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Chapter 13
Conclusion

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13.1 The View

The first section of the book highlights the effects of a fundamental mismatch between the logics underlying the mobility of refugees and those determining the ambition and capabilities of states to govern such mobility. This tension arises on several levels of governance; the European, the national as well as the sub-national. As the Italian example (Semprebon and Pelacani, Chap. 2) demonstrates, asylum seeking migrants desire certain destinations over others. Preferences may for instance result from the presence of relatives in a particular place or the reputation of a country as being generous or having well-organized reception structures. As a result, it is not surprising that there is considerable transit migration in the countries along the European Union's external borders, such as the Italian case shows. This transit-migration is by policy makers commonly referred to as "secondary move-ment" for reasons of a different logic, one that follows from the structure of the Common European Asylum System: the first country of arrival is responsible for an asylum request and the reception of the applicant. Until recently (i.e. in the after-math of the 'refugee crisis') this principle tended to be loosely applied by the Southern member states allowing for considerable onward migration. Not fully applying the rules served the national interest while reducing burdens to the asylum system. Obviously fuller effectuation of the principle serves the interests of the majority of member states while reducing their "burden" but inevitably reduces the

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possibilities for refugees to cross into another member state. On a lower scale, this creates stresses as well: the numbers of refugees that require reception grows and the nature of the reception changes too. People in transit turn into people who remain, albeit unwillingly. Certain localities in border regions thus unexpectedly face the need to integrate refugees into their housing and labor markets. Like between states, they maybe tempted to shift the presumed or actual burden onto neighboring localities or regions. These processes in turn may considerably impact local civic support and find translation in politics on all levels. In other words, decisions and actions on any given level resonate between the other levels of governance.

Whereas in Southern Europe refugee reception tends to be loosely organized, further north the traditional welfare states tend to take more control. Their desire to make and keep populations "legible" (Scott 1998) in order to (among other goals) both care for and control them (see Agier 2011 for examples from Africa), together with the expected benefits of the economies of scale this leads to the establishment of large asylum seeker accommodations. Kreichauf (Chap. 3) and Göler (Chap. 4) extensively demonstrate how this results in holding facilities for hundreds of asylum seekers who are in the process of status determination. Oftentimes, these facilities (or camps, as both Göler and Kreichauf refer to them) are at geographically isolated locations thus reducing interaction with wider society. And even when their location is not isolated by their distance (literally or practically by lack of transportation) they are so by the presence of obvious demarcations such as fences, walls and gates, as well as the presence of security staff. Since such facility needs not to be integrated in its environment and the location thus does not matter, Göler, while referring to the work of Auge (1995), conceptualizes them as "non-places". Unavoidably then, this leads to a sense of alienation among those who are meant to reside there. Likewise, the geographical distance and the demarcations of the camp render the residents as aliens and effectively underline their otherness in the eyes of the resident population. This effect is possibly more consequential than the alienation of the asylum seekers per se. Normally the duration of their residency is brief and will be followed by further integration or (attempts at) deportation. The physical structure of the "camp" is likely to be more permanent and so are its signifying and hence political consequences. Kreichauf (Chap. 3) finds this to be an explicit goal of recent Danish politics and refers to the process as one of "campization".

Kreichauf (ibd.) furthermore describes how the Danish government introduced conditionality in refugee protection, a trend seen elsewhere in Europe as well. Whereas earlier on recognition of a refugee status meant full acceptance and fast-track integration, nowadays society's membership can be made conditional on the fulfillment of integration requirements, oftentimes based on the refugee's acceptance or better still embracement of society's core values. Duyvendak and Tonkens (2016) refer to this as the "culturalization of citizenship". Failing to pass exams that test the adaptation to the national "culture", virtues and skills may result in less favorable treatment by the state. It could and probably should be argued that this trend towards 'conditionality' is at odds with the spirit of Chap. 4 of the Geneva Convention, which stipulates that refugees should be granted the most favourable treatment allotted to other non-citizens.

Once asylum seekers have been identified by the authorities as eligible for protection, which either results in a refugee status, subsidiary protection (usually because returning the asylum seeker would expose them to severe risks) or some other residence status, their housing, integration into the labour market or into education becomes the next concern. As several contributions to this volume show, it matters where one ends up. It also matters whether the sequence just mentioned (arrival, temporary accommodation and asylum adjudication, acceptance and (only then) steps towards further integration) are strictly adhered to or not, and how much time lapses before it is complete.

The precise location in which asylum seeking migrants who received a residence status start their integration process is of considerable consequence even though the wider, i.e. national, setting, in terms of resources, regulations and political climate, is of considerable significance as well. Obviously, it is at the local level that personal interactions take place and experiences are made, where refugees find work or not, go to school and receive training. And, as Ponzo and Pogliano (Chap. 6) show, the framing of refugee integration as a policy and political issue is also very much done locally. In line with the finding of Geuijen et al. (Chap. 12) and Doomernik and Ardon (2018), local policy makers tend to the view that integrating refugees (and other migrants) functions best when dealt with in a pragmatic, i.e. non-ideological, manner. Pogliano and Ponzo (Chap. 6) provide two local case studies that demonstrate how local policy communities are most effective in achieving their aim, if this is clearly defined in practical, pragmatic terms and not fraught by ideological differences of opinion. This then allows for the definition of a clear policy frame, which is easily and consistently conveyed to local media who subsequently reproduce, and by doing so, strengthen support for the policy frame. And conversely, policy communities not united around pragmatism fail to convey a strong and clear frame and thus generate less support through the local media. Not in all countries local media are equally prominent, but the gist of their argument could well be generalizable.

In spite of local governments' usual benevolent intentions towards refugees, formal rules do not always allow equal support to all of them. Ravn et al. (Chap. 7) make this concrete by the example of young refugees who turn 18. Once they formally have become adults, a different support regime applies to them and they lose access to facilities that are typically geared towards minors. The support gap this results in is being bridged by a coalition of local actors (civil society as well as municipal) who then are faced with the need to differentiate between those who are most likely to benefit from extra resources (translated into access to housing and training) and those who are less so. In the Antwerp case, on which Ravn et al. base their discussion, this discretion results in striking a balance between more or less deservingness. A paradoxical outcome is that those who are socially or psychologically most disadvantaged are least likely to receive support.

Geuijen et al. (Chap. 12) present the case of the Einstein-plan in the Dutch city of Utrecht. It is the story of a local government, with a notable role for activist civil servants, which viewed the "asylum crisis" as an opportunity for increasing its role in refugee integration and offering an innovative approach. Dutch asylum policies

are highly centralized which leaves little agency for the local level. The authors, referring to the work of Castells (2008), show how this easily leads to "scales mismatch" while problems manifest themselves in other locations and to other actors than those placed at the (higher) scale where these are the subjects of policy making. This observation is surely valid beyond the city of Utrecht and the Netherlands.

Asylum seekers tend to be moved between reception centers throughout the country before they are finally resettled in a municipality according to a distribution procedure. Depending on the availability of housing, which is usually scarce, this can take much longer than the actual adjudication process. Only once this resettlement has been realized can integration actually commence. In Utrecht (and elsewhere) this was viewed as inefficient. Rather the integration process should be allowed to start from the moment of arrival; i.e. already before the outcome of the asylum request is known. Moreover, the Utrecht approach aims to keep these asylum seekers as permanent residents (unless their request is rejected). Even though looking for employment is illegal for anyone without a residence permit, at least social integration is made easier by this approach, which accommodates asylum seekers, refugees and young locals in a single venue. This latter element appeared to be essential: when Dutch public discourse is negative about receiving (more) asylum seekers this tends to be about scarce resources, notably social housing, that are unequally handed out to refugees. The Einstein project found its public support by explicitly including local interests. Moreover, funding necessary for the project was found by going beyond the national level, i.e. by a subsidy from the European Regional Development's Fund (Urban Innovative Action). The mismatch between scales thus appears to have resulted in creative innovations which would fit under the broad heading of "experimentalist governance", modes of policy development through channels other than those of traditional hierarchical architectures and their bureaucratic inhabitants when these are no longer adequate to cope with present day issues, notably those that are related to or result from European policy harmonisation and integration.

Reflecting on Simonovit's piece on Hungary (Chap. 8), it would appear in few European countries refugee protection is as emotionally charged, and in a negative manner, as it is in Hungary. As is hard to ignore, the country's government is very outspoken on the matter and refuses to implement the EU's Common European Asylum System in as far as this would result in the acceptance and integration of refugees. As Simonovits (ibd.) notices, this refusal finds significant support in the Hungarian population. She also finds, this support seems to a considerable extent based on irrational fears for migrants in general. Causality in the relationship between public opinion and political rhetoric may be a difficult issue, but the Hungarian government appears to be quite willing to heighten and exploit such fears instead of offering reasoned arguments for political action. Aside from challenges this creates for the future of joint European asylum and refugee policies, the other burning question is how state level positions play out on the local level. Can cities still be pragmatic forces for integration in spite of those? And are local governments willing to be more receptive in the first place?

Many of the chapters in this volume show or at least are suggestive of a local turn in asylum policies and notably in authority over refugee reception, to bring these in line with local political concerns and lessen scale mismatches. This would be fitting in a trend towards a gradual federalization of asylum and refugee policies in a Common European Asylum System, which would allow local governments to ask for resources from the European level instead of, or in addition to, the national one. From a multi-level governance perspective one could suggest this then to become a new vertical division of labour and competences. The Austrian case study by Müller and Rosenberger (Chap. 5), however, seems to suggest something else: the division of tasks and authority can also oscillate with the tide of political expediency and need for stress relief. Under the pressure of high arrival rates, national government may have no alternative but to enlist municipal support. Municipalities recognize this as an opportunity to increase their authority and act accordingly (see also Geuijen et al. in Chap. 12). Once stress on the system receded and Austrian national elections brought to power a government with a right-wing migration agenda, the governance of asylum is being retrenched to the national level and replaced by a 'campization' model (cf. Kreichauf in Chap. 3). A dynamic process along scales of governance may well offer an alternative perspective on the evolution of national and European responses to unexpectedly large numbers of asylum seekers.

Adam et al. (Chap. 10) go into the importance of housing as a prerequisite for integration. As we already discussed in relation to refugee camps, social and geographical distance are severe and obvious impediments to integration. In these cases, this may be the intended consequence. However, once asylum seekers have been accepted, this would be counterproductive. Yet, peripheral housing is often easiest available, whereas at desirable locations prices are likely to be high, social rental sectors to be small, and competition therefore severe. This is definitely the case in the Western part of Germany, where the authors did two case studies. They find that even when a city (here Cologne) has well-developed housing policies for refugees, scarcity in times of high inflows is unavoidable if this city is also a generally desired location for people to move to. Given the overall urbanization trend this is likely to result in social-economic segregation in general and that of newly arrived refugees in particular. Indeed Adam et al. find that refugees thus live in group accommodations for a prolonged period of time, which keeps them from developing the bonding and bridging ties that are vital to the integration process.

Studying the integration of young adult refugees who ended up in Germany's sparsely populated eastern periphery, Glorius and Schondelmayer (Chap. 9) found that stakeholders tend to have varying ideas about what should be achieved in order for integration to have been accomplished. School administrators, for instance, tend to understand integration as formal inclusion into the (educational) system without showing much interest in the general well-being of their pupils. This results in mismatches between what the system offers and requires of students and the needs of those students themselves. Teachers, who actually interact with these students try to close the resulting gaps. Here the local setting is of crucial importance as it to varying extents limits and determines the scope of their interventions. The case study area is a remote rural area with long commuting times, little educational

opportunities, lack of diversity and a skeptical or downright hostile social environment. Moreover, the resulting general trend of out-migration was projected by stakeholders on the refugees' futures too. In other words: this regional case again underscores the importance of the understanding of a complicated interplay of local effects on the integration process, be they positive or negative.

Going through the collection of chapters, more or less explicitly the vital role of civil society actors becomes apparent. Its role is complementary to those of governmental institutions, it functions to build bridges and to fill policy gaps. In a Bavarian-based case study, Hoppe-Seyler (Chap. 11) focuses on volunteers, whose involvement, notably when the "asylum crisis" was at its peak, has been widely noted. Interestingly, these volunteers appear not so much driven by ideological motives but by the desire to engage in new social relations with each other and refugees, and helping in pragmatic ways. It appears many want to stay clear of the wider politics of asylum and integration and are simply motivated to do what seems necessary on an interpersonal level. At the same time they cannot escape the fact that those issues have become politically highly charged. Here Germany offers a very explicit example of a more general trend: it moved from the almost euphoric moment of Chancellor Merkel's open-door approach and Germans greeting asylum seekers with flowers and gifts when arriving by train in 2015 to the general elections of 2017 which showed meanwhile considerable support for the right-wing "Alternative for Germany"/"Alternative für Deutschland" (AfD) with its anti-refugee agenda had developed, as well as the overall much more critical appreciation in the media of what actually had happened since 2015. Here on the local level, individuals are touched by the failed implementation of the Common European Asylum System, which otherwise would have put much less pressure on Germany's integration capacities and thus might have resulted in smaller electoral support for the AfD.

13.2   Further Research

This volume merely offers a flavour of what the local consequences were of the 2015 'refugee crisis' and its aftermath. It is a story with many protagonists, each with its own narrative and plot development, leading to as yet unknown endings (if we assume there exists such a thing in real life world). In order to better understand the storylines, explain their dynamics and chart their likely futures, the highlights of the present collection of studies suggests the following obvious lines of inquiry:

It has been amply demonstrated that refugee integration happens and is governed first and foremost at the local level, by local actors. These local actors act in the wider settings and are constrained and/or supported by higher levels of governance. They also organize horizontally with likeminded partners and as such engage in vertical relationships. The latter processes deserve more study, in terms of quantity and in a more systematic study of local governance of refugee integration.

As a method, it seems to pay to adopt a perspective that puts the local experience central: "looking up from below" should help better understand how gaps between

politics, policies, laws, mandates, on all governance levels, as well as scale mismatches translate into local realities.

We would suggest there is considerable skepticism in certain member states about the fundamental need to protect refugees, about the feasibility of refugee integration, and about the social, cultural and economic benefits to be gained from accepting refugees. The Hungarian case is a clear one in point but more overall as well national governments appear less inclined towards a positive take on these issues, as is exemplified by the "campization" trend we observed. We already suggested this could have considerable direct impact on the refugee integration process but also have a signifying effect on local communities and society at large. These effects merit more attention.

Housing is a crucial element of refugee integration. This is so for the obvious reason that decent housing is a pre-condition for integration in all other societal areas. Additionally, the location of housing has consequences for the outcome of this wider integration process: e.g. distance to work has an effect on employment and income, which in turn has effects on educational outcomes, and the social setting may deeply effect people's well-being. Since housing is such a basic need, its availability or rather lack thereof also deeply affects resident populations. Further study of local housing markets and social housing schemes are thus highly relevant for a proper appreciation of refugee integration in its widest meaning.

We assume national skepticism to result in local political responses and grassroot opposition. In terms of multi-level governance this may result in decoupling (Scholten and Penninx 2016) and independent policy making efforts, implicitly or explicitly opposing national policies. All through Europe cities become vocally in favor of refugee reception, not least in those states where the national take on offering asylum is skeptical or downright negative, in line with the sanctuary city movement in the United States. Interesting and innovative findings on political mobilization and their effectiveness in multi-level settings could be expected from systematic trans-Atlantic comparisons.

Whereas the concept of multi-level governance offers a suitable frame for a transatlantic comparison of federal arrangements, for the EU as such the question would rather be how within the formal framework, and by making use of its strengths and resources, "experimentalist governance" offers durable remedies for the failings of the current Common European Asylum System. Experimentalist governance may offer flexibility and establish new relationships between actors when preconceived policy methods do not deliver what local actors (and possibly also the member states) require in order to reach their policy goals (Sabel and Zeitlin 2012). In effect, Europeanization may well fundamentally reconfigure the role of the local, and notably the city, in the asylum policy domain.

Lastly, because refugee admission normally is a national affair and a lengthy process, refugee integration from a policy perspective is conceptualized as a process taking place outside, or next to, wider social dynamics. We saw that local policy makers and civil society actors tend to oppose such a separation and favor a mainstreaming approach. More case studies could help identify the conditions under which this leads to particular outcomes.

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