perception, this had led to increased pressure on the municipalities, where a negative response to settling certain refugees might lead to that municipality not being considered eligible for any future settlement requests.

In 2017, the government introduced new criteria for refugee settlements and signalled that municipalities with fewer than 5,000 residents would not be considered for refugee settlement. As a result, Kryssfjord had initially not been requested to settle anyone in 2018, while the other three municipalities in this study had been requested to settle ten refugees each. In response to the lack of requests to settle, the refugee services in Kryssfjord, which had accumulated 30 years of experience, initiated a lobbying effort to receive requests to settle. Because of their efforts, which received the mayor's support, they finally received a request to settle ten refugees in the summer of 2018 and were waiting for specific requests during my fieldwork. One day in October, sometime after lunch, Astrid, the joint manager of the local NAV office and refugee administration, received an e-mail from IMDi to settle a family located in a third country. Following the request, Astrid and a local programme advisor started the process of figuring out whether they would be able to agree and finding a potential house in which the family could be settled. After calling the municipal PSO in charge of housing, it became clear that the place they had first considered had been allotted to someone else the previous day. Nonetheless, they continued their efforts. Astrid emphasised the importance of figuring out the details of how they were going to settle those requested and stated, 'if we do not settle this year, we will probably not receive a request next year. Moreover, it is of economic importance [that we accept]'.

That afternoon, a feeling of enthusiasm could be felt at the adult education centre, as the settlement would fulfil that year's ten-person quota and thus contribute to the continued operations at the centre. In December, the family arrived from a country in the Middle East and was settled in Kryssfjord, where the sun was currently blocked by the steep mountains but was due to return in a few months.

The Struggle Continues

The struggle for requests and actually settling refugees in the period characterised by declining refugee arrivals following 2016 had led to a situation in which the municipalities realised that times were changing. Decreasing refugee arrivals constituted a shock in the extended service environment for refugee services in municipalities throughout Norway, which were suddenly faced with a the prospect of no longer having people to serve. In 2018, the challenges experienced by the municipal refugee services came as a result of changes in their extended service environment, with stricter border regimes in Europe and Norway resulting in refugees becoming a scarce resource for the municipalities. While millions of people around the world were still being forcibly displaced, the taming of migration policy had thus resulted in an operational environment that would potentially lead to a scaling down of the municipal refugee services and cost at least some people their jobs.

During a meeting held between Kryssfjord and Endefjord as part of their upcoming merger into one municipality – the future Fjordbygda – Tobias expressed a belief that the time of nationwide settlements had passed and that they would now have to work to stand out in the crowd. As part of this effort, a reform of the adult education centre was proposed which would see it increasingly target labour migrants. Growing language requirements for immigrants working in the health sector and elsewhere indicated a change that could result in additional demands for language education, and it was proposed that the education centres could increase their robustness by creating courses that targeted these groups. Without service recipients, the adult education centres' reason for existence would disappear, and it was therefore considered vital to find alternative service recipients. In Kryssfjord, this effort had already been initiated, as the centre had received a request to offer a 'Health Norwegian' language course for employees in the health sector. Kristin, the headmaster, had been in contact with health sector representatives from the municipality, and they had discussed the language requirements (written, oral, and aural). The requirements would influence the design of the centre's service offering. At first, it had been suggested to require all health workers to have B2 language levels, as is the case in larger Norwegian cities like Bergen and Oslo. 'This might be OK in larger cities', Kristin had

argued, 'but in a small place like Kryssfjord, it can exclude much needed resources'. The B2 level is equivalent to the level required to attend university and in Kristin's view, this would be superfluous in a sector where most of the work depended on being able to comprehend and react to very specific messages. In the end, they had come to an agreement that employees in the health sector should achieve B2 in oral language and B1 in written language, and thus the Kryssfjord education centre had started to organise a new course that would take place during the evenings.

Tobias from Endefjord envisioned a similar future service offering, as the municipality housed a number of labour migrants working in its factories. He believed that some of these migrants would eventually realise their need to improve their Norwegian language skills and that this could result in a new user group. According to his estimates, the potential pool of participants consisted of several hundred future service recipients: 'Regardless of what is going to happen, we are facing an interesting future when it comes to our user group'. In addition to the potential pool of language students, changes in the public sector had signalled that the counties and municipalities would be increasingly made responsible for life-long education (Meld. St. 5, 2019-2020, p. 9). This, Tobias believed, was an opportunity that the centre should grasp as soon as possible: 'It is difficult to understand that digital education has been given to the volunteer centre when it can just as well be done here'. As the number of refugee arrivals went down, changes elsewhere in the extended service environment were viewed as an opportunity for the adult education centre to prevail.

In 2018, refugee services in Norway were affected by external influences that came about because of population attitudes, new language demands in the work force, and a general decrease in refugee arrivals that the municipal service organisations could serve. The context in which they operated influenced local service provision, and several employees feared what the future would hold. While PSOs exist to serve user needs as they have been articulated through policy, those employed in such services are simultaneously individuals with their own agency. Facing an unpredictable future in which the number of refugees settled could stay low, new strategies were developed to 'stay in business'. For the adult education centres, in particular, developing new service offerings would be a way for them to stay open despite disruptive changes in their contextual environment. While changes in the extended service environment had caused a problem for them, that same environment was simultaneously seen as offering a potential solution. This became apparent by mapping out their local communities and identifying their needs. Kryssfjord and Endefjord appeared to have an advantage over Haugen and Varmdal due

to their high number of migrant labourers. By identifying the increasing language requirements signalled by state and municipal governments and comparing them with the current skills of the labour migrants, the education centres could fill a gap and remain in operation.

The impact of the extended service environment on municipal service systems, such as that related to refugee integration in 2018, shows how vulnerable such systems are to uncontrollable externalities. The uncontrollability of the extended service environment in the featured municipalities was manifested in the fact their ability to settle refugees was outside their control, as arrival numbers were determined by national and regional policies. In the years following the 2015–2016 influx, Norway has had low refugee arrival numbers, which has led to municipal PSOs working with refugee integration to scale down their operations or reorient their efforts elsewhere.

Refugee integration services are deeply vulnerable to changes in the extended service environment. This section has shown how municipal PSOs working with refugees rely on refugee arrivals to do their job by facilitating settled refugees' value creation through providing service offerings. As was also discussed in Chapter 4, the years since the 2015–2016 refugee influx have been characterised by a marked decline in refugee arrivals (particularly asylum seekers) to Norway. This, I have further shown, is due to restrictive policies at the EU and national levels. Policy restrictions to limit refugee integration are a change in the extended service environment due to their being part of a process outside the municipal refugee services' sphere of influence. In 2018, the general decline in refugee arrivals in Norway had led the featured municipalities to survey their immediate extended service environment and identify new service recipients they might serve. In Endefjord and Kryssfjord, a potential pool of resources – labour migrants – had been identified as potential service recipients. To invite these individuals to make use of their services, the Kryssfjord adult education centre was in the process of developing new service offerings aimed at municipal health workers with Norwegian as a second language.

The general decline in refugee arrivals meant the local refugee services, especially the adult education centres, had to radically rethink their operations. Coming to terms with the new situation in which the government had both signalled a shift towards settlements in larger municipalities and increasing restrictions on refugee admissions, the employees started to think about developing service offerings for new groups of recipients. The ideas that emerged in 2018 resonate with bricolage as a form of innovation that comes in response to a particular problem and makes use of the available resources to alleviate that problem (Witell et al., 2017, p. 291). Even though the problem at hand was temporally situated in the future, its long-term

consequences made it clear that it would have to be faced before the centres found themselves in a situation where they no longer had any students at all.

Sociocultural and Psychological Impacts on Local Service Provision

International migration and local refugee integration comprise parts of a sequential process. This was reflected by Ibrahim during an interview when he stated that 'I had no idea that one day I would come to Norway. I never thought about it'. Nevertheless, in 2018, he found himself one of several introduction programme participants in his municipality, where he was now trying to reassemble his life in a country at 'the end of the world'.

The geographical and social relocation that comes with being forcibly displaced had multiple consequences. For some, the process of becoming accustomed to new cultural environments – a core feature of the integration process – distorted their ability to apply their resources optimally to learn the language. Sometimes, the source of the distortion came from Norway, the very country to which the refugees had moved. Other times, events in the their countries of origin would result in an inability to create value from local service offerings.

One morning during the spring fieldwork, one of the programme advisors in Varmdal received a text message from a participant, who stated that they would be absent that day as their home city had been bombed by the Turkish Armed Forces. The trauma caused by the incident had led the participant to decide that it would be impossible to attend class; furthermore, that absence was framed as a form of solidarity with family and friends who had been affected. Later that day, similar messages, which appeared to have been coordinated among people from the same ethnic community, came in from throughout the country and were discussed on a Facebook page organised by refugee service employees in Norway. The absence caused by the incident was discussed on both the Facebook page and at the office, as a position would have to be taken regarding whether it could be accepted as a legitimate reason for not attending. In the end, the person's absence was deemed unjustified based on an interpretation of the Introduction Act.

While wars and horrific events in the participants' countries of origin did not justify their absence from the programme, conflict and war nevertheless continued and frequently affected their abilities to fully follow the programme. Even though the introduction programme offered a structured and formalised service offering on which the refugees could and were expected to focus their energy, the wickedness of the world beyond the adult education centres could have a profound influence on their lifeworlds.

Ties and relations in the settled refugees' countries of origin also influenced the experiential value based on how they affected some of those enrolled in the programme. While some, like Bassam and Qasim in Chapter 5, had made a conscious decision to limit their ties and connections with people in the places they had left to go forward and make good use of the opportunities they saw in Norway, this was more difficult for others. Another factor arising from transnational ties was the responsibility felt by settled refugees for their relatives in Somalia, Eritrea, Lebanon, and Syria. 'Many of the participants complain that they have very little money', a programme advisor stated during a meeting:

> At the same time, we know many people send money back 'home' through Western Union and similar services. I can understand that there is an expectation for them to send money back home, but they [the participants] should prioritise their children. This is how child poverty prevails. (Programme advisor during meeting, spring fieldwork)

The notion of the disintegrating influence of extended families, as opposed to the nuclear family, has been noted in a previous study from Denmark (Larsen, 2011, p. 338). In that study, Larsen argues that the underlying assumptions of Danish integration policy, which has been influential on its Norwegian counterpart, take the nuclear family as the core social unit. As a consequence, she points out that

> integration programmes in Denmark often regard wider kin relations as a '*dis-integrating*' factor ('they have to send money back to their kinsmen', 'they are marrying cousins instead of marrying ethnic Danes', 'kinsmen pull them towards the cultural norms and traditions of the country of origin, rather than pushing them towards those of the host society' and so on). (Larsen, 2011, p. 338)

Larsen's argument points to disintegration as the opposite of integration, and through her example, she shows how integration efforts in Denmark were framed against a simultaneous contrary force in the shape of disintegration. Tensions between integration as a process in which a person is to become part of a community and disintegration as the reactive forces that work against such integration resonates with the policy understanding of refugee integration discussed in Chapter 1 (see Rytter, 2018; Schinkel, 2018). In such instances, social behaviour that is considered an obstacle to resource integration can be viewed as actively hindering the outcomes that have been defined as preferential, while at the same time being acknowledged as difficult to tackle for the service-providing actors.

During the spring fieldwork, a rumour emerged that revealed the differences between the social communities of the refugees and most of the employees; it demonstrates that an understanding of service recipients' lifeworlds is crucial for service providers. The rumour concerned an ad hoc prayer room that had been established at some point. While the employees I spoke to were uncertain about precisely when the ad hoc prayer 'room', which actually consisted of a curtain hanging in a secluded corner of the adult education centre, had been set up, it was clear that it had now become a problem. The problem with the prayer room concerned the Muslim students at the centre, as a rumour had circulated that a participant at the centre would be keeping track of whether students attended to their religious duty to pray. One of the five pillars of Islam is *salah* or *salat* (the five daily prayers). Even though the adult education centre in question did not facilitate time for prayer for their students, it soon became clear that praying during school hours was something that had been going on for a long time. Further, the social control practiced through the use of prayer rooms had been discussed at a recent refugee workers' association meeting, and the issue had also been receiving increasing political attention (Justis- og Beredskapsdepartementet, 2017). Something would have to be done.

During the meetings at which the issue of the prayer room and social control at the centre was discussed, it was emphasised that the solution to the problem would depend on how it was defined. Praying during school hours as an individual act was largely considered unproblematic; what was at issue was any sort of communal effort to pressure people into attending to their religious duties. A month or so after the problem first arose, employees from the refugee administration went to the centre after school hours, took down the curtain that had marked the location of the prayer room, and re-regulated the space by placing a printer there. In its aftermath, the re-regulation of the prayer room was said to have been successful, although some suspected other rooms might still be used for that particular purpose. Nonetheless, it was evident that certain participants at the centre were engaged in controlling behaviour that was found difficult to counteract. As the next step in efforts to deal with this issue, a meeting with all the centre's participants was therefore planned to discuss the issue in indirect terms and avoid the suspicion that someone had revealed the subjugating control that may have been occurring. The steps taken to counter social control at the centre thus consisted of a combination of physical changes and efforts to change participant attitudes.

The influence of religious communities on service provision re-emerged a few months later, as the Islamic holy month of Ramadan coincided with the exam and language test period at the centre. Abstaining from eating during the period the students had been working towards all year

was perceived as unfortunate by employees and teachers associated with the refugee services. Crucially, it was acknowledged by all involved that fasting would result in the students not being able to make optimal use of their resources, as what they had learned during the past year could easily be forgotten on an empty stomach. This assumption has been supported in a previous study conducted in the Netherlands (Oosterbeek & van der Klaauw, 2013). In the week prior, some students had made it clear that they would not fast on days when they had exams. One student in particular had argued that he had to do well on his exams to get a job and take care of his family and therefore would not participate in collective fasting on exam days. Another student had signalled that he wanted to do the same but felt social pressure that would prevent him from eating in front of other Muslims.

Sociocultural influence and behavioural practices in the service recipients' sphere interfered with the value co-creation process in various ways in the municipalities. Here, I have discussed sociocultural backgrounds as part of an extended service environment that influence local service processes.

Embodied Traumas and the Impacts of War in Municipal Services

For some who had fled, war and conflict had been embodied in either mental or physical ways, creating a continuation of the pasts they had largely fled into their present-day lives. One example was Ibrahim, who was now partially impaired after his legs had been shattered in the aerial bombing of a factory he was visiting in Syria. For others, experiences with the state in their countries of origin had resulted in a deep-seated scepticism towards authorities. Bassam, who had fled the war in Syria, noted the following:

> The police in Syria have always been like that. Very brutal. And it is like that, when you see a police car you become very scared even if you have not done anything. I still feel like this when I see the police. I become very scared. I think that maybe it will be like that forever. (Bassam, interview)

During the fieldwork, I learned of several instances of mentally or physically traumatised participants who for various reasons had trouble following the programme. Most of these cases were of a particularly sensitive nature, so I did not fully transcribe the individual cases. One of the employees, however, noted the influence of mental health issues stemming from previous experiences and was critical of how every settled refugee was subject to immediate enrolment in the introduction programme three months after being settled: 'There are several people who will not benefit from being in school if they have things they have to deal with inside their heads

first'. Mental health issues were further perceived as challenging due to cultural differences between the employees and settled refugees, some of whom were reported to associate mental health with stigma. It has been argued that 'stigma is another challenge facing the provision of mental health services to Syrian refugees in Western countries. In Syrian culture, emotional suffering is perceived as an inherent aspect of life' (Almoshmosh, Bahloul, Barkil-Oteo, Hassan, & Kirmayer, 2019). In an extension of this cultural stigma, it could be difficult to ensure proper services for people dealing with issues that they do not fully acknowledge as problems.

While several of my interlocutors mentioned what can be described as mental health challenges related to their migration, they were frequently articulated in terms like 'tired' or 'thinking a lot'. For Amr, tiredness was expressed as a result of not being able to speak Norwegian fluently. Further, he stated, 'sometimes I am tired because I do not read and write Arabic. Sometimes I am tired because my mother and father live in Lebanon and I live in Norway'. In an attempt to shield his children from his own exhaustion with the war in Syria, he would prevent them from watching the news: 'They are not allowed to watch because of the war. Sometimes I watch news of the war, but for six months, I did not watch because I get tired and [have] a headache'. Perhaps because of his self-expressed fatigue, Amr believed the service offering provided to participants at the adult education centre was too extensive. 'Six hours is not good, because I have a wife and family … and we have to cook and clean.… I would like school to be finished at 12 o'clock', Amr suggested.

Discussing his early efforts in learning Norwegian at the asylum centre, Sadiq told me something similar:

> When I was sleeping [in the asylum centre], a lady came and knocked on the door to say, 'come to school'. I told her 'no, I'm tired today. I have a headache and did not sleep'. And she said, 'you have to wake up and come to school'. When I came to school, after an hour, I said, 'I have to sleep'. (Sadiq, interview)

Sadiq's articulation of his early problems coping with his new situation resonated with statements made by a health worker employed in a municipal refugee service who told me that the problem was not necessarily that people were reluctant to talk about their situations and their thoughts about those situations. Rather, she had experienced that 'everyone tells me what they are doing and feeling, but many are sceptical of going to the psychiatrist. They do not say why, just "I do not need it"' (Health worker interview). This was also the case in the interviews I conducted, where fatigue and other mental health issues were readily discussed by my interlocutors.

Faraway events such as wars, conflicts, and bombings had both direct and indirect influences on local service provision. The traumas of war and problems related to the translation of mental health issues – often manifested through the embodied psychological baggage from previous experiences – affected individual lifeworlds in ways that prevented the settled refugees from fully benefitting from the service offerings. The extent to which individual service recipients were influenced by trauma and previous experience connected with mental and physical health issues squarely placed local service provision in an international context where the settled refugees themselves were the connection between Homs, Afrin, Aleppo, the Al-Shabaab occupied areas of Somalia, and rural municipalities in Norway.

The international influence on refugee service provision was displayed through its impact on the refugees' lifeworld situations and in how pre-established social norms (such as those related to religion) affected local service provision in ways that had not been accounted for in the service offering design. Here, the extended service environment influence is captured in how aspects that were beyond the control of the service system influenced service. This influence sometimes surfaced when prevailing conflicts elsewhere in the world interfered with the service recipients' ability to interact with local service offerings. Further, this section has argued that the settled refugees' pre-established communities could sometimes interfere with local service provision and the service providers' attempts to facilitate their value creation processes. This was exemplified through the issue of social control and Ramadan, which were reported as interfering with attempts to facilitate value creation. While the two issues were intimately tied to the service recipients' lifeworlds, they were also aspects that existed outside the PSOs' sphere of influence. Although service providers could – and did – encourage introduction programme participants not to fast on the days of their exams and to refrain from engaging in social control efforts, these social mechanisms operated outside their domain.

Engaging with the Local Community

> I think among the people in our community, there are many who still do not know that we have settled refugees; they talk about asylum seekers and we do not have asylum seekers now. None. We have settled refugees who can stay here as long as they want to and until they die. That is very important to communicate, because it makes more sense to contribute [to integration efforts] for someone who is going to stay. (Interview, former employee, Haugen)

The experiences of both the public service employees and settled refugees suggest that the current organisation and practices associated with refugee integration in Norway are part of a

process that occurs alongside rather than as an embedded part of the local communities. In Chapter 5, this was revealed in how several of my interlocutors reported satisfaction with the actual introduction programme and the efforts of service employees associated with it but struggled to establish contacts and social networks in the places they now lived. In a 2020 survey on attitudes towards immigration and integration, a majority of respondents believed that refugee integration was working rather or very poorly (57%), while 20% of the respondents thought it was going rather or very well (Brekke & Mohn, 2018). The remaining 34% responded that it was working neither poorly nor well.[36] Different reasons are provided in the report to describe particular challenges in integration; approximately 53% thought that several immigrants had a culture or religion that did not 'fit' into Norwegian society, and a similar percentage believed the number of arrivals was too high (Brekke, Fladmoe, & Wollebæk, 2020, p. 79).

The gap between settled refugees as service recipients in service systems and as members of local communities is thus recognised by those settled and by respondents to the 2020 survey. In terms of the analytical framework of this study, it appears as if the entities into which the settled refugees are to be integrated – local communities – largely remain obscured as part of their extended service environment during their initial years in Norway. Even though the settled refugees were aware of this environment and the actors within it, it was also framed as something they found difficult to fully join.

Refugee integration as a wicked problem is amplified by the multidimensionality of the process, as it has been sub-categorized into cultural, residential, economic, and social processes (Eggebø & Brekke, 2019, p. 429; Valenta & Bunar, 2010, p. 466). Attitudes towards integration and immigration add further complexity, as they often reflect beliefs rather than actual practices and outcomes, which may be expected to influence practice and behaviour. Polarisation in the debate on refugees in particular and immigration in general creates a type of problem that is difficult for policymakers to tame. Nonetheless, this unruliness caused by public debate, when added to refugee integration as a wicked problem, affects real-world integration processes.

Prejudice towards settled refugees as a group was reported to have surfaced during a hiring meeting in one of the municipalities featured in the autumn fieldwork. A local business had asked a prospective employee whether accommodations would be required for prayer and whether it would be acceptable for the potential hire to eat with the other employees. In that instance, the prospective employee had handled the situation well, but a programme advisor retold a story in

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[36] Due to rounding, the numbers total 101% in the report.

which a Syrian refugee had become upset and asked the employer whether they thought he was an Islamic State fighter? During his time at an asylum centre in a small city in western Norway, Mahmoud had similar experiences: '[There] we would say hi to people and they would say nothing. We thought, "Why are they not saying hi?" Maybe they thought that because we are Muslims, we are Islamic State. But they are wrong, maybe because they do not know what Islam is'. Their experiences relate to how a previous study has argued that mis-interpellation, as a situation in which a person is perceived to be something that does not resonate with their own self-image, could lead to frustration and fatigue for Muslims (Hage, 2011).

The distinction between social and systemic integration, in which the latter is understood as the proceedings through which a person fulfils certain requirements to become a formalised member of society, was exemplified in Endefjord, where Irene told a story of a couple who had recently moved away. Despite reaching the government targets for acquiring permanent residency and obtaining jobs in the municipality, the couple was reported to have struggled with establishing a social network. Their integration into society, per the phrasings of the Introduction Act, had thus largely been successful, but they had not fulfilled their experientially perceived needs for establishing a good life in the municipality. Beyond the jobs they had been able to acquire, the couple thought they would have a better chance of creating a social network and a good life elsewhere and had thus moved away.

The introduction programme in its current form can sometimes have an unintended side effect of prolonging the threshold period before refugees become part of society. Kari, a volunteer at the Haugen Red Cross and former refugee administration employee, had witnessed an encounter between settled refugees she was responsible for:

> I had a woman who had work practice at the care centre for the elderly. A very kind and sociable woman who got to know a lot of people, and one of the people she knew died. And then she said, 'I have to go to [the person's] funeral, because I have to know how a Norwegian funeral is. Because I am going to die in Norway'. So she had to know what it was like. And that, I think – then you have figured out a lot, because … she was trying to understand everything she knew she was going to go through here. (Kari, interview)

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have addressed the third sub-research question:

This chapter has explored how value co-creation in the featured municipalities was influenced by the extended service environment, which has been conceptualised as the context in which service systems operate; further, it has been argued that they may have to be explored empirically to understand the full range of potential influences that might emerge from them. The most important analytical potential inherent in the extended service environment, therefore, has been to open an analytical lens to understand how externalities affected service provision.

Two types of extended service environment influences have been identified: structural and social. Structural influences were primarily discussed in relation to the decline in refugee arrivals, which was likely to alter the structural conditions in which the municipal refugee services operated. The change had come in response to the high arrival numbers in 2015–2016, after which restrictive policies aimed at asylum seekers had been enacted at the regional and national levels. Declining refugee settlements in the municipalities further led the refugee services to rethink their user bases and operations. As a possible solution to stay afloat, refugee services in Endefjord and Kryssfjord initiated efforts through which service offerings to labour migrants would be provided. Labour migrants, Tobias figured, constituted an untapped resource that could be made part of the local service system through the provision of tailored programmes. This would ensure that the service still had a user group through facilitating a new service recipient group's value creation.

Structural influences can thus be considered a type of influence that is difficult – if not impossible – for local service systems to change. Accordingly, strategies of coping are required by which local PSOs adjust their services to fit the new structural circumstances in which they find themselves operating.

Social influences in this chapter were largely discussed in terms of the empirically observed gap that seems to exist between settled refugees as parts of service systems and the local communities of which they are to (supposed to) become part. I discussed how the social practices and attitudes that were reported in a survey (Brekke et al., 2020) could be used to explain the distance between settled refugees and local communities described in Chapter 5. The relational aspect highlights a general need for bringing public service efforts and social inclusion in local communities closer together as a means of improving settled refugees' integration experiences. Social mechanisms that resulted in maintaining a distance between people settled as refugees and their municipal

neighbours were discussed in terms of how some refugees had perceived their experiences. This led some to question, for instance, whether Norwegians thought they were Islamic State fighters because they were Muslims. Such instances, it can be assumed, affect individuals' lifeworlds, as their perception of being welcomed is affected by how they experience being seen.

According to this analysis, social influences can be addressed in a more direct manner than structural influences. At the same time, these social influences were often seen to be associated with ingrained practices that are difficult to challenge, including religious practices and the overcoming the obstacle identified as Norwegian sociality.

In the next chapter, I synthesise the findings from the three empirical chapters to extrapolate the theoretical contributions of this thesis. These three chapters have been written to address the study's three sub-research questions. In Chapter 8, I discuss the theoretical implications of my findings before addressing the main research question in Chapter 9, where I draw conclusions for the thesis and suggest avenues for future research.

Chapter 8: Discussion and Analysis

It is not easy to grow up in Norway without knowing 'bæ lille lam' [a famous children's song].
Because it is something everyone knows, and if it is the only thing you don't know, it does not
matter. But if it comes on top of a range of other things you don't know, then it becomes …
well, it becomes a handicap. (Kari, volunteer, interview)

Introduction

Refugee integration in Norway is interconnected with public service provision. Throughout this study, I have discussed refugee integration as a service process. Moreover, I have highlighted the wider social implications through the extended service environment concept in an attempt to reveal the multiple external influences that affect refugee integration as both a public service and a social process.

The study contributes to the development of PSL, and in the empirical chapters, I have discussed my findings in light of my analytical framework. PSL as a theoretical framework in this study has been supplemented with additional theoretical approaches, such as wicked problems and bricolage as an innovation concept. The addition of other theoretical lenses to PSL is a result of my abductive research design, in which I have continually oscillated between theory and empirical data.

In this chapter, I discuss the implications of the thesis in relation to previous research. In the empirical chapters, I explored and analysed the findings in relation to the sub-research questions presented in Chapter 2. This has provided an empirical foundation from which the main research question of this thesis could be addressed:

> How can we understand refugee integration as a wicked problem from the
> perspective of PSL?

The theoretical orientation of my main research question makes it clear that my ambition is to see how PSL can serve as a framework for better understanding refugee integration as a wicked problem. In this chapter, I address this point and discuss how the insights produced may have relevance for other fields characterised by wicked problems.

As a theoretical framework, PSL consists of a number of underlying concepts. In line with recent developments, I have relied on a service logic interpretation of PSL (Osborne, 2018). In practical

terms, this makes it clear that my interpretation draws more from Grönroos and colleagues (Grönroos, 2019; Grönroos & Voima, 2013; Medberg & Grönroos, 2020) than the alternative stream of PSL inspired by service-dominant logic (e.g., Petrescu, 2019; Vargo & Lusch, 2016). The primary influence of service logic in this study has been the adoption of a division of resource integration into three processes and spheres: value facilitation in the providers' sphere, value co-creation in the joint sphere, and value creation in the recipients' sphere (Grönroos, 2019; Grönroos & Voima, 2013; Skålén et al., 2018).

First, I discuss my findings by updating the service model introduced in Chapter 2 (Figure 2). After advancing a multidimensional service model in which different value outcomes are included as dimensions, I explore the implications for value co-creation in PSL in light of the revised model. Next, I provide a thorough discussion of how the model can be used facilitate understanding the three types of resource integration in the service process and how externalities should be taken into account to gain a better perspective of the context in which service occurs.

Finally, I discuss innovation and bricolage from a PSL perspective and illustrate how bricolage in particular provides a useful analytical tool to study service innovation in a public sector context.

Towards a Multidimensional Service Model

In Chapter 2, I introduced the service model (Figure 2) as a way to operationalise my theoretical framework. There, I argued that the design, implementation, provision, and value creation in refugee integration services could be separated into three processual phases: (A) a policy-taming phase in which an intended outcome is defined, (B) value facilitation and value co-creation, and (C) the service recipients' value creation, which leads to actual value outcomes. This conceptualisation extends previous explorations of value co-creation in a (public) service logic framework (Grönroos, 2019; Osborne, 2018; Skålén et al., 2018; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020; Trischler & Charles, 2019). The inclusion of a wider policy apparatus in the process of value facilitation – captured through phase A – has been explored through a wicked problems lens (Daviter, 2017; Head, 2019; Rittel & Webber, 1973) and represents an extension of PSL in this study, as the influence of policy on PSO value facilitation had not been sufficiently addressed. Scaling up of the scope of interest in value facilitation has been useful in this study, as I have discussed the ways in which service offerings for immigrants and refugees have developed in Norway over the past 50 years and how the municipalities worked to implement the introduction programme in 2018. By doing so, the service processes observed in 2018 have been connected to the larger politico-historical context.

The service model (Figure 2, Chapter 2) included three main actors and/or objectives: refugee integration (as both an intended *and* actual value outcome), service providers, and service recipients. Each phase has been shown to contain several processes, such as the process of taming, coping and implementing found in the value-facilitating phase A. The inclusion of the extended service environment as a possible influence has contributed to scholarship by broadening the level of observation and including the possibility of 'uncontrollable externalities' (Lusch & Vargo, 2006, p. 414). Broadening the level of observation refers to how I have aimed to include and explore influences on service that originate from outside the service system and are largely beyond its control.

The different phases have been explored in the empirical chapters. Chapter 5 primarily focused on phases B and C (value co-creation and value creation), while Chapter 6 attended to phases A and B (value facilitation and value co-creation). In addition to the service processes, which were conceptualised as taking place within a service system that consists of service providers, partners, and recipients, I discussed the extended service environments in Chapter 7.
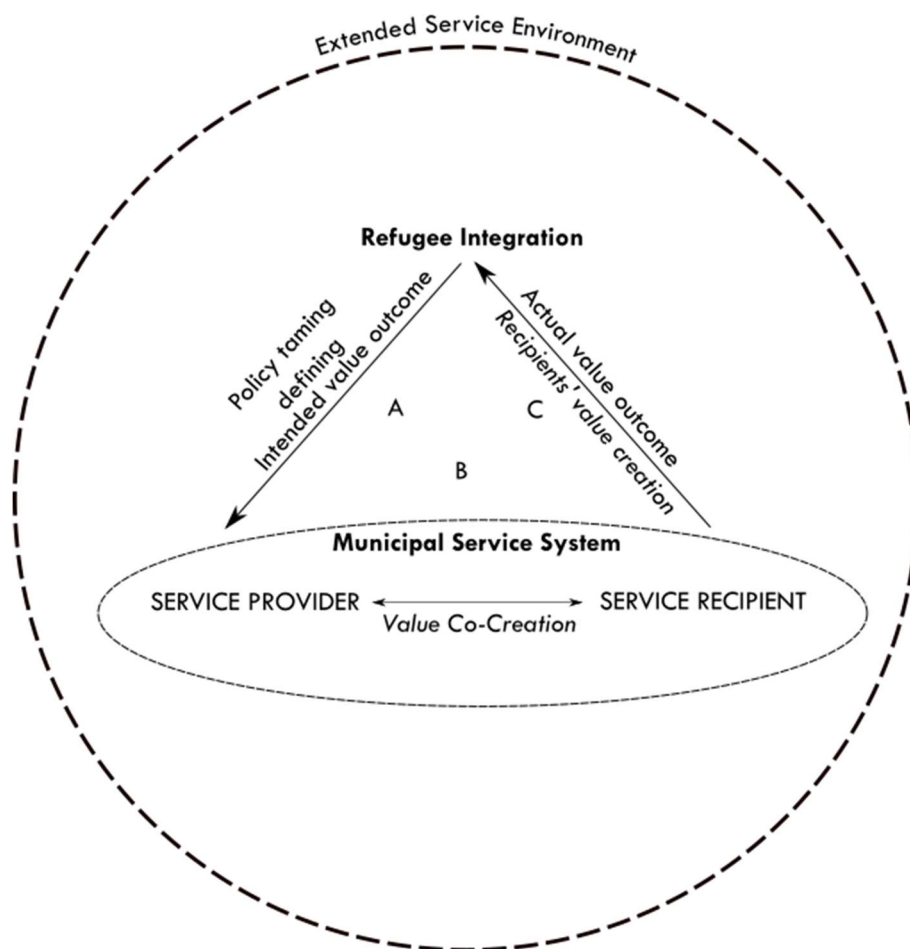
Figure 13: Refugee integration service model (repeats Figure 2, Chapter 2).

Through the empirical chapters, evidence for the unpredictability of value outcomes has been discussed, as I have argued that one service offering may be experienced differently and lead to differing value outcomes for different people. This, I have further illustrated, is largely due to differences in resource-integrating capabilities and individuals' lifeworlds. Understanding unpredictable value outcomes as a result of service recipients' different lifeworlds (Helkkula et al., 2012; Trischler & Scott, 2016) has revealed a need for further development of the initial service model (Figure 13) because it only captures a single outcome, based on the assumption that actual value outcome will align with intended value outcome.

Instances of unintended value outcomes in this study were shown through the examples of failed collaborative learning in Kryssfjord and in how a participant at the work practice café in Varmdal ended up improving her skills in Arabic but not Norwegian. In the latter example, work practice as a language learning arena was partially successful but not in the way intended. Another example referred to how the simple act of living in an apartment was sometimes perceived as being done incorrectly, thus leading the municipalities to provide living guidance. This example

shows how 'living properly' in a house is culturally defined and thus consists of more than just having a roof over one's head. By including unintended value outcomes in the model, I highlight how an intended value outcome of public service provision is defined (in policy) prior to service provision and then measured through a number of indicators. In refugee integration services, such indicators include increased language proficiency, which may enable the settled refugees to obtain jobs and become participating citizens.

Unintended value outcomes call attention to incidents where value is not created in the ways expected or intended in policies. On the one hand, if a service offering's aim is to teach a service recipient how to ride a bike, the service recipient's ability to ride a bike will be defined as an aligning value outcome. In other words, the outcome matches the intention. If, on the other hand, the service recipient is unable to learn how to ride a bicycle or perhaps learns how to fix it rather than ride it, the value outcome created through the service offering is, in this understanding, misaligned with the intended value outcome and has resulted in the creation of unintended value. Consequently, unintended value outcomes are not always normatively bad; rather, they are defined through their misalignment with the predefined intended value outcome.

The importance of alignment and misalignment has been addressed in previous research, as Skålén, Pace, and Cova have argued that 'value is co-created when a firm and community members' enactment of practices aligns and that failure of co-creation takes place when the enactment of practises misaligns' (Skålén, Pace, & Cova, 2015, p. 600). At the same time, the authors call for exploring 'the exact nature of alignment and misalignment practices' (Skålén, Pace, et al., 2015, p. 600), an endeavour to which I similarly aim to contribute.

In an extension of the discussion on alignment and misalignment, previous studies have noted the unpredictability of value outcomes. Some have attributed this uncertainty to differences in intended and realised resource integration (Edvardsson, Skålén, & Tronvoll, 2012; Plé & Cáceres, 2010). This distinction has been used to recognise how 'intended resource integration tends to differ from actual resource integration, a gap that can be studied through service practices, the results of which will have implications for value co-creation and how service systems should be designed' (Edvardsson et al., 2012, p. 104). In a study by Edvardsson and colleagues (2012), the difference between intended and actual resource integration lies in how the former describes 'how value propositions will be realized' (Edvardsson et al., 2012, p. 91), while the latter refers to 'resource integration in service practices' (Edvardsson et al., 2012, p. 105). Here, I have focused on intended and unintended value outcomes rather than resource integration, but the insights from Edvardsson and colleagues (Edvardsson et al., 2012) correspond with my argument. Hence,

to develop the service model used in this study, I have included two additional phases and an additional value dimension based on my findings. These are phases in which unintended value outcomes from value creation emerge and are defined as a *phase D* and a *phase E*, through which PSOs may learn from *unintended value outcomes* by using the lessons learned from misalignment as inputs to their future service offerings.

The Multidimensional Service Model

Figure 14: The multidimensional service model.
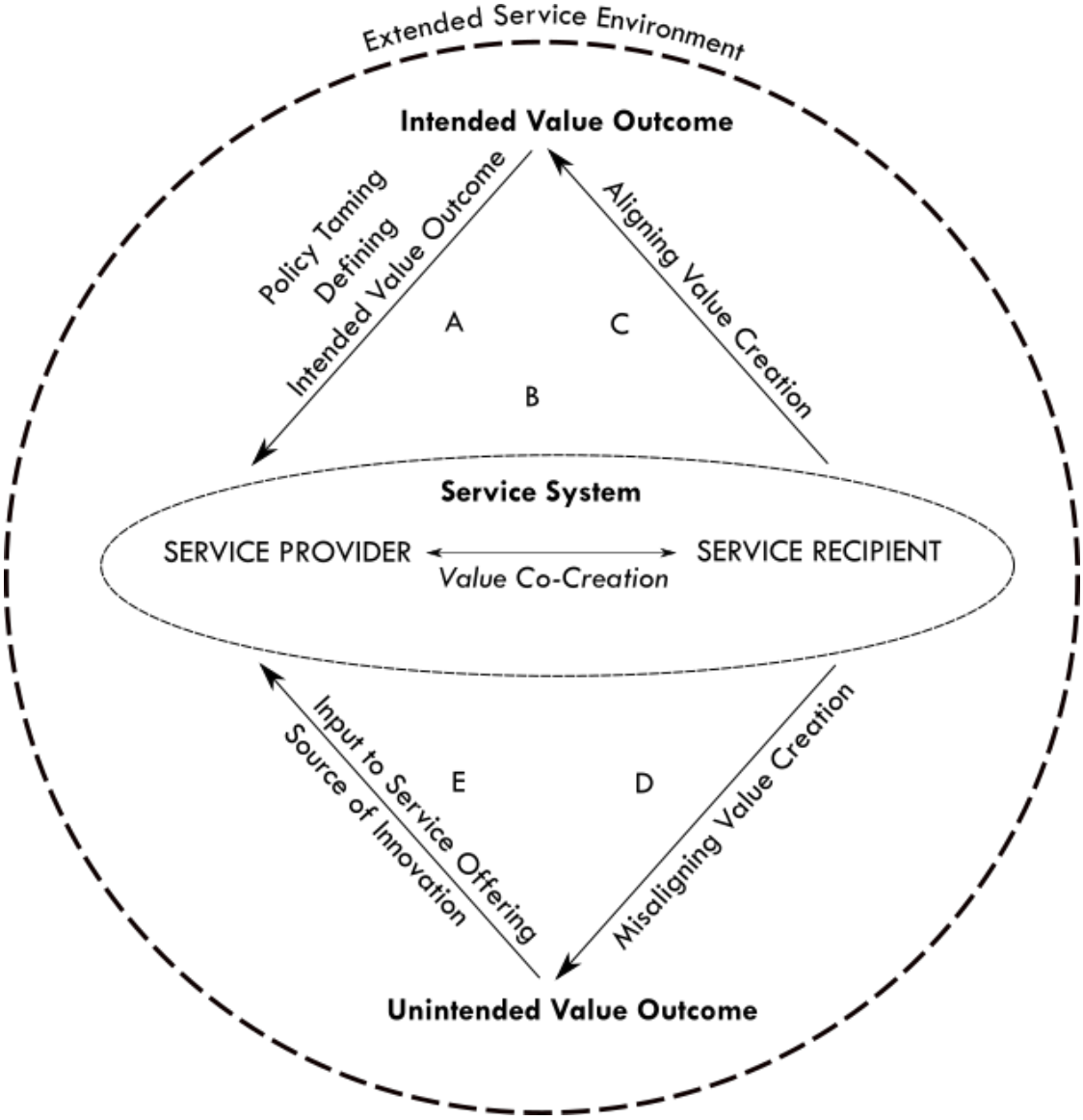
The development and use of models in research requires caution, as it has been stated that all models are somehow wrong (Box, 1976, p. 792). That is, few if any models are able to capture the full complexity of what is explored, so 'the scientist must be alert to what is importantly wrong' (Box, 1976, p. 792). This realisation is combined with the argument that 'models breed

more models' (Tsing, 2011, p. 104), a statement that is supported by the development of the initial model presented in this study. Having developed and tested the service model (Figure 2, Chapter 2) in this study, I now present an updated model that takes the shortcomings of the first model into account.

The multidimensional service model I outline here constitutes my overall contribution to PSL and public service innovation. Before discussing how the model specifically contributes to extant theory and the development of PSL, I describe it in detail. The model synthesises my theoretical contributions to PSL by accounting for service processes in which two possible value outcomes are considered. The inclusion of only two dimensions in the model represents a necessary simplification in which I assume that value created by service recipients either mostly aligns or mostly misaligns with the value outcome defined in policy. As such, the model assumes a binary opposition between intended and unintended value outcomes that may be further challenged and explored along a continuum where the different phases are accounted for in future research.

Phase A: Policy Taming and Service Offering Design

Phase A in the model has been discussed in terms of wicked problems and policymaking (Daviter, 2017; Head, 2019). It involves two processes that occur prior to service offering provision: taming a social problem at the policy level and coping at the local level. This study has focused on the Introduction Programme for Newly Arrived Immigrants (Introduksjonsloven, LOV-2003-07-04-80), the Norwegian government's primary tool in refugee integration efforts. The development of services for immigrants and refugees that has led to the current introduction programme is discussed in Chapter 4, where I show how both the problem and associated solutions have been continually redefined over the past 50 years. In 2021, a new act – named the Integration Act – is set to replace the Introduction Act, thus further justifying the significance of using a wicked problems lens to consider refugee integration as an issue that needs to be constantly solved and re-solved (Rittel & Webber, 1973).

At the local level represented by service providers located in service systems, the model takes into account how PSOs have to interpret and implement policy based on available resources, competencies, and local strategies. The municipal level implementation of the introduction programme – as a service offering – has been the centre of attention in this study, as I have studied how four municipalities worked to implement the programme in their local contexts. Following Daviter, I argue that local-level implementation of policy requires a process of coping (Daviter, 2017, pp. 579-580). Local-level coping with wicked problems, according to Daviter, is a

necessity, as those working in direct interaction with service recipients cannot themselves afford to carve out bits and pieces of complex social problems to articulate a neat solution (Daviter, 2017, p. 580). Rather, problems that emerge through direct contact must be solved constantly. This study has interpreted coping as a type of bricolage process (Fuglsang, 2010; Witell et al., 2017) in which PSOs make use of the resources available to adjust their service offerings in accordance with local needs and possibilities.

This study has focused on two levels of the public sector: policy (and thus the central government) and practical (and thus the municipalities). Further studies might consider additional levels, such as the role of the county governor (*statsforvalter*) in oversight and the relations between municipal politicians and PSOs. Although the simplification of governance complexity does not account for the full range of public sector dynamics, certain tendencies have surfaced. Most importantly, I have argued that service providers, such as employees in municipal PSOs, are faced with competing pressures from the policy level and their service recipients. This insight has been used to challenge certain assumptions found in PSL regarding the centrality of the service recipients as those with the prerogative to create value. While this central PSL tenet has been followed, the model is simultaneously designed to illustrate how the competing interests of policymakers and service recipients force PSOs to strike a balance between their legislative mandates and recipients' contextual needs and expectations. Although service recipients create value, the value created is susceptible to being steered by the configuration and practices of service offerings made by PSOs and in policy.

Phase B: Value Co-Creation in Service Systems

Phase B in the model is related to the process of value co-creation, which may well be considered the core of PSL and service logic. I have followed a service logic interpretation of PSL (Grönroos, 2019) and distinguished three types of resource integration: value facilitation, value co-creation, and value creation.

Value facilitation as the PSOs work to configure resources to be provided as service offerings is in part captured in phase A, where I have recognised the importance of policy in local service provision. In phase B, the model assumes that PSOs have already undergone a process in which their legislative mandate is interpreted and the service offerings designed in accordance with their local contexts and available resources. Value facilitation in phase B is therefore associated with a set of practices in service provision and any adjustments made to create a better fit between the service offering and its recipients' resources and abilities.

Value co-creation in (public) service logic is understood as occurring in the joint sphere in which service recipients integrate their resources with the providers' service offerings (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 704). Value co-creation can hence be understood as a platform of co-creation (Grönroos, 2019, p. 783). Such platforms, or arenas, may be physical locations, such as the adult education centres, but they may also be represented by online platforms or otherwise be virtual through the means of telecommunication. As a general note, the platform in which value co-creation occurs is likely to affect the overall process through factors like accessibility and hospitality. If an online platform, for example, does not work properly, this is likely to hinder value co-creation and consequently the service recipients' value creation.

To increase the scope of interest beyond the dyadic (provider-recipient) service interface, I have followed a service systems conceptualisation (Maglio et al., 2009; Skålén, Aal, et al., 2015). In the model, service systems are defined as including actors formally involved in the provision of service offerings. These can include actors at various levels and are defined in terms of core and partner organisations and actors. Further, service systems always include the service recipients (Vargo & Lusch, 2016, p. 8). Departing from elements of existing service logic research, I have emphasised formal relationships in my understanding of service systems in recognition of the fact that a number of actors and organisations surround a given service system. Actors may be included as partners, but they may also exist in competition or tension with the efforts conducted within particular service systems. In this study, the competition for requests to settle refugees shows how different municipal refugee service systems are pitted against one another and therefore have a shared interest in what has become a scarce resource: people to be settled as refugees.

Phase C: Service Recipients' Aligned Value Creation

Service recipients' value creation is at the centre of PSL-based analysis (Osborne, 2018, p. 227; Petrescu, 2019, p. 1738; Skålén et al., 2018, p. 701; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020, p. 2). However, whether service recipients are able to create value through their interaction with service offerings, and whether the value they create aligns with the intended value of the service offering, continues to be debated (Strokosch & Osborne, 2020, p. 2).

To account for the complexity of service recipients' value creation in a public sector context, the model recognises two possible value dimensions that may emerge from service recipients' resource integration. In the model, these two dimensions have been defined as intended and unintended value outcomes.

Aligned value creation in the model is defined as value outcomes that fully or partially match those articulated through policy: they are intended value outcomes. The empirical data presented have shown how PSOs are pressured to facilitate value creation in such a way that their service recipients are able to reach a set of predefined targets. In a refugee integration context, this means attaining a certain language level and getting a job within a certain period following their completion of the introduction programme. Aligning value creation thus assumes that policymakers have the right – through their role as democratically elected representatives – to define what type of value should be created through various services. Consequently, it is the job of PSOs to assist service recipients in reaching these predefined policy-based targets). In a PSL study, the relation between service recipients' created value and the intended value defined by policymakers marks a theoretical conundrum. While I have placed the service recipients at the centre of value creation and argued that it is they who actually create value – which can be experienced as subjectively beneficial or detrimental – through the service encounter, I have simultaneously emphasised the importance of policy-defined expected value outcomes.

This distinction diverges somewhat from previous service logic theory, which posits that service providers should assist service recipients in creating value that is subjectively determined as beneficial to them (Grönroos, 2019, p. 778). Importantly, what is altered in the model is the hypothesis that those who have developed and provided service offerings have assumed that they know what will be beneficial for service recipients. This relates to a research stream on being a good citizen (Horst, Erdal, & Jdid, 2020) and governmentality (Djuve, 2011; Haque, 2017) that I have not examined in this study. Briefly, however, the governmentality argument addresses how governments seek to instil a sense of self-governance in their citizens (Foucault, 1991, pp. 102-103). This digression is of relevance to the distinction between intended value outcomes and the value creation of service recipients but is not discussed further here.

Following the model, aligned value creation indicates that the design and definitions inherent in the service process have been successful in reaching the predefined ambition. As such, a scenario in which all service recipients are able to create value that aligns with the intended value outcome – for example, all settled refugees are able to reach a certain language level and get a job – means that no adjustments will be necessary. Fully aligned value creation for all service recipients, however, is rarely seen in practice. Inabilities to assist service recipients' creation of value in the way intended by policymakers open up a venue for innovation at the policy level, in which repeated instances of misaligned value creation are likely to lead to a redefinition of the problem-solution complex that guides local service provision. Such changes can be hypothesised to come

about because of the municipalities' reporting of service recipients' progress – and thus value creation – as participants in a programme. While misaligned value creation and unintended value outcomes may be taken into account by policymakers, their impacts are more likely to first become manifest at the local level. In the following, I therefore describe how the services followed adjusted their service offerings based on misalignment and how my analysis of their actions contributes to PSL.

Phase D: Service Recipients' Misaligned Value Creation

Phases C and D in the model, it has now been argued, both refer to service recipients' value creation. Furthermore, the two potential outcomes (intended and unintended) acknowledge that service recipients' value creation must always be determined *a posteriori* and thus recognise that the recipients may either be able or unable to create value that aligns with the intended value from existing service offerings.

Misaligned value creation may be the result of instances of misintegration (Laud et al., 2019) or other failures in any of the preceding phases of the value co-creation process. Unintended value outcomes in the model refer to instances of misalignment in which the service recipients' value creation does not match the outcomes expected by policymakers and PSOs. In phase D, the model aims to capture instances both what has been termed value co-destruction (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Engen et al., 2020) and value creation in which the benefit of a service differs significantly from that expected. One example of the latter was seen with the woman who learned Arabic through work practice, although the measure was aimed to increase participants' Norwegian language skills. In such cases, value cannot necessarily be defined as being destroyed and thus leaving the recipient clearly worse off. Rather, the recipient is better off in an unintended way. At the other end of the spectrum, value co-destruction was seen to occur in Endefjord, where participants in the educational scheme for industrial workers simply did not receive what had been promised in the service offering (i.e. apprenticeships in the local factories). Here, the PSO was unable to keep its promises through the service offering, and the participants in the programme had reportedly started to feel as if they had been tricked into something that would never result in a beneficial outcome. Hence, unintended value outcomes can be both positive and negative for service recipients.

In many ways, the presence of misaligned value creation and unintended value outcomes is more interesting than aligned value creation. This is due to the realisation that misaligning value creation indicates that something is not working the way it should in one or several of the

previous phases (i.e. value facilitation and value co-creation). Furthermore, value co-creation that leads to unintended value outcomes highlights the impact of individual lifeworlds on value creation (Helkkula et al., 2012; Osborne, 2018) in which a person's life experiences and current circumstances mediate their value creation in certain ways. The importance of taking service recipients' lifeworlds into account in the design and provision of service offerings has been addressed in previous studies, with Trischler and Scott arguing that 'the design and marketing of a service offering requires a profound understanding of the consumer's "lived experience" within the broader lifeworld context' (Trischler & Scott, 2016, p. 722). Their argument underlines the importance of sensitivity in service offering design and further suggests that instances of misaligning value creation cannot be made the responsibility of service recipients alone. This is particularly true regarding what may be defined as vulnerable service recipient groups.

Misaligning value creation is often the result of various types of resource misintegration (Laud et al., 2019), which refers to instances in which either of the main actors involved in service applies resources erroneously or interprets the other actor's intention as malicious (Laud et al., 2019, pp. 871-872). In Kryssfjord, the introduction of collaborative learning reflected an example of resource misintegration, as the service offering provided – collaborative learning – was not properly understood by the service recipients, who were therefore unable to benefit from the scheme in the way and to the degree intended by the PSO. While this initially represented a setback for the teachers at the adult education centre, it later served as an example of how unintended value outcomes may function as a source of innovation and service offering re-adjustment.

Phase E: Source of Innovation and Inputs to Service Offering

Even though unintended value outcomes are by definition anomalous to what a service is supposed to achieve, they are also an important source of innovation. For PSOs, the identification of service recipients' misaligned value creation and consequent unintended value outcomes provides an indication that something is wrong or not working as intended. The public service context described in this thesis located the municipal PSOs betwixt and between policy and their service recipients' expectations and skills. Sometimes, larger-scale innovations are introduced in a certain sector, thus altering the problem-solution complex from which the PSOs operate. In such cases, the means and mission of a PSO are altered. Such an innovation will soon be implemented with Norway's Integration Act, which comes into force in 2021. Most of the time, however, municipal PSOs are faced with coming up their own novel solutions based on their observations of unintended value outcomes.

This study has also shown how PSOs engage in bricolage innovation to improve their service offerings and value facilitation. The distinction between intended and unintended value outcomes relies on the understanding that policymakers define what type of value creation is expected through service provision. As such, PSOs' identification of unintended value outcomes is based on their realisation that the value created does not correspond with the one defined by policy and articulated through sets of indicators.

Combined, phases D and E in the model serve as a feedback mechanism through which PSOs may identify and alter their service offerings to redirect service recipients' value creation in a way that results in better alignment with the intended value outcome. At the same time, the emphasis on lifeworlds and life experiences emphasised in PSL (Strokosch & Osborne, 2020) makes it clear that bricolage innovations and adjustments constitute a continual effort in local service provision. In relation to the wicked problems literature, this is expressed in how the problem-solution link is never 'frozen' (Daviter, 2017, p. 581); rather, it is open to continual alterations. New service recipients may, for instance, require alterations in service offering provision, as a person with a university degree is likely to have a different set of resources (skills) to learn a language than a person who is fully or partially illiterate (e.g. someone who does not know the Latin alphabet).

Having now shown how the phases of the model describe different types of resource integration and can help identify different types of value outcomes, it is time to explicate its consequences for PSL. Below, I articulate how the model builds on and contributes to PSL. First, I discuss the implications of the model in relation to value co-creation in PSL. After a review of the value concept, I outline my contributions to the various parts of the value co-creation process and public service innovation.

Extending Public Service Logic

This study has been inspired by and sought to contribute to the development of PSL. At its core, PSL is intended to alter the perception of public service provision by putting the service recipient at the centre of analysis and making value creation and evaluation the prerogative of the service recipient rather than the producer or provider (Osborne, 2018, p. 227).

In the following, I describe my contributions to PSL by discussing the implications of my findings in light of previous research and providing definitions of the different processes in a public service context.

Intended and Unintended Outcomes as Value Dimensions

The multidimensional service model is in line with recent developments in PSL, as it takes into account how value outcomes are contextually and experientially dependent on the service recipient (Osborne, 2018, p. 226). The model contributes to the literature on value co-creation and co-destruction by illustrating a process that describes the dynamic value creation (resulting in intended or unintended value outcomes) that comes from recipients' resource integration with service offerings. Potential unintended outcomes of the service process have previously been captured through the concept of interactive value formation, implying that interactions can develop in both negative and positive directions (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011). In such cases, value may not only be co-created but also co-destroyed (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Engen et al., 2020; Espersson & Westrup, 2019; Plé & Cáceres, 2010). In a recent article, Medberg and Grönroos have explored the dynamic outcomes of service by considering service recipients' positive and negative experiences within the context of retail banking (Medberg & Grönroos, 2020). By examining a number of topics, the authors map out how individual experiences with a similar service offering may result in both positive and negative value outcomes that are determined on a case-by-case basis (Medberg & Grönroos, 2020). The article contributes to theory with empirical examples of how value is created individually by service recipients and determined as beneficial or detrimental.

In the multidimensional service model, I aim to account for such dynamic outcomes – as a type of interactive value formation – through the dimensions of intended and unintended value outcomes. The public sector context of this thesis has followed a definition of 'intended value outcomes' as situations in which there is an alignment between the expected value outcomes described in policy and the actual value created by the service recipients. By using the concepts of intended and unintended value outcomes instead of value co-creation and value co-destruction, I seek to direct attention to how unintended outcomes may serve as sources for innovation for the PSOs. This further implies that I emphasise how unintended value outcomes do not necessarily result in a diminishment of value, as described in the value co-destruction literature, but may very well be positive for the service recipient.

Unintended value outcomes include a range of instances in which the value outcome from the perspective of the recipient differs both positively and negatively from what was intended or expected by policymakers. Therefore, the notion of intended and unintended value outcomes, along with the aligning and misaligning value creation processes as part of the multidimensional service model, contributes to the development of PSL and the understanding of value creation in

the public sector. As a source of innovation or novel thinking, unintended value outcomes may inspire new solutions through inputs regarding if, why, and how the PSO should alter its service offerings. If the outcomes of a particular learning scheme like collaborative learning fail and the PSO is able to capture this outcome through a recognition of their students not becoming better off, this can be used as an input that can be deployed to change the configuration of resources used in the service offering and value co-creation process.

The differentiation between intended and unintended value outcomes in the model is also a way to address the difficult relationship between public and private value conceptualisation in PSL (Petrescu, 2019). As has been discussed in previous research, PSOs in PSL theorisation should contribute to the creation of public value in addition to individual value creation (Eriksson, 2019, p. 295). The connection between public and private value in PSL emerges from the premise that value is created by individuals, and at the same time, public services should contribute to public value creation (Alford, 2016; Skålén et al., 2018, p. 702). Creating and, more importantly, capturing public value creation, is a difficult exercise, as it can often be difficult to define 'the public': i.e. the collective for whom value should be created (Geuijen et al., 2017, p. 629). In this study, I have largely followed an assumption that the intended value outcome defined by policymakers and bureaucrats should reflect what the public (citizenry) values expressed through elections and democratic processes, in line with previous research (Geuijen et al., 2017, p. 629). Simultaneously, I recognise the inherent limitation of this interpretation, as the emphasis on elections and democratic processes does not grant people without the right to vote, such as refugees who are yet to become citizens, a say in the definition of public value (Geuijen et al., 2017, p. 631).

In this study, I have not significantly considered the importance of public value as a central tenet in PSL (Alford, 2016; Eriksson et al., 2019; Osborne, 2018, p. 228), and this constitutes an important limitation of the study. However, I believe the multidimensional service model may serve as a good starting point to explore the relationship between private and public value creation through its distinction between intended and unintended value outcomes. At the same time, I recognise how the model does not address the full-scale complexity of public value as something that is set to benefit 'the collective citizenry' (Alford, 2016, p. 680).

In the multidimensional service model, I have used intended and unintended outcomes as value dimensions that can be used to evaluate how a service offering helps facilitate service recipients' value creation. The importance of alignment between intended and created value has been framed through the legislative mandates of PSOs and how municipalities that failed to assist their

participants in reaching certain goals were in danger of not being requested to settle refugees in the future. As such, facilitating service recipients' value creation in a way that aligned with the intended outcome was important for the PSOs. However, an aligning value outcome was also important for the service recipients, as their eligibility to apply for permanent residency and citizenship relied on whether they were able to reach the required language levels.

The assumption that value creation should partially align with intended value outcomes differs somewhat from the previous argument that 'service is to help someone's relevant processes, such that his or her goal achievement is enabled in a way that is valuable to him or her' (Grönroos, 2019, p. 778). Even though this study has followed an understanding of value as being created by service recipients through resource integration, the public service context and articulation of service offerings as a set of means to alleviate problems in a particular way suggests that this value creation should be steered in a certain direction. Although insufficiently discussed in this study, this is not the least due to the responsibility of PSOs to achieve results through their service provision that are to be reported back to the government department or directorate which in turn, will allow them to carry on with their work. This has been shown to be of particular relevance in refugee integration where continued operation relies on whether or not a municipality will be requested to settle refugees.

The unavoidable relationship that exists between municipal PSOs and the central government represents a challenge for PSL. Although the theoretical framework has been developed as a counter-argument to new public management (Osborne et al., 2012), a continued requirement for municipalities to report their results should be expected in the future. If service recipients' subjective experiences and value creation are to be reported rather than the hours spent by PSOs on administration and providing service offerings, this will likely require a revision of the whole feedback system that exists between governments and municipalities. This question, however, has not been discussed in this present study and may thus be a possible avenue for future research.

Value Facilitation through Service Offerings

In PSL and other service logic theories such as service logic and service-dominant logic, the conceptualisation of value creation has been altered from a process through which providers create value for the consumer to something that is created by the service recipient through use (Grönroos, 2019; Osborne, 2018; Vargo & Lusch, 2016). This, however, does not diminish the role of service providers in the process of value co-creation.

Service offerings, also referred to as value propositions in PSL (Engen et al., 2020; Skålén et al., 2018), have been defined as promises of future value that may be realised or created by the service recipients through their resource integration (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 703). In addition to the resources embedded in such offerings, Skålén and colleagues have argued that service offerings should also be interpreted in light of the practices associated with service offering provision (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 703). In this study, I have aimed to understand service offerings in a specific public service: refugee integration. My theorisation has added to previous research by associating service offerings with the literature on wicked problems (Daviter, 2017; Geuijen et al., 2017; Head, 2019; Noordegraaf et al., 2019; Rittel & Webber, 1973). In so doing, I have argued that public sector service offerings can be defined as a three-phased process consisting of taming at the policy level, coping and implementation at the local level, and service offering provision in the process of value co-creation.

The first process, I argue, occurs at the policy level, in which politicians and bureaucrats come up with problem-solution complexes that seek to reduce wicked problems into actionable fragments that can be alleviated through a specific set of measures (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p. 158). The conceptualisation relies on previous findings indicating that the processes of defining a problem and finding its solution are intertwined (Head, 2019, p. 185; Rittel & Webber, 1973). Thus, those coming up with solutions may simultaneously be defined as problem makers. To explore this idea, I discuss the evolution of services to immigrants and refugees in Norway over the past 50 years in Chapter 4, in which I show how the problem of immigrant integration has changed along with the political circumstances in which it has been defined. An integral issue with wicked problem taming has been identified in terms of how such taming processes must invariably neglect parts of the wickedness to come up with actionable solutions (Daviter, 2017, p. 578). Once again quoting an early article on the concept, this results in a process in which the problem makers should state, 'Look, I've not tamed the whole problem, just the growl; the beast is still wicked as ever' (Churchman, 1967, pp. B-142).

Policy-level taming of refugee integration, I argue, leads to a process in which those in charge of implementing the solutions (i.e. PSOs) defined at the higher organisational level have to deal with those parts of the problem that have not been tamed (Daviter, 2017, p. 581). Coping has been associated with bricolage innovation (Fuglsang, 2010, p. 74; Witell et al., 2017, p. 293), and is explored here in how the featured PSOs worked to implement the introduction programmes in local contexts, within the resource restrictions and organisational contexts in which they operated. The initial coping conducted in the municipalities is discussed in terms of their

implementation of the introduction programmes and how they configured local resources so as to provide a service offering that to, the greatest extent possible, would lead to value creation that aligned with the expectations articulated in policy (i.e. the intended value outcome).

'In stark contrast to taming strategies', Daviter has argued, 'coping strategies do not seek to freeze the problem-solution link' (Daviter, 2017, p. 581). This insight has been used in the multidimensional service model through the inclusion of a feedback function (phases D and E) in which the PSOs could capture instances of unintended value outcomes that result from various instances of resource misintegration and misalignment (Laud et al., 2019). A minute difference between implementing and providing service offerings is made: the former consists of the initial design and plans regarding how a service is to be provided in a local context, whereas the latter refers to the direct contact through which value co-creation occurs. Implementation has hence been understood as a plan regarding how service is to be provided, while provision reveals potential strengths and weaknesses in the plan that can be unearthed by evaluating the service recipients' ability to create value from the service offering.

The legislative *raison d'être* of PSOs has been insufficiently explored in a PSL context (Strokosch & Osborne, 2020, p. 13). The wicked problem framing of service offerings provide a novel contribution to PSL research by constructing the framework as part of the public sector context as a whole. This has been achieved by including the policy process and the ways in which PSOs work to provide offerings that fulfil the requirements of the law. In this study, I have argued that PSL-based studies need to take intended value outcomes into account, as most PSOs are guided by a legal mandate that provides the ground for their operations. Rather than following a definition in which service 'is to help someone's relevant processes, such that his or her goal achievement is enabled in a way that is valuable to him or her' (Grönroos, 2019, p. 778), most PSOs work to provide service offerings that come with clear underlying assumptions regarding the type of value that is intended as an outcome of their work.

Intended value outcomes as a predefined aspect of service offerings have implications for service recipients' value creation in a public service context. This is due to the realisation that the outcome of the service exchange is created and determined by service recipients, while there is simultaneously an underlying assumption regarding the specific type of value that is to be created. PSOs' influence over this process can be found in how they choose to configure and provide their service offerings. For instance, if the service offering is to provide language training that should assist service recipients in learning a language, an optimal combination of resources and practices that aides the recipients' process should be included. If, in contrast, the offering is to

assist their development of social networks in the local community, a different set of resources and practices should be included in the service offering.

Although service offerings can be defined in terms of how they are provided in a combination of practices and resources (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 703), previous research has argued that the service recipients' actual value creation might cause incongruence in the actual outcome of service (Edvardsson et al., 2012, p. 118). Below, I discuss how service recipients' resource integration and value creation as conceptualised in the multidimensional service model contribute to the development of PSL.

Service Recipients' Resource Integration and Value Creation

The extant PSL literature has framed value co-creation as the process in which a service recipient interacts with service offerings to create value (Engen et al., 2020, p. 2; Skålén et al., 2018). Furthermore, the PSL literature has found individuals' lifeworlds to be influential in the process of creating value through resource integration with service offerings (Cluley & Radnor, 2020; Osborne, 2018, p. 4). In this study, I have included lifeworlds as a term to explore the ways in which individuals' past and present experiences, and future expectancies affects their abilities to create value. This, I have argued, serves as a mediating factor for their ability to interact with service offerings (Helkkula et al., 2012). The lifeworlds perspective has become an embedded part of PSL (Eriksson et al., 2019; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020), and the primary contribution of this study in relation to lifeworld influences on value co-creation has been to explore the empirical consequences of this in Norwegian refugee integration services. The lifeworld situations of the settled refugees who were featured as interlocutors in the study were seen to function as mediating factors that affected their ability to create value.

This study has contributed to improving our understanding of value creation in PSL through the empirical data and an emphasis on the dynamic value outcomes that may come as the result of their resource integration. To understand how service recipients (i.e. the settled refugees) were able to create value from the municipalities' service offerings, I conducted interviews and spent time with them over an extended period. The time spent with my interlocutors expanded my understanding of value creation as a dynamic process in which the service recipient's ability to interact with service offerings was found to depend on a variety of mediating factors. In addition to lifeworlds, which have previously been discussed in the context of PSL, the impacts of the extended service environment were seen to influence individual service recipients' resource integration. Influences from the extended service environment were manifested through relations

with people in the countries they had left behind where the conflicts they had escaped from often continued to persist. Additionally, the process of learning a language was complicated by difficulties in establishing social networks in their local communities. Service, I have argued, does not occur in a vacuum, and this study has made it clear that the value co-creation that occurred among providers and recipients in the local service systems was often considered insufficient for the process of language acquisition. Even though service offerings and value facilitation serve as a central tenet in public service provision, the benefit from such offerings appears to demands the ability to use the skills learned at school in an organic (i.e. real-life) environment, particularly by engaging in conversation with people in their local community.

A lesson from this study is thus that the broader social context of service provision – in this case, the extended service environment – must be considered to grasp the service recipients' value creation. Although the PSOs' service offerings may be 'perfect' in their provision, the surrounding context in which the service recipients live their lives is likely to affect their self-assessed benefit. In the multidimensional service model, the potential influence of the extended service environment, along with the ways in which lifeworlds mediate value creation, have been illustrated as value outcomes. Even though PSL and the multidimensional service model posit that it is the service recipients who create value, it is simultaneously recognised that aligning and misaligning outcomes are not necessarily the result of wrongful resource integration conducted by the service recipient. Rather, instances of misintegration in either of the phases, or poor service offering design and provision, may well lead to an unintended value outcome being created by the service recipient. This has important implications for PSL that should be explored in future research, including the question of the distribution of responsibility for value creation within the value co-creation process as a whole. One preliminary answer to this question that has emerged through this study indicates that although service recipients have the prerogative to create and assess the value outcomes from resource integration, they are not solely responsible for the value that is created.

This insight relates to the distinction made between intended and unintended outcomes featured in the multidimensional service model. Value in the public sector should not be created haphazardly. Ideally, it should align with the intended value outcome defined in service offerings. In the introduction programme, this alignment is attempted through the negotiation and writing of individual plans, in which the goals of the programme are agreed upon by a refugee advisor and settled refugee. While individual plans exist to provide a mutual understanding regarding the expectations of the providers and recipients involved in refugee integration services, previous

studies have found that such a conflation is often misinterpreted, in part due to language barriers and misunderstandings (Lillevik & Tyldum, 2018, pp. 42-43).

Service Systems and Value Co-Creation

Service systems have been included to highlight the collaboration and tensions that may arise among actors who cooperate in service offering provision and thereby facilitate or distort value co-creation. Examples from the empirical chapters showed that service systems are dynamic configurations of actors and resources (Skålén, Aal, et al., 2015, p. 251), thus indicating that such systems are not static but rather organic structures. The dynamic nature of service systems has primarily been explored through how service system partners, such as businesses and volunteer organisations, would sometimes renegotiate their role in the system or perhaps drop out and abandon their responsibility. In the case of volunteer organisations, their efficiency as service system partners was seen to be particularly vulnerable due to how their operations are based on volunteers showing up to language cafés and similar events. Such challenges can be described as internal changes in the service system that force the core organisations to rethink their service offerings or find new partners who can replace those who leave.

The definition of service systems embedded in the multidimensional service model has relied on a more conservative definition than what is found in much recent service research. This is primarily due to how my understanding relies on framing actors and organisations who are connected through formal agreements, as making up individual service systems, rather than following a definition in which several things, such as individuals, families, organisations, and more, make up service systems that integrate resources (Maglio et al., 2009). Further, the decision not to adopt service ecosystems as a term to describe the systemic nature of service might be read as somewhat conservative (Petrescu, 2019; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020). The conservative definition of service systems, however, is useful, as it has helped me to distinguish between those who are part of the service system and those who are not. I have found it more difficult to maintain such a distinction based on the dominant parts of the recent service system and service ecosystem research, as I discuss in Chapter 2.

I have considered municipal refugee services to be core organisations in the service systems, while businesses, other PSOs, and volunteer organisations are regarded as partner organisations. Core service system organisations are hence defined by their legal mandate to provide a particular service offering to a particular group of service recipients, while partner organisations can be formally included to assist in that effort but are under no overarching requirement to do so. In

the four municipalities, the extension of the refugee service systems differed, as some had initiated broad partnerships with high schools and local businesses to provide service offerings, while others relied on a smaller and more tightly knit service system to help them carry out their work.

The contribution of service systems in the model helps capture actors directly involved in the process of value co-creation as service providers, partners, tangible resources, and service recipients. Service systems thus include the three types of resource integration outlined by Grönroos (Grönroos, 2019) and delineate the boundaries of what is – and what is not – to be defined as an embedded part of the service process. This is important in relation to the introduction of extended service environments in which I have located a set of factors that may influence service provision but are located outside individual service systems.

The demarcation of service system boundaries has been used to describe how PSOs may engage in public service innovation by including or inviting new actors and resources into their systems to improve service offerings. Instances of service system innovation were seen in Endefjord, where the adult education centre attempted to establish a new educational programme and faced difficulties in their efforts to include external actors. The example showed both the possibilities available in local extended service systems while also highlighting the potential risks and challenges associated with upscaling the service system.

Extended Service Environments and Externalities in Service

As an alternative to considering service ecosystems as an extended lens through which service processes can be observed, this study has suggested the concept of the extended service environment. This conceptualisation has been borrowed from existing service environment and servicescape literature (J. Baker et al., 2020; Bitner, 1992; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011) and has been used to explore instances in which uncontrollable externalities (Lusch & Vargo, 2006, p. 407) affected value co-creation. The conceptualisation has been inspired by a distinction between autogenic (internal) and allogenic (external) drivers of change found in the early ecological conceptualisation of ecosystems (Tansley, 1935, p. 287). The concept has primarily been used as an analytical lens intended to capture how a number of different uncontrollable externalities – defined as influences stemming from outside the service system – affected processes in the provider sphere, recipient sphere, or joint sphere. Uncontrollable externalities, I have argued, have important impacts on service provision and need to be taken into account to grasp the real-world complexities in which service exchange occurs. Examples of extended service environment

impacts included the declining number of refugee arrivals to Norway and how this affected the operations of rural municipal refugee services. Furthermore, ongoing relations between settled refugees and their families and the general situations in the countries left behind were shown to be influential. The concept of the extended service environment contributes to the PSL literature by emphasising the importance of considering the ways in which actors, events, organisations, and other entities outside the interconnected actors that are part of service systems may affect value co-creation within such systems. While externalities as a challenge in public service value co-creation have been addressed in previous studies (e.g., Petrescu, 2019), future avenues for research should explore such influences in greater depth. The extended service environment, I have sought to show, may serve as a useful concept in this endeavour.

In the multidimensional service model (Figure 14), the extended service environment is illustrated as the contextual environment in which service systems operate and processes of value co-creation occur. The potential influence of such environments, I argue, can only be revealed through empirical investigation and in Chapter 7, I showed how a range of uncontrollable externalities led to instances of resource misintegration. Extended service environment influences that led to unintended value outcomes were exemplified in the service provider, recipient, and joint spheres. Different types of uncontrollable externalities originating from the extended service environment were shown to have concrete impacts. For the service providers – the PSOs and their service system partners – the decline in refugee arrivals was an uncontrollable externality in which decisions made entirely outside their sphere of influence threatened their operations. This was manifest through how a decline in arrivals would mean the refugee administration and adult education centres would no longer have service recipients whose value creation they could help facilitate. Without a user base of settled refugees, the municipal refugee services had started to fear they would have to downscale their operations, which would mean thinking about letting people go.

Public Service Innovation, Wicked Problems, and Public Service Logic

Through this study, I have been interested in understanding how municipal PSOs and their related service systems worked to implement the introduction programme, local processes of value co-creation, and the experiences of settled refugees as service recipients. The idea of wicked problems as an analytical tool has provided this study with a conceptualisation of policy implementation in which I have argued that local PSOs cope with the prevailing wickedness of social problems that have been tamed (through a problem-solution complex) at the policy level (Daviter, 2017). This indicates an understanding in which municipal PSOs are left in charge of

providing services to alleviate a social problem within restraints set by policy and decision makers that do not necessarily reflect their municipal realities.

PSL has important implications for the study of service innovation through its placement of the service recipient at the centre of attention (Osborne et al., 2012, p. 146). As a result, studying service innovation from a PSL perspective requires a slightly different approach than those found in other theoretical frameworks. Here, I have primarily explored innovations as changes in service offerings or the service recipients' ability to interact with such offerings to improve value creation. Elsewhere, the inclusion of service recipients' in service offering development has been argued to be an important task for PSOs (Skålén et al., 2018, p. 705); in this study, I have shown how the featured refugee services continually worked to adjust and improve their value facilitation.

The presence of bricolage in the four municipalities has been captured through how each had developed distinct characteristics via their implementation of the introduction programme. These distinctions, I have argued, were enabled by the autonomy granted to the municipalities in their refugee service provision and were further mediated by local resource availability, constraints, and strategies. The extraneous movements to which bricolage is used to respond are captured in the model through how PSOs work to implement policy on the one hand and to respond to and improve service offerings by capturing instances of unintended value outcomes on the other. Consequently, events and aspects that could lead to bricolage adjustments came from both above (i.e. policy, as captured through phase A) and below (i.e. from unintended value outcomes, as captured through phase E). The origins of extraneous movements were multifaceted; they would sometimes result from an individual's lifeworld situation, events or factors in the extended service environment, or resource misintegration in the joint sphere. Regardless of the origins of a new challenge to be solved, bricolage serves as a pragmatic response in which PSOs adjust their service provision in response to unforeseen events (Fuglsang, 2010, p. 74).

The feedback mechanism included in the multidimensional service model represents a novel conceptualisation of bricolage innovation in the public sector, as it shows how PSOs may identify problems and make adjustments in response to instances in which service offerings result in unintended value outcomes. Through the various phases, I argue, new challenges may be identified through service recipients' misaligned value creation, and attempts to alleviate these mistakes may be rectified by implementing changes based on lessons learned in phase E. Consequently, the model may serve as a useful tool for practitioners, as instances of misalignment and unintended value outcomes can be explored at both the individual and group levels.

Although the model suggests that PSOs should adjust their service offerings to facilitate service recipients' value creation in such a way that it causes alignment between their value creation and the intended value outcome, alternative paths for innovation can also be followed. Here, I have primarily been concerned with showing the context in which PSOs operate and how their service provision is subject to legislative and resource restrictions. At the same time, the intentional ambivalence of unintended value outcomes as potentially both beneficial and detrimental shows how PSOs may learn from a service recipient's unintended yet positive value outcome. Failures to facilitate alignment between the intended value outcome and the service recipients' value creation is hence not something that must lead to changes that guide the service recipient's value creation in a different direction. Rather, PSOs may learn from a service recipient's unintended value outcome that is unexpected but beneficial. Such instances can be explored in light of the literature on positive deviance (Herington & van de Fliert, 2018).

The multidimensional service model aims to illustrate how renegotiations of the problem-solution complex – as the articulation of problems and suggested solutions to alleviate them – at the policy level may create a gap between the intended and actual value outcomes in different processes of value creation. Whether local-level PSOs are able to facilitate service recipients' value creation in a way that aligns with intended outcomes relies heavily on the initial intention embedded in the policy designed service offerings. This helps explain such discrepancies by taking into account that there is seldom a causal relationship between intended and actual value outcomes (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996). Bricolage innovation in the municipalities often came in response to resource scarcity and necessity, as it was realised that the schemes and measures described in legislation or comparable organisations in the service field would be difficult to implement in their local context. This shows how the dissemination of innovations tends to involve translations and adaptations when introduced in new contexts.

Through this chapter, I have outlined my theoretical contributions and shown how PSL can be used to understand refugee integration as a wicked problem. My main research question has been answered through the multidimensional service model, where I have outlined the service process and shown how value is facilitated and created by service recipients through the process of value co-creation. To further answer my research questions, I have included a number of additional concepts in my understanding of PSL and in so doing, addressed both how policy represents an important aspect of public service provision and how bricolage is frequent and vital the municipal level. My discussion of the tensions that exist between policy and municipal service provision, the latter of which consists of PSOs in direct contact with service recipients, has

revealed crucial insights for PSL. In this thesis, I have further explored how actors operating in fields characterised by wicked problems experience and deal with this phenomenon (Noordegraaf et al., 2019). In Chapter 9, I conclude my study and outline potential avenues for future research.

Chapter 9: Conclusions

It is a small place, you know. After two or three days, I see people. Maybe in the grocery store! But I heard that some places in Norway, people are not good. I heard they do not like refugees.… [This village] is very good. I just heard this other thing. But well, all people are not the same, right? Some are bad. It is true. But [this village] is good! If I get a job, I will just die here. (Abdukadir, interview)

This ethnographic study has explored the everyday operations of refugee services in four rural municipalities in Norway. The project was motivated by a desire to understand how public services operating in fields characterised by wicked problems work, with the added goal of contributing to the development of PSL, which has proven to be a useful theoretical framework for studying refugee integration, with its emphasis on service recipients and the articulation of the service process accounted for by service logic-inspired studies (Grönroos, 2019; Skålén et al., 2018). At the same time, this study has addressed two additional aspects of public service provision that I believe need to be further developed in PSL. First, I have argued that the current articulations of PSL as a theoretical framework do not sufficiently account for the influence of policy on local service provision. This, however, has recently been addressed and may be considered an emergent perspective in PSL (Strokosch & Osborne, 2020). Through this study, I have also used wicked problems as an analytical lens to grasp how municipal PSOs cope with problem-solution complexes defined at the policy level. Public service provision, I have argued, often relies on PSOs' implementation of a set of measures defined by policymakers. This means that PSOs are made responsible for implementing policies and for facilitating their service recipients' value creation. The tension that might arise at the intersection between service recipients' needs and the restrictions articulated by policies has led me to suggest that municipal PSOs and other public service provision operate betwixt and between expectations that may at times be in conflict.

This study has found that current PSL development has not taken the potential influence of unexpected externalities into account, as the issue has only been briefly discussed elsewhere (e.g. Petrescu, 2019). Unexpected externalities in this study have been defined as influences that originate from outside the service system, which itself has been defined as a configuration of actors engaged in service provision (including core organisations, partners, and service recipients). To address the influence of unexpected and uncontrollable externalities, I have

included a conceptualisation of the extended service environment. Such environments have been defined as inherently unpredictable and must therefore be explored empirically.

Through this chapter, I synthesise the lessons from the study. First, I briefly reiterate my theoretical contributions, after which I discuss the use of ethnography in service research. I then review the practical implications of the study. Here, I outline the key empirical findings from the study and show how they may be of interest to practitioners. Finally, I provide an account of the limitations of this study and outline potential avenues for future research.

Lessons from the Study

This study has used PSL as an analytical framework to investigate how refugee integration occurred in four rural municipalities in Norway. It has aimed to understand the service process by examining policies, local service provision, and service recipients' value creation. Empirically, it provides new insights regarding the everyday process of service provision in Norwegian refugee integration and framed them in a politico-historical context. This has revealed that the solution to the problem has been frequently framed and reframed in different ways over the past 50 years (Rittel & Webber, 1973). As this study reaches its conclusion, a further manifestation of the wickedness of the field has emerged once more in how the Norwegian government is set to implement a new Integration Act in 2021, with the issue being reframed – or perhaps tamed – in order to improve its efficiency (Prop. 89 L, 2019-2020).

Dealing with refugee integration is difficult and demands insights into the process and associated service provision. This study provides a timely account of the Introduction Act and the introduction programme in its current shape and form, just as they are being replaced. It differs from several others in terms of both its theoretical foundation in PSL and a focus on processes and people rather than evaluating outcomes. While outcomes have been emphasised through the discussions on the discrepancies between expected and actual value outcomes (including intended and unintended outcomes), I have been more interested in what caused these discrepancies than in measuring outcomes.

Below, I explicate my theoretical contributions by reviewing how I have operationalised existing the conceptual components in this study, such as three-phased resource integration (Grönroos, 2019) and lifeworlds (Helkkula et al., 2012; Osborne, 2018; Trischler & Scott, 2016). Further, I have included new elements in the theoretical framework, notably wicked problems (Daviter, 2017; Head, 2019; Rittel & Webber, 1973), bricolage (Witell et al., 2017), and extended service

environments. Thereafter, I discuss the potential of ethnography as a potent method in service-centric research.

Theoretical Contributions

The theoretical contribution of this study is captured in the multidimensional service model (Figure 14, Chapter 8). The model represents the service and value creation process as it has been developed in PSL with some additional inspiration from service logic (Grönroos, 2019; Skålén et al., 2018) and further contributes to the development of PSL by including three additional concepts: wicked problems, bricolage innovation, and extended service environments. Furthermore, the model represents an important contribution to PSL as it captures the service process from policy development through to the service recipients' value creation. Below, I provide a brief summary of my theoretical contributions based on the discussions in Chapter 8.

An important characteristic of the multidimensional service model is how it depicts the underlying intentionality of public service provision and how PSOs work towards ensuring alignment between intended and actual value outcomes. In the model, two value dimensions are included: intended and unintended value outcomes. These two value dimensions and the articulation of aligned and misaligned value creation contribute to PSL through the inclusion of a dynamic value outcomes perspective.

Intended value outcomes have been defined in this study as situations in which the service recipients' value creation matches that of the expected outcome defined in policy (the intended value). Emphasising the importance of policy in public service provision allows for the observed efforts of municipal PSOs to facilitate their recipients' value creation in a way that aligns with the outcomes defined in policy. This could mean reaching a certain language level within a given period or acquiring work practice experience that could qualify recipients for work following their time in the introduction programme. As a counterpoint, unintended value outcomes have been defined as situations in which the service recipients' value creation did not match that which had been predefined in policy. The separation between intended and unintended value outcomes resonates with the literature on value co-destruction (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Engen et al., 2020; Laud et al., 2019). However, rather than only exploring situations in which one of the actors involved becomes experientially worse off following the service encounter, I have argued that unintended value outcomes may be beneficial to either of the actors involved. The primary feature of such outcomes, therefore, is that they differ from the intended outcome of a particular service.

In this study, I have extended previous theoretical developments in PSL. In addition to following the basic premise of placing the service recipient at the centre of attention (Osborne, 2018; Strokosch & Osborne, 2020) and exploring service through the process of value co-creation (Grönroos, 2019; Skålén et al., 2018), I have introduced wicked problems (Daviter, 2017; Rittel & Webber, 1973) and bricolage (Fuglsang, 2010; Witell et al., 2017) as concepts that are relevant – even crucial – to PSL. The relevance of wicked problems has been defined in relation to policymaking, as decisions made at the policy level are essential to understanding municipal-level service provision. Including wicked problems as an analytical concept in PSL fills a current gap in the research, as I have argued that policy has not been sufficiently taken into account. An understanding of wicked problems as problem-solution complexes made at the policy level has been combined with the definition of two value dimensions, in which the value created by service recipients may be in alignment or misalignment with the intended value outcome embedded in the policy.

Wicked problems theory has been included as a way to capture the influence of policy on public service provision. Specifically, I have applied Daviter's (Daviter, 2017) conceptualisation and its distinction between the taming and coping processes. Taming, I have argued, occurs at the policy level where complicated social problems are made actionable by articulating problem-solution complexes that address a piece of the problem. Coping, on the other hand, has been situated at the municipal or PSO level and discussed in relation to how PSOs implement policy and work to provide service offerings in resource-scarce environments. Furthermore, coping has been championed as crucial for PSOs whose role in local service systems makes it difficult to overlook those parts of a complex social problem (or wicked problem) that characterise the lives of their service recipients. To understand how PSOs cope and balance their work between policy requirements and service recipients' needs, I have used bricolage as a concept that captures the continual innovative activities that occur in the featured municipalities.

Bricolage innovation resonates with the use of Grönroos's three types of resource integration, which have been introduced to PSL (Grönroos, 2019; Skålén et al., 2018), due to how the service process is useful in capturing instances in which the PSOs should adjust their service offerings. In the multidimensional service model (Figure 14), the relation between value co-creation processes and bricolage is represented through the feedback mechanism (phases D and E). The combination of bricolage as a concept to grasp innovation (Fuglsang, 2010; Witell et al., 2017) and value co-creation has proven useful in identifying instances of misintegration that lead to unintended value outcomes. Bricolage in PSL represents an important theoretical contribution in

this study and resonates well with the articulation of value creation as a three-phased process in which service recipients' create value from providers' value facilitation through the process of value co-creation. Identifying unintended outcomes, I argue, can serve as a source of innovation for PSOs, as they provide an indication of how service offerings should be (re-)configured and delivered. A bricolage perspective in PSL can be used in studies that follow PSOs over prolonged periods, as that time frame would allow researchers to capture how they adjust their service offerings and work to improve their value facilitation. As I have shown, this can include improving their service recipients' resource-integrating skills or establishing new service system partnerships to help them more effect service offerings (e.g. the introduction of collaborative learning in Kryssfjord or establishment of a new service system to support the implementation of a new educational programme in Endefjord).

Finally, this study has aimed to expand the field of inquiry in PSL by including a conceptualisation of extended service environments. The definition of extended service environments used in this study builds on previous service environment research (J. Baker et al., 2020; Bitner, 1992; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011), but widens the notion of environment to capture the influence of uncontrollable externalities. Empirical data from the study show how the service process and value creation are frequently affected by a number of externalities. In this study, such externalities have been exemplified through events occurring in the service recipients' countries of origin and changes in domestic and regional policy that are likely to influence the refugee' services future operations.

The conceptualisation of extended service environments supports a recent statement made by Strokosch and Osborne, who insist that 'no public service is an island!' (Strokosch & Osborne, 2020, p. 13). Refugee integration as a social process *and* public service has served as a fruitful arena through which to explore how a range of outside influences affected the service process. Similar external influences can be expected to be found in other service fields and should thus be taken into account in future PSL studies.

As a whole, the theoretical contributions of this study extend PSL as an analytical framework through the introduction of additional theoretical perspectives and the associated empirical analysis. Using an abductive approach, theory has been challenged through empirical testing and consequently adjusted to create what I have reported to be a better fit between theory and the empirical world it seeks to describe (Blumer, 1954, p. 306).

In the next section, I briefly discuss how fieldwork and ethnographic data serve as potent methods in service research.

Ethnographic Service Research

This study has contributed to the service research field through its ethnographic foundation, which is based on methodological approaches from social anthropology. While ethnographic studies have been called for in service research (Cluley & Radnor, 2020, p. 10; Koskela-Huotari et al., 2020, p. 385; Osborne et al., 2012, p. 151), the method has yet to become widely adopted and accepted in the service research community. The ethnographic approach applied in this study has retained methodological lessons from anthropology and a focus on reflexivity in the description of the data. This, it has been seen, requires attention to the fact that empirical data are contextually produced through interactions between a researcher and the people with whom the study has been conducted. As Tim Ingold argues, to

> observe is not to objectify; it is to attend to persons and things, to learn from them, and to follow in precept and practice. Indeed, there can be no observation without participation—that is, without an intimate coupling, in perception and action, of observer and the observed. (Ingold, 2014, pp. 387-388).

The empirical data presented in this thesis are the result of seven months of fieldwork, during which I learned from people in the places I stayed, had coffee with them, laughed with them, and shared concerns and grievances. My stays resulted in intimate knowledge of the people who chose to welcome me into their lives and allowed me to get to know them as people to a degree that has not been reflected in this final product. Through these relationships, I was able to record detailed accounts of the operations of the refugee-related services in four rural municipalities in Norway, and they are also likely to have influenced the type of data presented in this thesis in a variety of ways.

Choosing to conduct longer-term fieldwork in service research yielded a type of data that has been crucial for writing this thesis, which I hope will have shown the potential inherent in this method. The extended service environment conceptualisation presented, for instance, was enabled and inspired by staying in the municipalities and attending meetings at which it became clear that a range of external influences affected the services' daily operations in ways that would likely not have been uncovered with the use of surveys and more time-limited methods. Further, the recent turn towards a focus on the experiential value creation of recipients as central in service research (e.g., Helkkula et al., 2012; Medberg & Grönroos, 2020) has been explored

through getting to know people settled as refugees and learning how they have experienced the process of being settled as service recipients in the various municipalities.

The ethnographic approach, through which I stayed with people in the municipalities for lengthy periods, allowed me to better understand the details of value co-creation. This experience included observations of the PSOs' continual efforts to adjust their service offerings in attempts to better facilitate the service recipients' value creation. I also obtained an improved understanding of how the settled refugees' lifeworlds affected their ability to benefit from local services.

The detailed accounts produced through participant observation and ethnographic fieldwork, however, are inherently limited in scope, as the number of areas that one person can cover is naturally limited. In this study, I have primarily chosen to focus on employees in the local refugee services and people settled in the municipalities as refugees. As such, the study does not cover the full range of arenas that could have been of interest: work practice businesses, partner organisations in the public sector like NAV and other government offices, or the full spectrum of civil society. These arenas may, however, be valuable subjects for future research.

Practical Implications of the Study

Through the fieldwork, I have learned from those who in a variety of ways were part of the Norway's refugee integration processes. This thesis is a synthesis of lessons learned from the people employed in and associated with Norwegian refugee integration efforts, including those settled as refugees. As a consequence, coming up with practical implications and suggestions regarding what may be learned from this study for employees and practitioners is a daunting prospect.

A key practical implication of this study is the discrepancy it identified between local and national government attitudes in refugee reception and integration. Whereas the Norwegian government has followed increasingly restrictive politics in refugee admissions and settlements since 2015–2016, the municipal willingness to settle has remained high. In this study, that eagerness appears to have several causes. Although specific reasons differ within the hierarchy of municipal governance, the financial benefits that come with accepting requests to settle, along with the possibility that the refugee services could stay in operation and thus allow for continued employment, seem to have created an environment that favours refugee settlements. The municipal willingness to accept IMDi requests to settle refugees is reflected through statistics on

the IMDi website, where the discrepancy between the agency's requests and municipalities' acceptance rates were at a historical low in 2018.[37] Divergences between national and local attitudes towards migration have also been reported elsewhere (Oliver, Dekker, Geuijen, & Broadhead, 2020).

While this study found a high willingness to settle refugees in the rural municipalities that were its focus, it has also identified certain challenges that are connected to the small-scale structure of rural municipalities, challenges that are connected to three separate issues. First, small-scale services such as the refugee services featured did at times have problems providing thoroughly customised programmes for those settled. This was apparent in how students with different backgrounds and existing skills would be taught in the same classroom. For some students with higher education backgrounds, the lack of customisation was reported to slow down their progression, as they would have to follow the pace of the class as a whole. An associated issue is related to the availability of relevant work practice positions, as smaller municipalities in general do not have the same range of possible businesses and organisations at which participants may be enrolled in work practice. A second challenge was identified through the extended service environment and how people settled as refugees reported difficulties in establishing social networks in their local communities. This study does not have comparable data for big cities or larger centres, so it is difficult to say whether the challenge has to do with the relative size of communities or is relevant for the country as a whole. The importance of social networks has been made clear, as reports from those who had settled showed how their efforts in school would at times be considered insufficient on their journey to become part of Norwegian society. I have argued that public service provision alone cannot ensure the integration and social inclusion of people settled as refugees, as the current organisation of refugee integration efforts in Norway appears to facilitate a trajectory that occurs outside (or at least alongside) general society.

The third issue relates to the second and was manifested through the difficulties of getting a job. For most of the people I interviewed, their future prospects in the municipality to which they had moved depending on finding employment. Many believed that the rurality of the municipalities they had been settled limited their ability to obtain work. Therefore, they believed they would have to move sometime in the future. As Mahmoud put it, 'if it is difficult to get a job, I have to

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[37] URL: https://www.imdi.no/tall-og-statistikk/steder/F00/befolkning/bosatt_anmodede/enkeltaar/@$u=personer;$y=2019;bosetting=anmodning%2Canmodning_justert%2Cvedtak%2Cbosatt%2Cbosatt_aggr.

move somewhere else. That is how life is; if you get a job [elsewhere], you have to go there'. Job availability links local refugee integration to the question of rural policy and whether refugee settlement may serve as a useful tool to counter current trends towards centralisation among young people in Norway. As briefly touched upon above, Norwegian young people from rural municipalities are tending to move to cities and more populated areas, while the elderly stay behind. As such, I assumed that the municipalities I stayed with had an interest in ensuring that the people settled there would stay following their time in the introduction programme. Reports from employees, however, reflected how they alone would not be able to ensure that those settled would stay after completing their mandated time in the programme.

The key practical advice that has emerged through this study is therefore to encourage rural municipalities to engage in innovation and find new ways to facilitate increased contact between people settled as refugees and the communities of which they are expected to become part. The current reports of weak social ties with the communities in combination with scarce opportunities for work could both motivate settled refugees to move away when they can. As this study reaches its conclusion, this encouragement represents a statement of the problem faced by rural municipalities that have chosen to settle refugees. The solution, however, will depend on local competencies, strategies, and resources.

Limitations

This study has been limited to an investigation of service provision and value co-creation in four rural municipalities in Norway. Furthermore, I have primarily followed service providers and recipients through the fieldwork and thus have not fully taken into account how these individuals – as actors in local service systems – relate to actors at the policy level and civil society as a whole. This limitation has also resulted in less than complete information regarding how policymakers relate to local processes and adjust their practices in response to local knowledge. Furthermore, how actors in civil society (neighbours, volunteers, and so on) relate to municipal refugee services, and their role in refugee integration remains unexplored.

This study has primarily focused on processes rather than long-term outcomes of service provision. This is the result of the study's research design and time limitations, as I would not have been able to conduct a longitudinal study and thus capture the long-term value created by the introduction programme for individual service recipients. For the sake of future PSL theoretical development, studies on long-term value outcomes from service exchange and value co-creation are likely to produce interesting and valuable insights. Importantly, such studies may

reveal discrepancies between the immediate and long-term experience of value by people enrolled in comprehensive public service programmes such as those featured in this thesis.

Although I have included a conceptualisation of extended service environments in this thesis, I also recognise that I have been unable to capture the full extent to which externalities may have affected service providers' and recipients' respective processes in value co-creation. Alternative entry points to further explore the influence of the extended service environment could involve the inclusion of more social arenas and interviews with local businesses and volunteer organisations to learn their views on their own roles in refugee integration. Furthermore, the international context in which refugee integration inevitably occurs might have been discussed more profoundly through, for example, conducting a survey of individual recipients' social networks across borders and asking how these networks affected their current lifeworlds.

Additionally, I primarily included people who were part of the introduction programme in the study. To develop more nuanced data during the fieldworks, I believe it would have been advantageous to include people who had previously been part of the programmes. Such an approach could have, to a certain extent, provided insights into the long-term effects of the introduction programme without extending the temporal length of the study.

The processual and time-restrained nature of doing ethnographic fieldwork also limited my ability to follow several innovation projects from start to finish. Public service innovation can take a long time, and the fact that some projects I wanted to follow had been shut down shortly prior to my arrival represents an important and much regretted shortcoming. At the same time, this shortcoming is a valuable lesson for future researchers who conduct fieldwork in PSOs, as a certain length of time should be taken into account.

Future Research

I conclude this study by outlining potential areas for future research. I have identified three key areas that I find particularly intriguing as topics for future research endeavours.

1. What is the feedback relation between service providers and policymakers, and what are the implications of this relation for public service innovation?

2. What is the role of local communities in local refugee integration?

3. How can the multidimensional model contribute to an increased understanding of the relation between private and public value creation?

Starting with the last question, I acknowledge that this study has not sufficiently addressed the question of public value in PSL, although the concept has gained traction in recent years (Alford, 2016; Eriksson et al., 2019; Petrescu, 2019). Public value in PSL has been emphasised by scholars who argue that public service provision should result in beneficial outcomes for more than just the individuals it targets. In other words, it should benefit society or the general public. At the same time, the service logic theory from which PSL has been developed (Grönroos, 2019) complicates discussions on public value because value is defined as being created and valorised by individuals. Through the multidimensional service model, this study has argued for an approach to understanding value creation through two dimensions which assume that value creation that aligns with the expected outcome of a service offering may contribute to the public, as the public itself has been part of defining this outcome through the democratic process. Unintended outcomes, by contrast, have been defined as instances in which service recipients' value creation is misaligned with the intended value outcome defined in policy. These unintended outcomes of the value co-creation process need to be addressed by introducing adjustments to (at least) one of the three types of resource integration: value facilitation, value co-creation, and value creation.

Next, the empirical findings presented here and the introduction of an extended service environment to conceptualise uncontrollable externalities point to the importance of an increased understanding of the role of local communities in refugee integration. In the municipalities featured, refugee integration was found to involve parallel processes in which the efforts of PSOs to provide service offerings constituted a process of refugee integration that occurred next to rather than inside local communities. Current public service refugee integration efforts in Norway appear to create (or at least exacerbate) a gap between settled refugees and the communities of which they are supposed to become part. Increased insights into what drives or hinders members of local communities from taking an active role in refugee integration in Norwegian municipalities is warranted. Instances in which people settled as refugees had been able to create social networks in their local communities have shown how these networks had greatly improved their language and allowed them to achieve a better sense of connection to the municipalities that were now their homes.

Finally, an important question for future research concerns the relations between municipal PSOs and the central government and policymakers. This thesis has focused on the municipal level, and I have argued that PSOs cope with policy in their daily operations to fulfil their legal obligations. At the same time, reports from the people I followed reveal the existence of avenues in which

they communicated their needs and restrictions back to policymakers, who may or may not include these experiences in their revisions and re-articulations of problem-solution complexes. An investigation of this link and the ways in which it may foster public service innovation on a larger scale is outside the scope of this study. However, the feedback link between service providers in charge of implementing policy and the policymakers who articulate it is central to the study of the provision of public services like refugee integration. Such studies are also important for the broader public sector's efforts to develop new and improved service offerings.

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Appendix 1: Refugee Interview Guide

Intervjuguide om norskopplæring, praksis og fritid

1. Hvordan var hverdagen din før du kom til Norge?
2. Hvordan har det vært å komme til Norge? Er det slik du så for deg eller annerledes?
3. Skole: Hvordan synes du det er å lære norsk her på skolen? (lett, vanskelig, motiverende etc.)
   a. Hvilke planer har du når du er ferdig med intro? Grunnskole, vgs, få jobb?
4. Praksis/jobb: Jobbet du før du kom til Norge/hva jobbet du med før du kom til Norge
   a. Lærer du mye norsk på språkpraksis? Hva synes du om språkpraksis?
   b. Har du blitt kjent med de du jobber med?
   c. Hvis du kunne velge, hvilken praksisplass ville du hatt?
5. Fritid: Hvilke ting liker du å gjøre når du ikke er på praksis eller skole? (se på TV, lese, fiske, trene, lage mat etc)
   a. Er det de samme tingene som du likte å gjøre før du kom til Norge?
   b. Får du praktisert norsk på fritiden, eller snakker du mest på morsmål? (arabisk, tigrinja etc)
   c. Ser du på norsk tv/leser avis/hører på musikk?
   d. Er det noen materielle ting (som mat, utstyr til og lage mat, eller møbler) du synes det er vanskelig å skaffe i Norge?
6. Nettverk: Har du blitt kjent med naboer og personer som bor i området rundt der du bor?
   a. Om du lurer på noe, spør du naboer eller bruker du andre nettverk?
7. Kan du tenke deg i bli boende i kommunen?

Interview guide in English

1. How was your everyday life before you came to Norway?
2. How has it been for you to come to Norway? Is it like you imagined or is it different?
3. School: How do you think it is to learn Norwegian here at the adult education centre? (easy, difficult, motivating, etc.)
   a. What are your plans when you finish the introduction programme? Primary school, high school/vocational school, get a job?
4. Work practice/work: Did you work before you came to Norway? What did you work at before you came to Norway?
   a. Do you learn Norwegian in your language practice position? What do you think about language practice?
   b. Have you become acquainted with the people you work with?
   c. If you could choose, what work practice position would you like?
5. Leisure time: What things do you like to do when you are not in work or language practice or at school? (watch TV, read, fishing, working out, cooking, etc.)
   a. Are these the same things you liked to do before you came to Norway?
   b. Are you able to practice Norwegian during your leisure time, or do you primarily speak your mother tongue? (Arabic, Tigrinya, etc)
   c. Do you watch Norwegian TV/read newspapers/listen to music?
   d. Are there any material goods (such as food, cooking utensils, or furniture) that you think it is difficult to acquire in Norway?

6. Network: Have you become acquainted with your neighbours and the people who live in the same area you do?
    a. If you have questions, do you ask your neighbours, or do you use other people in your network?
7. Do you think you would like to stay in this municipality (after the introduction programme is over)?
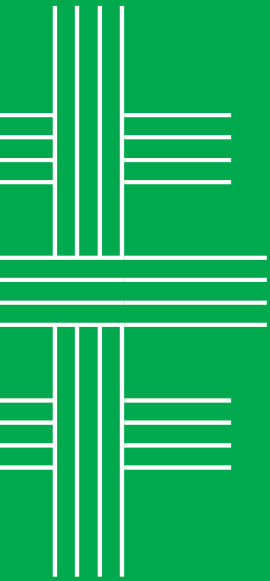
Gjennom denne studien har jeg fulgt arbeidet med integrering av flyktninger i fire kommuner i distrikts-Norge. Studiet har hatt som mål å forstå hvordan kommunene jobber med integrering, og gjennom etnografisk feltarbeid har jeg fulgt ansatte i de offentlige tjenestene og bosatte flyktninger i deres hverdag.

I dette studiet har jeg tatt i bruk teoretiske innfallsvinkler fra nyere tjeneste-forskning for å studere kommunenes arbeid med implementering av intro-duksjonsloven. Introduksjonsloven ble introdusert i 2003/2004, og er et omfattende tjenestetilbud rettet mot nyankomne flyktninger med behov for kvalifisering. Loven, representert ved introduksjonsprogram som tilbys bosatte flyktninger og deres familiegjenforente, er et heltids- og helårsprogram som har som mål å hjelpe bosatte flyktninger med behov for grunnleggende kvali-fisering. Gjennom programmet er målet å forberede nyankomne flyktninger til å bli deltakende borgere i Norge, og skattebetalere.

Studiet følger integreringsprosessene i norske kommuner fra synspunktet til bosatte flyktninger så vel som ansatte i de offentlige tjenestene, og søker å kaste lys over hvordan flyktningeintegrering arbeides med og oppfattes fra disse ulike perspektivene. Gjennom studie argumenterer jeg for at kommunalt arbeid med flyktninger krever kontinuerlig tilpasningsarbeid, som fanges gjen-nom konseptet bricolage, der både ansatte og flyktninger tilknyttet tjenestene utsettes for stadig internt og eksternt drevne endringer som påvirker tjeneste-prosessen – og flyktningenes verdiskapning.