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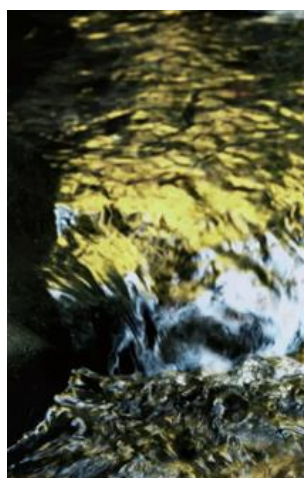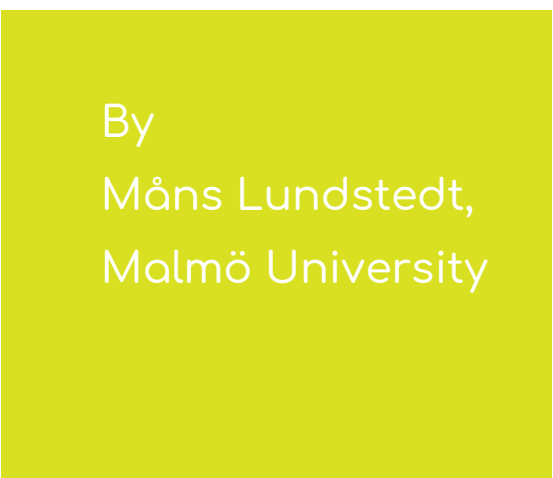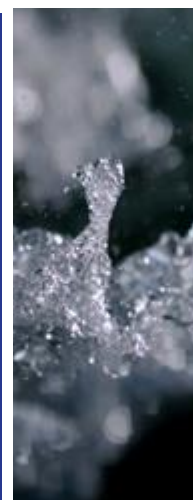MIGRANT INTEGRATION IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

Nov. 2022

Social relations, individual attitudes and migrant integration experiences in small and medium-sized towns and rural areas in Sweden

Country Reports on policy outcomes

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REPORT

https://whole-comm.eu

Executive summary

This report presents the Swedish results of the Whole-COMM work package 5. This work package consists in a qualitative examination of the social, governance, political, and spatial opportunities and constraints that affect migrants' opportunities for successful social and economic integration. Through individual interviews with post-2014 migrants, focus groups with migrants and long-term residents, and participant observation in public spaces in six case study localities, the report finds that positive integration experiences are closely related to the creation and maintenance of meaningful social ties in three arenas: at school, in civil society associations, and, particularly, at work. In these arenas, migrants can improve their language skills, find connections to other and better employment, and gain a stronger sense of belonging in the new host society. Inversely, experiences of interaction in informal settings (e.g. on the street, in public transportation, or in the neighborhood) are largely negative, associated either with racist abuse or – much more common – indifference. The participant observation comes to a similar conclusion, finding that intergroup contacts – whether including migrants or not – are extremely uncommon in the absence of organized activities.

Around all three arenas are barriers that limit inclusion overall, and exclude some migrants altogether. These barriers are related to the local *integration opportunity structure*, consisting of social, political, governance, and spatial factors. In the labor market, high barriers of entry and insufficient language training limit participation overall. Problems in validating international work experiences and skills create further challenges for skilled migrants. For those migrants that have managed to enter the labor market, the proliferation of short-term, subsidized contracts, lone work and functional segregation (i.e. the segregation of migrants and long-term residents across different positions) limit the extent to which employment can actually contribute to positive integration beyond economic inclusion. Integration in the school system is most relevant for migrants who have entered Sweden at a relatively young age. Migrants that have entered the Swedish education system as teenagers report being met with hostility and indifference, and few manage to make long-term contacts with native-born youths. In explaining these differences, interviewees particularly stress the vast differences that exist in lived experience, interests, and material resources. Participation in civil society associations, finally, is perceived as a very powerful means for positive integration. However, this participation is predicated on particular personality traits (outgoing, unafraid), interests (e.g. shared political interests), and access to time. As such, the interviewees note that participation in civil society associations is particularly useful for sociable, older women without stay-at-home children, with prior experiences of organizational participation.

Aside from these obstacles, which have to do with individual traits as well as broad structural constraints, the opportunities for integration also relate to cross-case differences in housing and labor market structures, political factors, and spatial relations. Local differences in thresholds to labor market entry (e.g. skills-intensive labor markets) and in the concentration of migrants to particular neighborhoods recur in the interviews and – to some extent – in the results from the participant observation. In localities with significant levels of residential

segregation, migrants are adversely affected with inequalities of information access, even higher obstacles to meaningful interactions with long-term residents, and (through longer distances and inequalities of information access) higher barriers of labor market entry. Residential segregation – a key spatial constraint – is, in turn, closely linked to the structure and governance of the local labor market. Political factors have a weaker (visible) impact on migrants' interaction trajectories, likely coloring migrants interactions with strangers, acquaintances and potential landlords or employers. While some municipalities had relatively mobilized radical right organizations, and histories of anti-migrant mobilization more widely, no such mobilization had been able to have a direct impact on local policy, and the interviewees did not report any negative encounters with mobilizing anti-migrant actors. At the same time, one should also consider the possibility that the indifference that most migrants' experienced in their encounters with long-term residents was partly an expression of racism and xenophobia.

The findings reflect back on the Whole-COMM project's theoretical framework. Slight differences that do exist between municipalities relate to differences in labor market and demographic structure. In highly competitive and one-sided labor markets, migrants become more strongly dependent on local labor market initiatives for successful inclusion. In rapidly growing municipalities, on the other hand, spatial segregation is considerably more present than in those that are stagnant or declining. Because most Swedish municipalities have a relatively comprehensive history of past refugee migration, this factor is only relevant insofar as it has or has not generated support infrastructures in civil society and in the municipal organization. Overall, however, the results from the Swedish cases are very similar across cases, likely owing to the strong centralization of Swedish integration, welfare and labor policies, which leave little room for non-public actors and even for municipal policymakers to promote other modes of interaction.

At the time of fieldwork, it was too early to say how the experiences of receiving post-2014 migrants affected the municipalities' reactions to the current wave of refugee migration from the Ukraine. However, the current situation has impacted on post-2014 migrants, both as they have mobilized to support the new arrivals, and as they have seen the discrepancy between the welcoming reaction to the Ukrainians and the hostility they encountered in the wake of 2015. In this situation, many migrants find Swedish society to be hypocritical, and to favor "white" and "European" refugees over those from the Middle East, Africa, Afghanistan, etc. The Swedish government's and the Swedish public's inconsistent reactions to different waves of migration thereby risks fracturing post-2014 migrants sense of trust in the Swedish system, and their sense of belonging to Sweden as a whole.

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Acknowledgement

1.   Introduction

In the wake of the so-called "refugee crisis" of 2015, small and medium-sized towns and rural areas (SMsTRAs) have been playing an increasing role in accommodating humanitarian migrants. The arrival of asylum-seeking migrants in the EU has peaked after 2014 and EU countries have struggled to re-organise and manage the reception of humanitarian migrants. The lack of immediately available reception facilities in cities, coupled with the dispersion policies implemented by states to ensure an "equal" distribution of asylum seekers across their national territories, has led to the increased involvement of Small and Medium-sized Towns and Rural Areas in the reception of people seeking refuge (Flamant et al. 2020). Even though immigrant integration in cities has been in the focus of research since decades now, we know relatively little about smaller towns and rural areas, localities that often have no or little prior experiences with migration. Research has shown, that "the experiences that new arrivals face in the first phase of their reception and accommodation, and the relationships they build in their neighborhoods and host cities have a long-term effect on their later lives and play a significant role in the way their impressions, aspirations and motivations develop along the way of their integration trajectories" (Seethaler-Wari 2018, p. 152).

We need to know more, which factors facilitate and which hinder positive experiences when migrants (mainly arrived after 2014) settle in these Small and Medium-sized Towns and Rural Areas. The objective of the country report is thus to understand which role specific local contexts (or "local refugee integration opportunity structures"), within the same country, can play in shaping individual attitudes, social relations and consequently migrant integration experiences in SMsTRAs. We define local (refugee) integration opportunity structures, as "sets of resources, arrangements and pathways that can facilitate or block integration" (Phillimore 2020). Among the contextual factors that determine the local opportunity structure we identify, following and adapting Phillimore (2020), four dimensions:

a) the social dimension, highlighting the individual (e.g., age, gender, country of origin, class, religion) and the group level factors (e.g., presence or absence of support networks, civil society organizations);
b) the ideational-political dimension, which includes a set of factors connected to discourse, such as media information, political ideology of leaders and the local community, and political mobilizations pro- and anti-migrants;
c) the factors connected to governance including the impact of housing, labour market, and specific immigrant integration policies and practices, and their implementation at the local level;
d) the spatial dimension, focusing on the specificity of SMsTRAs compared to cities but also on local socio-economic determinants and on spatial proximity/segregation.

The aim of this report is to identify which factors in Swedish SMsTRAs are most relevant in shaping attitudes, interactions between long-term residents and post-2014 migrants, and

migrants' experiences of inclusion/exclusion.[1] As such, it builds on the findings from work packages 3 and 4 on integration governance and migrants' resource access.

Whole-COMM country report 3 showed that Swedish integration policy is hierarchical and centralized, allocating the vast majority of functions and responsibilities to the public sector. Within the public sector, the national government and state-level public agencies play central and diverse roles, as they allocate migrants to the municipalities, plan the overall structure of local integration programs, and, in the case of the Public employment service (PES), organize, supervise, and partially carry out the *Introduction program* (Etableringsprogrammet), a labor market activation programs for recently arrived refugees. The municipalities are expected to *implement* centrally organized integration tasks, including the provision of universal welfare benefits (e.g. financial aid, primary healthcare, support on the housing market) and the organization of adult language education (SFI) and civic orientation courses as part of the Introduction program.[2] While the municipalities have significant discretion in *how* they organize the implementation of local integration policy, and while they are free to go beyond their core responsibilities, most municipalities follow the national framework. This has led some municipalities to scale back their engagement to a small number of core tasks – primarily adult education and general welfare services, while others have reorganized local integration to resemble and complement the PES's labor market activation programs. While there are no sanctions for municipalities that fail to provide local reception or integration services, very few municipalities – and none of the case study localities – have refused to carry out their core responsibilities within the studied period.

The strong emphasis on the public sector in the planning and implementation of Swedish integration policy means that civil society and private sector actors are relatively absent in the day-to-day practice of local integration. Further, private sector and civil society associations do not express a desire to play a bigger role in local integration. While some express the need for more funding in relation to particular activities (e.g. language cafés or cultural events), there is wide agreement among public and non-public actors that the public sector should have the main responsibility for integration-related tasks. To the extent that the municipalities collaborate with, or express a desire to collaborate with, civil society actors, this collaboration is restricted to very specific activities (e.g. tutoring for migrants that have passed through adult education) or to consulting. However, the participants in the project see relations between local level actors and civil society associations as largely positive and collaborative.

As seen in country report 4, the central obstacles that the interviewees perceived for Swedish integration were insufficient language acquisition, high barriers to labor market entry, and a

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[1] for a more detailed description see Caponio & Pettrachin (2021).

[2] At the time of writing, the new right wing-conservative government has proposed a thorough reform of municipal welfare provision. If realized, this reform would restrict migrants' access to welfare services in accordance with their progression in national integration programs.

generalized housing shortage (Lundstedt et al. 2022b). These problems stemmed from structural as well as political and institutional factors, and they combined to form self-reinforcing feedback loops. Insufficient language acquisition was understood as a consequence of inadequate adult education programs as well as segregation in the housing and labor markets. High barriers of entry in the labor market, in turn, were symptoms of the overall structure of the Swedish labor market as well as insufficient language acquisition among many recent migrants. The interviewees also mentioned how reforms and cutbacks to the PES have led to the effective breakdown of national-level labor market activation programs. Finally, large discrepancies in labor market activation, coupled with a general housing shortage, had lead to patterns of residential segregation, as migrants are concentrated in stigmatized areas, in crowded apartments, and often on short-term or informal contacts.

This report will shift the perspective to show how the local context impacts on migrants' abilities to circumvent the obstacles that surround basic resource access. It emphasizes the relationship between economic and social integration outcomes, showing how successful economic integration trajectories relate to the development of meaningful social relations. This introduces new sets of obstacles, as access to relevant networks is also incumbent on particular combinations of personal traits, features of local integration governance, spatial relations in the local community, and, to a limited degree, political factors. These factors, defined below as elements of the *local integration opportunity structure* become visible in different ways across different arenas of interaction, which the interviewees found to be particularly relevant for social integration: the workplace, education, and civil society associations. Throughout the report, these three arenas serve as structuring devices for the comparative analysis as well as for the individual case studies.

The participants agree that successful integration is incumbent on **access to employment.** For most adults, the workplace is the only location where they can develop meaningful relationships with long-term residents. These relations can then be used to find further and better employment opportunities, to access information, and to gain a sense of belonging within the new society. However, high barriers of entry, the proliferation of short-term, subsidized contracts, and functional segregation within the same workplace (i.e. migrants and long-term residents are employed on different positions and in different work teams) each make it necessary to look deeper into the link between employment and integration. At the broadest level, employment as a means of integration is only accessible to those that have sufficient (and validated) skills, have managed to gain sufficient language skills, and have been able to circumvent discriminatory hiring practices. Even when they manage to gain employment, many find themselves on short-term contracts, making it difficult to acquire stable and transferable relations. Finally, some interviewees who had managed to find stable employment in the studied period described having to work alone, or in teams where all their colleagues shared the same migrant background. In these cases, access to employment was only useful as a source of income, and did not contribute to meaningful interactions with long-term residents.

Another way that the participants managed to develop meaningful contacts was through **participation in civil society associations** and other organized leisure activities. Many participants spoke of finding the majority of their friends – migrants and otherwise – through the local church or Mosque, through the Red Cross or other aid organizations, or through sports activities. Still, this trajectory was limited to a subset of participants. Further, even though most participants did have some experience collaborating with such associations, there was a clear difference between deep participation (e.g. joining an association and taking on long commitments) and simply taking part in an association's activities (e.g. visiting a language café). Whereas the former allowed migrants to develop wide social networks, and sometimes employment, the latter did not appear to foster relations beyond the specific activity. Given the limited size of civil society, and the ways that individuals' amount of free time, practical interests, and psychological characteristics (e.g. trauma) affect their willingness and capacity to participate, the civil society trajectory is deeply unequal. Particularly in a context where state-level integration programs fail to deliver the expected services, this could cause deep inequalities in the ways that individual migrants can access necessary social ties and – as a consequence – future resources.

For those migrants who arrived to Sweden while underage, **school** provided an alternative path to integration. In school, some migrants found that they could more easily develop social contacts, and many also described how contacts with teachers and other school staff allowed them access to further contacts and resources once they had graduated. At the same time, school was also described as an exclusionary context, in which native or long-term resident youths would rarely interact positively with migrants, where most social contacts occurred within the migrant group, and where individual migrants felt excluded and vulnerable owing to racism as well as socioeconomic differences.

The problems that migrants experienced within the school system translated to a broader impression of Sweden as a strikingly **unfriendly** place. Informal and spontaneous interactions were hardly ever mentioned as a means to create social ties. In the interviews, migrants' failed attempts to strike up conversations with their neighbors were used to illustrate long-term residents' indifference and lack of commitment to creating social relations. Particularly among those that had failed to find proper employment or meaningful civil society engagements, many migrants expressed a profound sense of loneliness, failing to create and sustain relations with their neighbors, classmates, and colleagues. At the same time, the natives' indifference also meant the participants rarely encountered any direct hostilities. Even in locations with a large presence of neo-Nazi activists, the odd encounters with direct racism primarily involved individual strangers (screaming abuse, spitting at them) or individual co-workers and classmates, rather than collective anti-migrant mobilization. With some exceptions, those subjected to direct hostilities felt they had received support from their workplace, from the school, or from others in their surroundings.

While the report is structured as a comparison of the six localities, the overall impressions hold across cases. However, there are slight differences that can be traced to the

socioeconomic and demographic dimensions of the Whole-COMM model, and to cross-case differences in the local integration opportunity structure. Hence, the small town in Dalarna has particularly high barriers of entry to the local labor market, while the medium-sized town in Jönköping has particularly extensive problems with residential segregation. The very limited size of civil society associations in the rural town in Blekinge, on the other hand, puts a large responsibility on informal networks among migrants and between migrants and individual long-term residents. While the small town in Scania appears to be the most hostile environment, it is hard to determine to what extent this result is related to the timing of the fieldwork (right before the elections), and to the limited size of the available data.

We are currently facing a new refugee crisis triggered by the Ukraine war. Even though the focus of the Whole-COMM project is on post-2014 migrants' integration in SMsTRAs, the arrival of Ukrainian refugees begs the question: what can we learn from experiences of inclusion/exclusion in SMsTRAs of refugees who arrived in a different "crisis" period? Are SMsTRAs involved in the reception of Ukrainian refugees? Moreover, how is the arrival of Ukrainians reshaping social interactions, individual attitudes and post-2014 migrants' experiences? In this country report, we try to address also those questions to capitalise on the research conducted during yet another critical juncture.

At the time of fieldwork, refugee migration from the Ukraine was still limited and inconsistent across cases. As such, it is difficult to determine how the experiences of post-2014 migrants and receiving communities have been incorporated into, and resonate with, the current situation. However, many of the migrants that participated in the project perceived the reception of Ukrainians to illustrate the Swedish government's hostility and/or indifference to Muslims, to middle-eastern migrants, and to non-white migrants. While most believed that the Swedish government's response to the Ukrainian refugees was just, and while many had participated actively in receiving and supporting this group, the stark difference in public discourse and in government practices served to underline what they perceived to be an inherent racism in Swedish migration and integration policy. As such, the difference between the ways that Sweden received Ukrainians, and the way that Sweden had previously received other migrant groups, fractured the participants' perceptions of, and trust in, the Swedish authorities and in Swedish society as a whole.

Methodology

The cases for the research project were selected based on a set of the following variables:

Population size	Medium town: 100,000 – 250.000 Small town: 50,000 – 100,000 Rural area: 5,000 - 50,000 and low population density
Presence of a reception center AND/OR Reception facilities	Time period: 2014-2017
Number of currently residing migrants	Time period: arrived after 2014
Share of Foreign Residents	Time period: in 2005 (SF2005)
Variation of Unemployment level	Time period: 2005-2014 (VARUN)
AND/OR Unemployment Levels	Time period: 2005 and 2014
Variation of number of inhabitants	Time period: 2005-2014 (VARNI)
Regional variation	For example: East / West or North / South, choosing localities from different regions
Local politics	Parties in government and local political tradition, choosing localities with different political traditions (conservative / progressive)

The variables 'SF2005', 'VARUN' and 'VARNI' were used to identify **four** types of localities:

Type A	Characterized by a recovering local economy and an improving demographic profile and migrants' settlement before 2014
Type B	Characterized by an improving economic and demographic situation and no remarkable arrivals of migrants before 2014
Type C	Characterized by demographic and economic decline and migrants' settlement before 2014
Type D	Characterized by economic and demographic decline and no remarkable arrivals of migrants before 2014

In each locality, the data collection consisted of participant observation, focus group discussions with post-2014 migrants and long-term residents, and in-depth interviews with post-2014 migrants. Before fieldwork, the researcher conducted desk research to identify relevant civil society associations (see chapter 3 and Annex II) and pro- and anti-migrant protest mobilizations (see chapter 3). Along with data from the previous work packages, these were used to add background information on the cases, and to steer the sampling process for the participant observation, focus groups, and individual interviews. Participant observation sites were selected to observe whether and how post-2014 and long-term migrants interact, and what the barriers or facilitating factors for this interaction are, also considering that Covid-19 might have also played a role in changing patterns of interaction. Interviews with post-2014 migrants were aimed at understanding migrants' experiences of inclusion/exclusion in SMsTRAs and at further analyzing the type of interactions already observed through participant observation. Finally, focus groups discussions are aimed at further exploring which variables are more relevant in each locality in shaping positive/negative social relations and individual attitudes.

Generic name	Description	Municipality type
Locality 1	Small town in Scania	Recovering local economy and improving demographic profile, migrants' settlement before 2014
Locality 2	Rural town in Blekinge	Demographic and economic decline, migrants' settlement before 2014
Locality 3	Mid-sized town in Jönköping	Recovering local economy and improving demographic profile, migrants' settlement before 2014
Locality 4	Small town in Gävleborg	Economic and demographic decline, no remarkable arrivals of migrants before 2014
Locality 5	Small town in Dalarna	Recovering local economy and improving demographic profile, migrants' settlement before 2014
Locality 6	Medium-sized town in Gävleborg	Demographic and economic decline, migrants' settlement before 2014

Table 1: Case selection in the Whole-COMM typology

The Swedish fieldwork took place in six localities (see table 1).[3] The localities were distributed across five administrative regions: Scania, Blekinge, Jönköping, Dalarna and Gävleborg (see fig. 1).

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Fig. 1 Case study regions

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[3] It was not possible to identify an unambiguous case of a Type B municipality in Sweden

The fieldwork involved one researcher, with two assistants for the focus groups, and took place between April and August of 2022. The researcher stayed in each fieldwork site for about one week, carrying out all but one focus group during two additional weekends in April and May. The researcher conducted a total of 19 in-depth interviews with 24 participants, in addition to six focus groups with a total of 34 participants. However, the distribution of interviewees varies widely between the six fieldwork sites. It was relatively easy to identify and access interviewees in the medium-sized town in Jönköping (6 interviewees, 5 in the focus group), the small town in Gävleborg (8 interviewees, 8 participants in the focus group), and the rural town in Blekinge (5, 3). On the other hand, it proved very difficult in Scania (0, 4), Dalarna (2, 7), and the medium-sized town in Gävleborg (4, 7). This had to do with the timing of the fieldwork, the structure of local relations, and the contingent effect of external events. More details on the data collection and analysis procedure are provided in Annex I.

2. Main findings per locality

General information on the relevant national and state/regional context

Sweden had a comparatively high level of refugee migration even before the beginning of the "refugee crisis". In a country with a tradition of hierarchical and centralized welfare and labor market policy, this has led to the creation of a strongly institutionalized framework for local and national integration and integration. Overall, this framework grants considerable decision-making power (and some implementation capacities) to state-level actors, while municipal agencies are expected to provide a baseline of integration and general welfare services. The most important state-level actors are the PES and the Swedish migration agency (SMA). The PES is responsible for the Introduction program, which organizes labor market activation programs and organizes (some) social welfare provision for migrants who have received their residence permits within the last 24 months. The Migration agency is primarily responsible for the reception and allocation of asylum seekers. Municipal governments are required to provide housing, adult education, and civic orientation courses as part of the PES's introduction program, in addition to its broader responsibility for universal welfare services. Non-public actors play a very limited part, and municipal governments typically cannot and do not try to develop locally specific policies that diverge from the general national framework. Regional-level actors are not relevant for the current report.

Since the early 1990s, efforts from the Swedish Migration Agency to limit waiting times in accommodation centers, and to counter the concentration of migrants in large-receiver municipalities, has led to the development of a comprehensive and relatively liberal system of refugee dispersal, concerning asylum seekers as well as recognized refugees. Few municipalities are "unaccustomed" to migration, and local integration and reception has rarely been successfully contested. In most places, mobilization against local migrant accommodation has been a fringe phenomenon, limited to small groups of people and occurring only at very specific moments and against very specific targets and issues. This should be understood against a broader pattern in Swedish public opinion, which long remained comparatively liberal on issues of migration, ethnic difference, and multiculturalism.[4]

Following a steep increase in received migrants in October 2015, the Swedish government passed a series of temporary and highly restrictive asylum and border legislations that rapidly diminished the number of migrants entering the country. In the municipalities, this led to the closure of accommodation centers, and a steady decline in the number of recognized refugees allocated from the Migration Agency. Some municipal governments dismantled their integration infrastructure, and withdrew economic support for integration-related activities (e.g. for civil society associations). Others reoriented their policies toward narrower labor

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[4] e.g. Demker, M. (2014). *Sverige åt svenskarna?* Stockholm: Atlas akademi.

market goals. The period also saw the increasing polarization and politicization of migration issues, a process that was reflected in public opinion, in the parties' rhetoric, and in the slow formation of a new right-wing conservative block in local and national politics, spanning the right-wing populist Sweden Democrats (SD), the Conservative party and the Christian Democrats. This was particularly visible during the time of fieldwork, as it coincided with the campaigns for the 2022 national, regional and local elections.

In sum, the fieldwork took place at a moment where the politics of migration were becoming increasingly polarized at the national and at the local level, but where integration and migration policy was largely disappearing from municipal politics. As reflected in the interviews, this period also included numerous heavily mediatized events, which included Danish-Swedish right-wing populist Rasmus Paludan burning Qurans at public rallies across the country, and the dissemination of rumors that the Swedish social services were apprehending Muslim children. At the same time, civil society associations and municipal agencies that worked to support refugees felt they had been abandoned by important financing bodies, whether at the state or at the local level.

Locality 1 small town in Scania (type A)

Overview

Locality 1 is a small town in Scania. As a type A municipality, its demographic and socioeconomic situation is improving, and it has a long history of migrants' settlement prior to 2014. During the time of fieldwork, the governing coalition on the municipal council consisted of the Conservative party, with support from the SD. The municipality has a relatively low level of unemployment overall, and although post-2014 migrants' unemployment rate is high when compared to the general population, it is relatively low when compared to the country as a whole.

The right-wing populist SD has long had strong electoral support in the municipality, and particularly in its rural areas. In the 2018 elections, the party received 25 % in the vote for the municipal council. In the 2022 elections, this figure declined slightly to 22 %. Aside from strong support for the SD, the municipality has also seen repeated mobilization against migrants. In 2016, the municipal government, the SD, and various neighborhood groups opposed the allocation of unaccompanied minors and recognized refugees from the Migration Agency. This is visible as an extensive series of violent and nonviolent protest events in the city center and elsewhere (see Annex). The neo-Nazi Nordic Resistance Movement (NMR) has been active in the area, participating in some of the mobilizations against migrant accommodation. The municipality has also been the site of national demonstrations by the SD, the radical right coalition Folkets demonstration, and the right wing vigilante initiative Soldiers of Odin. Notably, radical right and anti-migrant mobilizations ceased after the 2018 elections and the formation of the SD-supported conservative majority.

While the radical right and other anti-migrant actors have mobilized prominently in the region (up until 2017), there have also been some examples of anti-racist and pro-refugee mobilization. Some of these have occurred in immediate response to the right–wing protests, while others have targeted widespread beliefs and policies more broadly. Despite the right wing conservative majority on the municipal council, anti-racist and pro-refugee protests in the municipality have not targeted local policies. Instead, local mobilizations have mainly targeted racist and radical right organizations on one hand, and "racism" (e.g. the prevalence of racist attitudes in society) on the other. Further, the supporters consist solely of mainstream (mainly center-left) political parties, the Protestant Church of Sweden, and a local antiracist campaign initiative. Every single protest took place in the city center. Notably, antiracist protest, particularly those involving the specialized local antiracist organization, increased in frequency after the formation of the right-wing conservative government in 2018.

The small numbers of organizations that have been active in anti-racist mobilizations mirror the relatively narrow structure of pro-refugee and anti-racist organizations in the municipality as a whole (see table in annex II). Only the Church of Sweden is mentioned in the interview materials, and the only relevant migrants' associations that were present in local media or in the municipal associations' register were founded as late as 2019. The antiracist and refugee support associations (i.e. the local antiracist organization and the language café association) formed in conjunction with the "refugee crisis." Aside from its small size, the civil society infrastructure is thus relatively young, especially when compared to the other cases in the sample.

Geographically, locality 1 is divided between a densely populated city center and a number of larger villages and dwellings on the municipality's margins. There are some signs of segregation, as migrants have come to concentrate in tenement housing in the center and its surrounding residential neighborhoods. Migrants, and particularly third-country nationals, are strongly underrepresented in the primarily single-household homes that spread out to the north, west and east of the center. In the city center are multiple squares and public spaces, as well as cafés and other commercial sites. There is a shopping mall with chain and local stores. Behind the shopping mall is a public park with a major collective transportation hub, a playground, and several outdoor seating areas. The square and the park that surround the shopping mall are the most frequent locations for the protest events listed in tables 3–4. Fifteen minutes from the center – by bus or by bicycle – is a free recreational area with fields of grass, a campsite, several cafés and restaurants, and a beach that runs several kilometers along the municipality's southern border.

Detailed description of site selection, interviews, focus group

The data for locality 1 consists exclusively of desk research, participant observation, and a focus group. The researcher made several attempts to recruit participants for the individual interviews through civil society associations, social media, private contacts, and contacts made during the focus group. Those contacts that explained their refusal to participate cited negative experiences from their home countries, problems with timing, and, as described in

detail in Annex I, the fear of political persecution in the wake of a potential SD election victory. The latter motive, which stemmed from an SD campaign against an Islamist educational association that had been launched at the end of August, also had a negative impact on participation in the focus group. The focus group consisted of 4 individuals, all women, all from Syria, recruited with the help of a local gatekeeper. The background to the limited sample is provided in the annex.

For the participant observation, the researcher chose the square in front of the shopping mall – a functionally and socially dense location, where most protest events have taken place, and where large numbers of people gather every day – and the park/beach area on the east side of the city center. Whereas the first location set up more barriers to interaction through the proliferation of cost boundaries (many of the seating areas were part of businesses' outdoors seating areas), the latter set up boundaries on the basis of spatial distance (as it is further away from the areas where most migrants live). As such, the site selection allowed for a better analysis of the effect of spatial vis-à-vis economic constraints and opportunities. In both locations, the observations took place on weekdays at lunchtime, the first observation starting at 10:00, the second observation starting at 13:00. The researcher made the first round of observations before the general summer holiday period, and the second round once the holidays had begun. This way, the researcher could expect different rhythms and patterns of interaction, and different constellations of people interacting.

Social interactions and individual attitudes

The available data suggest that interactions between migrants and long-term natives are scarce, challenging, and difficult to maintain over time. The participants in the focus group all shared experiences of struggling to meet "Swedes" and of encountering repeated discrimination and derogatory treatment at work and in informal settings. One participant related her attempts to build relations with neighbors. Since moving in, she had repeatedly invited her Swedish neighbors over for food, and she made attempts to strike up conversations anytime she met them in the stairwell. However, she was frustrated that her neighbors did not reciprocate. Instead, she had come to assume that they only "want to monitor my ability as a parent and spread gossip", suggesting, "Swedish people don't really want to be friends".

The workplace was where the participants described most of their interactions with long-term residents. However, their experiences of these interactions were seldom positive. One participant, a former principal from a Syrian city, was forced to seek employment in a school kitchen. In the kitchen, other staff began harassing her for her religion and national background. When she mentioned this to her supervisor, nothing happened. Another participant noted that her employer attempted to ban her from praying at work, and that her colleagues "speak about me, but not to me".

Despite their largely negative experiences, the participants believed employment was the best way to make contacts with Swedes and other long-term residents. However, they believed

that a combination of racism in hiring, and deficiencies in the adult education system – concerning language attainment and the validation of foreign diplomas and work experience – unfairly closed off employment opportunities. Making things worse, experiences of unemployment would cause depression and sadness, further limiting their possibilities to make new friends and contacts among the local population.

The negative experiences of interacting with long-term residents, at home and at work, did not make the participants reject the idea of interaction altogether. Rather the opposite, they subscribed to the notion that interaction between migrants and long-term residents is key to a good community, one in which "everyone is treated equal and feel safe". To reach that point, however, they believed that migrants should be given a fair chance on the labor market, that Swedes should be open to new contacts, and that politicians and the media should stop giving one-sided portrayals of migrants. Notably, the participants did not reflect much on local politics or anti-migrant mobilizations. However, they did note that the municipal labor market activation program does not sufficiently take into account the barriers that surround migrants' labor market entry, and that the municipality does not care about the mental impact of unemployment and discrimination, the fact that "being unemployed makes you sad".

The participants' experiences in the labor market suggest that racism and discrimination even out the differences that prior experience, education, and other factors might otherwise have on migrants' opportunities for social integration. As migrants coming from high-status positions in their home countries are blocked from exercising their former employment, they lose both the confidence and the social networks that would otherwise have given them advantages vis-à-vis low-skilled migrants.

The focus group participants mentioned civil society associations and education as the two arenas where migrants could develop meaningful relations independently of the labor market. One participant was an active member of the local protestant church. There, she found the complete opposite to the distant and derogatory interactions that she has experienced in other spheres of local life. The members of the church were welcoming and open from the start, and they had made it possible for her to make many friends in the community. While none of the participants had come to Sweden as minors, they saw similar processes in their children's schools. They did not believe that their children had any problems interacting and making friends with others, whether migrant or long-term resident.

The participant observations in both locations largely confirmed the focus group participants' bleak depiction of inter-group interactions. While there were many languages spoken in the public square and in the area surrounding the beach (e.g. Swedish, German, Polish, Russian, Arabic), it was extremely uncommon to hear interactions where participants switched between languages, where they spoke in foreign accents, or where they otherwise tried to accommodate linguistic differences. Instead, public space was obviously segregated according to language. These distinctions extended into more ethically and analytically problematic markers such as clothing style (class-based, religious, etc.), skin color, and age. In the city center, these differences extended to the choice of cafés. In the franchise café on the square,

virtually all the customers were white and spoke Swedish with local dialects. During the second observation, during the summer holidays, German- and Polish-speakers filled some of the tables. At the café inside the shopping mall, the staff and the customers were considerably more varied in looks and languages, and the age range was markedly higher. While the second café was somewhat cheaper, the difference did not appear significant enough to warrant a barrier to more mixed groups. Although these and other differences in patterns of interaction do not directly translate to relations between long-term residents and post 2014-migrants, they provide a comprehensive enough view of the patterned lack of intergroup interactions.

During the 12 hours of observation, there were two exceptions to the overall segregation pattern. The first exception occurred where people interacted across different commercial functions. Particularly in the city center, this was visible in the interaction between patients and their caretakers, and between customers and store clerks. As the focus group participants noted, labor market participation is key to interaction across group boundaries. However, these interactions do not necessarily generate long-term relations. Regardless, the permeation of commercial interactions in the city center made for slightly less segregated interaction patterns than on the beach. There, people kept to their own groups, staring into their books, into the sand, or keeping an eye out for bathing children.

The second exception occurred on the beach volleyball field, in the late afternoon of the second observation round. The entire afternoon, the volleyball field had generated a form of passive interaction between groups, as sunbathers and kids stopped to watch the spontaneous games. At about three in the afternoon, a large group of young men, speaking Arabic and playing electronic music and hip-hop from a large portable speaker, took the field. As soon as the men started playing, a mixed-gender group of Swedish speaking players drew close to the field. Hesitating for the better part of thirty minutes, the second group finally went up to the others to join the game. While it was likely that these interactions generated no more than a brief encounter, a spontaneous game of volleyball – more extensive in time, and more intensive in terms of the number of exchanges – is likely to do more for the creation of social relations than brief commercial exchanges. While the municipality in the small town in Scania did not actively promote sports as a means of social integration, those free and public sports facilities that existed – perhaps, the availability of free activities overall – promoted a base level of social interaction between groups that otherwise would not interact with each other.

Election data, the past history of anti-migrant mobilization, and the focus group participants' experience of workplace mistreatment, suggest a strong politicization of migration and integration in the municipality. While this is obviously true, it did not show at the observation sites. When the SD handed out flyers in the city center during my second visit, they did not discriminate between people on the basis of skin color or language, and to the extent that it was possible to overhear conversations between party representatives and sympathizers, these had to do with energy prices and other cost of living issues. Likewise, there were no

notable conflicts, no brawls, and no bickering between groups, and there was no radical right wing propaganda at any of the fieldwork sites.

Summary

The small town in Scania has a long history of migration, and is improving economically. In the studied period, radical right as well as neighborhood initiatives have mobilized to protest migration into (different parts of) the municipality, ceasing with the election of a Conservative municipal government with support of the SD in 2018. There are weak and scarce support structures for migrants in civil society, and the anti-racist and refugee solidarity organizations that currently exist have been growing only in the last few years. The municipality shows signs of residential segregation, as migrants concentrate on the margins of the city center and long-term residents move into surrounding dwellings.

Polarized on one hand, and segregated on the other, post-2014 migrants in the locality experience obstacles and hostility in their interactions with "Swedes." On one hand, Swedes are difficult to *meet*, given differences in labor market participation and employment. On the other hand, the Swedes that the participants do meet often behave in hostile and derogatory ways. At the same time, the participants do not report any public encounters with anti-migrant actors, with anti-migrant politics, and so on and so forth. This experience is reflected in the researcher's findings from conducting participant observation on a central square, and in the area surrounding a public beach. Whereas there are no public *conflicts* between migrants and others, the degree of intergroup interactions is generally very low. It is also possible to find the relatively hostile political climate reflected in the participants' stories of workplace discrimination.

There are also of segregation in the use of public space, where people who are white, speak unbroken Swedish, and so on, populate some areas rather than others. The exceptions to these rules, as reported in the focus groups and during the observations, are civil society associations (the Protestant church), in commercial interactions, and around free sports facilities. With regard to the latter, it is clear how both the functional and spatial division of public areas can serve to affect minor differences in patterns of intergroup relations. While it is clear that civil society associations are the "best" arenas for interaction, providing repeated social contacts without the harassment and derogatory behavior that the participants associate with the labor market, these have limited entry points. Possibly a consequence of the harsh political situation, further, the number of support associations is relatively low, increasing the pressure on migrants' personal interests, personalities, and, not least, religious beliefs, if they are to participate in the support associations that exist.

Locality 2: Rural town in Blekinge

Overview

The rural town in Blekinge is a type C municipality, meaning that it is going through economic decline, and that it had a relatively large proportion of migrants living in the municipality before 2014. At the time of fieldwork, the ruling majority on the municipal council consisted of a broad coalition between the Social Democrats and the Conservative party. Economic life in the municipality revolves around one large industrial employer, located on the edge of the urban center. Many of the interviewees either worked or had worked at the plant at some point. Many post-2014 migrants live in public housing on the Western end of the urban center, leading some interviewees to describe the urban center as segregated. However, one should note that the center as a whole is very small, and that the residential area in question is closely integrated with the surrounding neighborhood. Outside the urban center are a large natural preserve, a campsite, and a recreational forest- and beach area, which cut off the urban center from the surrounding villages. The rural town lacks railway connection to larger and more varied labor markets in nearby municipalities.

The rapid inflow and outflow of migrants between 2014 and the end of 2016 had a profound effect on integration policy and demographic patterns in the municipality. Given its small size and relatively large availability of potential housing facilities, several privately run reception centers opened in the municipality in the first year of the 'crisis'. As asylum seekers received their residence permits and moved to larger towns, and as the number of new asylum applications declined, the migrant population fell precipitously. In reaction, the municipality effectively dismantled most of its integration infrastructure, sharing services with other municipalities in the region and delegating many practical responsibilities to individual municipal agencies. In practical terms, this meant that the total number of post-2014 migrants staying in the municipality at the time of fieldwork was relatively small.

The rural town has experienced very little anti-migrant mobilization (see Annex II). The public protest events that have occurred in the past ten years have nearly all happened in relation to national electoral campaigns. In 2015, SD organized a public rally to support a referendum against Swedish asylum policy, a few days after the NMR had made a symbolic blockade against city hall to protest migrant accommodation and multiculturalism. In the 2022 elections, the rural town was one of few municipalities where the identitarian party Alternative for Sweden had a representative running for the municipal council. The low presence of radical right and other anti-migrant actors, and relatively low electoral support for the SD, makes the rural town stand out from the remainder of Blekinge, a traditional hot spot for the SD and for parts of the Swedish neo-Nazi milieu.

Pro-migrant and anti-racist civil society associations are few, and pro-migrant initiatives occur mainly on an informal basis. Among formal associations, the most active is the Church of Sweden, sometimes in collaboration with the Left party, the UN association, and a local chapter of Amnesty international. In the years immediately after the 'crisis', the Church of

Sweden organized a recurring language café, alongside personal support for individual migrants. In the past ten years, anti-racist and pro-refugee associations have only mobilized for protest events on two occasions, both targeting the proliferation of racist violence elsewhere in Sweden in early 2015 (see table in annex II). Migrants' associations exist on a regional basis, organizing individual support and social activities for particular ethnic or national groups.

The small size of local civil society associations is also visible in the municipality's organizational register. Combined with the associations mentioned above, and adding any associations that were mentioned in the interviews, it is only possible to identify a total of five associations that either mobilizes against racism/for refugees or provides services directly to migrants (Annex II). As the following section shows, informal networks therefore played a large role in individual integration trajectories.

Detailed overview of fieldwork

In the rural town in Blekinge, the project conducted five interviews (with the same number of people), one focus group with three participants, and two rounds of participant observation in the urban center and in the natural preserve. The interviewees came from Palestine and Syria, and their ages ranged from about 20 years to above 50. The interviewees were contacted through snowballing methods and through a contact in one civil society association. One of the interviewees lived in a neighboring municipality, but commuted into the rural town for work. The three participants in the focus group came from Palestine, Finland, and Sweden. While the focus group was supposed to consist of six people, two declined in the last minute, and one never showed up. The interviews, and the focus group, were all conducted in various venues at or around the central library.

The participant observation took place around lunch and in the early afternoon around the main square in the urban center, and in the natural preserve. In the former were multiple commercial functions (an ATM, a pharmacy, some restaurants, and a bar), a public transportation hub for regional transports, and a large playground with an outdoors gym. In the natural preserve were a beach, a campsite, and a hiking trail. At the campsite were some commercial functions, most importantly two information centers that doubled as supermarkets and cafés. These were the two most visited parts in the locality, and the ones that the interviewees suggested as places where interactions might take place. The interviewees did not know of any place where interactions between post-2014 migrants and long-term residents *in particular* were especially common. The observations were split between the holiday period in July-august and the working period in early June. As the rural town is a destination for international nature tourism, the difference was very evident in the natural preserve. By contrast, the holiday period saw the city center become mostly empty.

Social interactions and individual attitudes

The participants in the focus group discussion and in the individual interviews stressed the ambiguous effects that the municipality's small size had on the prospects for integration. On

one hand, many people described the positive, closely personal experiences they had had at work, in meeting their neighbors, and so on. Describing the atmosphere at the industrial plant, an interviewee argued, "You can find that at some places, how people speak about immigrant guys behave, how they act, how they don't want to develop themselves. I haven't noticed that here" (loc. 2, interview 5). Whereas the interviewee had encountered co-workers that saw migrants as lazy and undeserving, they found the industrial plant to be a place where everyone was treated equally.

Outside of the workplace, the interviewees and focus group participants noted that it was difficult to meet people at all, owing to the lack of proper meeting places. None of the interviewees described receiving help from civil society associations when they first entered the country. A middle-aged woman recalled, "for nearly a month I was all by myself. I am a person who is always helping others, but when I needed help I could not find anything, not anyone" (loc. 2, Interview 1).

The participants in the focus group argued that there are only two things to do for those who want to make new contacts: find employment, join civil society associations, or join organized sports. As one participant in the focus group noted,

> "There are no natural meeting places. If you arrive to [locality 2] and want
> to be a part of society, then it is through employment. If you are not active
> in sports club activities, then it is a different thing" (focus group, locality 2).

The way the participants discuss the issue of employment highlights the link between economic and social integration. While fundamentally a means of becoming self-sufficient, employment was also crucial for migrants to access social networks. In the focus group, the participants drew on experiences from the labor migration wave of the 1960s, discussing how large numbers of Finnish men could become integrated into the local community through repeated encounters at the industrial plant. By contrast, the interviewees saw contemporary integration as much more problematic, owing to higher thresholds for entering the industrial workforce, and to the growing diversity of the migrant population.

The interviewees noted multiple obstacles to entering the workforce. They argued that the municipality was not doing enough to help migrants in need. While there were "improvements for the first four years [after the refugee crisis], these haven't continued. Now it's worse. There are many that move out because there are no job opportunities" (loc. 2, interview 2). Other obstacles to enter the workforce included a lack of language acquisition and elements of discrimination among other employers. A middle-aged woman from Syria recalled how she had handed out hundreds of CVs before finding her first employment. Importantly, some interviewees did not recognize their difficulties as the result of racism, but of a highly competitive labor market. In meeting such demands, one interviewee related how he would organize private meetings with potential bosses, even before he had managed to learn Swedish (loc. 2, Interview 5). Another interviewee related his success in the labor market to

the personal relations he managed to develop vis-à-vis teachers during his time in adult education (loc. 2, interview 2).

Aside from employment, some migrants could also find support in informal support networks. For instance, a large number of Syrian migrants were organized in the youth chapter of one of the local parties. Syrian families were also connected through a common Whatsapp group, where they could ask each other for help with bureaucracy, with finding employment, with housing, or with more mundane problems ("whenever someone is losing their keys", loc. 2, interview 4). There was also a Palestinian organization, organized on the regional level, which used to organize parties and holiday celebrations. By contrast, civil society associations and support networks that included long-term residents were largely absent from the data, reflecting the small size of local civil society overall.

The interviewees recounted some experiences of encountering racism. As already mentioned, some experienced discrimination in applying for jobs. Most, however, encountered racism in informal settings. One woman reflects on the many encounters that she has had, where strangers question her right to stay in Sweden: "I meet a lot of people that are very cruel to me, but I always give them a straight answer. I always tell them, no, I'm not just receiving money from the government. I work here. I pay taxes. I take my salary and I spend it here, I don't send it anywhere." Others told stories of how they getting spat on, or meeting strangers that would spontaneously spout racist abuse. Importantly however, those that had experienced racism in the workplace or at school found that they received proper help and support from the staff, from their bosses, and from co-workers. However, that did not necessarily solve the problem:

> "I was bullied by a Swedish girl. […] I never understood why. We had never met or spoken before, and all of a sudden she just came up behind me. It was the same when I was in fifth grade. There was this group of girls who came up to me and pulled on it [points to her headscarf]. After that, I got a staff member who would follow me around, all the time, in the entire school building, on all the breaks. It was terrible" (loc. 2, interview 4)

Despite encounters with racism, most of the interviewees stated that they would like to remain in the rural town in Blekinge. They enjoyed the calm, and they believed that most people were kind and welcoming. The one exception, a young woman, could not wait to move, as she longed for

> "a big city, with new people, with somewhere to go. This town is so small, we only have the natural preserve and the playground… I want some action in my life. […] If my mother moved out of here, I would never return" (loc. 2, interview 4).

In nearly all the interviews, the lack of meeting places and things to do was presented as the second obstacle to meaningful integration. However, there were also signs of functional and spatial segregation. According to the field notes from the participant observation, these

modes of segregation are visible both in the recreational area and in the city center. In the latter, the public library, with a small service center in the lobby, represents an example of functional segregation, i.e. where different groups occupy the same places, but do very different things there:

> "In the early hours of my observations, older men occupied the newspaper reading area, whereas groups of people speaking foreign languages (Polish, Arabic, etc.) consulted the service desk for help with various bureaucratic errands. Sometimes, groups of teenagers would stop by the seating area to charge their phones. In the library, a small stream of people came and went to leave or borrow books, while boys in their lower teens hung around to play online games at the public computers" (field notes by author, loc. 2).

There were also some signs of spatial segregation within the city center. As one of the interviewees noted, "the municipality, when they give you an apartment, they make sure that everyone ends up in the same place. […] We get no contacts with Swedes, and the Swedes know nothing about us" (loc. 2, interview 4).

Spatial and functional segregation combined in the area around the natural preserve:

> "In my interviews, many post-2014 migrants spoke dearly of the natural preserve as their favorite part of the municipality. I was therefore surprised to find the location to be so predominantly white. At the beach or in the preserve, there was hardly anyone who would not pass as Northern European. The crowd spoke a mixture of Dutch, Danish, French, Norwegian, German and Swedish. The mix of languages was mirrored in the registration plates on the caravans and mobile homes, which read Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Germany, Poland, and so on and so forth. In other words, while the crowd was certainly international, their backgrounds seemed to be limited largely to the north-western tip of Europe." (field notes by author, loc. 2)

> As I left the beach and canoe rental area on my final day of observations, I noted a large group of Arabic-speaking young men in sportswear, diving and swimming from the grassy field at the top of the lake. I also see a lone woman wearing a hijab, and multiple older men sitting by themselves with fishing rods. Whether related to the time of day (early evening), or the fact that this area is separate from the campsite and beach, the area's margins appear to be slightly different from its center" (field notes by author, loc. 2)."

The sites where there seemed to be the most promise for interaction were the bus stop and the playground. These were places where many different groups of people come to meet similar demands (transportation, on one hand, playing with their children, on the other). However, even in these places, people very seldom spoke to each other. If anything, they exchanged glances or some small word. Maintaining these patters of (non-)interaction

seemed to be all the more easy given the vast spaces that exist in the locality, as there is seldom need to compete or collaborate for some particular plaything (in the playground) or seat (on the bus).

Still, there were some moments where it was clear that intergroup interactions took place. Observing interactions at a café in the city center, the observer noted:

> *"For the most part, I share the area with two parties: a group of Swedish speaking adults, presumably coming from the same workplace (judging from their conversation), and a mixed-language and mixed-age group having beers and coffee in the shade of a parasol. After a while, I start noticing how porous the boundaries of the latter group really are. First, a man who has been drinking beers and energy drinks at his own table since before I arrived, is invited to sit down. A little later, a middle-aged man and his (presumed) son arrive at the table to meet someone in the group. Later joined by a younger man, the people at the table shift between speaking Italian, Arabic, Finnish, and Swedish. At least an hour after I've left, they're still there. As for the other groups in the café, their boundaries appear to be as fixed when they leave as they were when they arrived. The pattern was much the same during my second day of observations"* (field notes by author, loc. 2).

Summary

The participants in the materials from the rural town in Blekinge were torn in their experiences of integration in the area. On one hand, they are mostly pleased with their interactions with Swedes and other long-term natives. On the other hand, they find a general lack of meeting places, making it crucial for individual migrants to find employment or join civil society associations. Obstacles to these solutions were the high barriers of entry into the main workplace, some signs of discrimination, and a lack of organized activities (particularly with local support). Overall, this meant that there existed very few channels through which the individual migrant could find contacts among long-term residents, and it put very high demands on individual initiatives. The lack of channels – particularly to the labor market – combined with the lack of communications to neighboring and larger localities – a basic spatial factor – to encourage further migration out of the locality. As in most other localities, however, this all happened in a political context that was largely supportive of migrants, but where local residents and local government did not complement their verbal and symbolic support with actual initiatives and policies. Instead, migrants' founded support networks among each other, and largely relied on within-group contacts and personal initiatives to find channels into the labor market.

Locality 3: medium-sized town in Jönköping

Overview

Locality 3 is a medium-sized town in the region of Jönköping. A type A municipality, its economy and population are rapidly expanding. Before the studied period, the municipality as a whole had a long history of migration, and a large settlement of asylum seekers and recognized refugees. Responding to increasing signs of residential segregation in the years even before the "refugee crisis," the municipal government has used a wide variety of instruments to "balance" settlement across different neighborhoods. The two primary instruments are the construction of "transitional housing" for recognized refugees in areas with small proportions of migrants, mainly outside of the urban center, and the withholding of financial aid for asylum seekers that choose to settle in any of the municipality's "vulnerable" neighborhoods. Regardless, the municipality still scores very high on different segregation indices, and residential segregation remains a central topic in interviews with long-term residents, public officials, and post-2014 migrants.

Locality 3 has a large urban center, with multiple shopping streets, restaurants, residential areas, recreational areas, and so on. In the middle is a collective transportation hub with buses and trains connecting the urban center to surrounding neighborhoods and the wider region. To the South and to the Northeast are three high-rise neighborhoods with large proportions of migrant residents. All three areas are well connected by public transportation, and there are bike lanes running to the city center. Between the urban center and the residential areas on the Northeast route is a beach and park area with multiple restaurants, cafés, sport facilities, as well as extensive public areas.

The medium-sized town has a tradition of mixed municipal majorities. During the refugee crisis, the municipal majority consisted of the center-right "alliance" (The Conservative party, the Christian democrats, the Center party, and the Liberal party). After the 2018 elections, the majority shifted to a centrist coalition with the Social Democrats as the biggest party. In all elections during the 2010s, the SD has performed worse in locality 3 than in the country as a whole.

The medium-sized town in Jönköping has an active and diverse civil society, with a wide variety of organizations supporting migrants. Many of these associations come from Pentecostal and other Protestant churches and congregations, but there are also multiple Muslim associations, associations for Syrian and Afghan nationals, and left-wing organizations with anti-racist or pro-migrant profiles. Based on interviews, the municipal associational registry, and media reporting, there are about 50 individual associations that offer some type of services specifically for migrants (e.g. language cafés, tutoring, sports activities). Some of these associations meet regularly in municipality-sponsored integration and civil society network meetings. A full list of relevant civil society associations is attached as part of Annex II.

Pro-migrant, anti-racist, and anti-migrant mobilizations have occurred throughout the period. The Christian churches have been particularly active, participating in protests against restrictive national migration policies and against individual deportations. Various migrants' associations protested the closure of the town's reception center in 2015, deportations of Afghan nationals in 2016 and 2017, and in solidarity with peoples affected by conflicts in Lebanon, Libya, Bosnia-Hercegovina and Ukraine. In these and similar protests, left-wing associations and representatives from center-left and center-right mainstream parties sometimes joined the migrants' associations and churches.

The medium-sized town in Jönköping has also been the scene of persistent and diverse anti-migrant protest (Annex II). Before the elections of 2014, the town saw multiple clashes between anti-racist counter-protesters and the neo-Nazi SvP. In subsequent years, the NMR has rallied on multiple occasions. In 2022, Danish-Swedish radical right activist Rasmus Paludan performed a public Quran burning in a neighborhood with a large Muslim population. Unlike in many other towns during the same period, the burning did not result in clashes between counter-protesters and the police. Instead, the Christian and Muslim congregations in the area, along with local businesses and sports associations, staged a silent counter-demonstration on the site.

Detailed overview of fieldwork

The participant observation and individual interviews in locality 3 all occurred during one week before midsummer's Eve, in mid-June 2022. The focus group took place in late May. The fieldwork resulted in four interviews with a total of six post-2014 migrants coming from Syria, Afghanistan, Turkey, and Palestine, and one focus group with six participants (three long-term residents and three post-2014 migrants) born in Sweden, Turkey, and Syria. The participants were recruited through contacts during former work packages, through social media groups, and – for the individual interviews – through snowballing after the focus group discussion. While the researcher had originally scheduled in-depth interviews with eight people, two had to cancel on short notice. The long-term residents that took part in the focus group discussion were –or had been – part of Christian congregations and the Red Cross.

The participant observation focused on the pedestrian street in the eastern half of the urban center, and on the public beach and park area that connects the urban center to the residential areas in the northeast. In the former are many different stores, restaurants, and some free seating areas (e.g. benches, small green areas), as well as the central public transportation hub. The public beach and park area is described more closely above. In both locations, the researcher carried out observations on weekdays around lunchtime (11–14) and in the early evening (19–22). Likely owing to the fact that the schools and universities hade gone on summer holidays a week before, both locations were relatively crowded even in the late evenings. In the daytime, on the other hand, the majority of the users appeared to be professionals going out for lunch or lunchtime errands.

Social interactions and individual attitudes

The focus group participants and the individual interviewees gave an ambivalent account of the possibilities for interaction with long-term residents. In the focus group, the participants spoke highly of civil society associations, which they believe have been – and remained – welcoming and committed to maintaining good relations with migrants. These experiences, however, were specific to those migrants who have managed to actually come in contact with such organizations and associations. While no group reported any hostile interactions, they did suggest that many long-term residents appeared indifferent or showed no interest in making meaningful interactions. Beyond the lack of interest, the participants mentioned three more general obstacles to intergroup contacts. These related to differences in labor market participation, age, and residential segregation.

The most common obstacle that the participants experienced was exclusion from the labor market. Those interviewees that had managed to find employment noted their reliance on labor market programs or committed managers. One interviewee, who had arrived as an unaccompanied minor, described how he had managed to find a job through his family home. Most others described going back and forth between short-term contracts, many of which in unqualified positions, organized through labor market activation and labor market training programs. A trained architect, who worked in home care at the time of the interview, described the stress and humiliation she felt in relation to the labor market:

> "We miss our home country, but Sweden is good for us as a family. To feel good in Sweden means to have a job. And for us, that means having a good job. We can survive on the jobs we have at the moment, but it's not my profession… [the interviewee starts crying] […] It's constant stress. Employment, residence permit, citizenship." (loc. 3, interview 5)

Notably, the person cited above was far from isolated, with wide-ranging commitments in civil society associations, and a personal network that spanned churchgoers, other migrants, and long-term residents in the municipality and its surrounding region. As such, her story magnified the importance of finding qualified and steady employment as a means to achieve a sense of belonging in a new society.

The difficulty of finding employment tied in with differences in age and geography. A young migrant woman, living in a village outside of the urban center, reflects on these issues, describing the loneliness of village life as well as her positive interactions with that village's largely elderly civil society. Like many other interviewees from the same municipality, and in the dataset as a whole, she described the long-term residents' attitudes as indifferent rather than hostile:

> "In the afternoons I go out for walks around the lakes, or in the forest. That's really all! I do hardly anything. If I were in my home country I would do so many things. I can't understand how people pass their time in Sweden. […]

In this village, I'm lucky, because I can speak to the elder people. When I go into the city, I can't speak to anyone, not to young people. I fear they will criticize me, that they will be prejudiced. […] They will just look at me, not talk to me. But when I meet an older person, they usually talk to me" (loc. 3, interview 1)

The spatial dimension is most evident in discussions of residential segregation. In the focus group, the participants noted, "entire days can go by where I feel like I am in my home country", and how "our children can go to school for several years before they meet a Swedish person". Unlike adults, however, who can only count on employment to breach this pattern of spatial and social segregation, most adolescents could still count on coming into contact with more diverse networks once they reached upper secondary school (gymnasium). Residential segregation thereby delays the integrating effect that preschools and primary school was suggested to have in some of the other municipalities, altering the relationship between integration and age.

The problem of residential segregation ultimately circled back to the issue of employment. For those that were living in the surrounding villages, the lack of public transport made it difficult to find and keep jobs, to make progress in adult education, and to save up money for better and more central housing. More prominently for those living in the areas around the urban center, residential segregation and deficient contacts with public agencies (particularly the employment agency) made it so migrants had to rely on each other for information about labor market resources, welfare services, and employment opportunities. The reliance on information from other migrants caused a proliferation of rumors and incorrect instructions, which in turn meant that many migrants missed access to services that the municipality and civil society associations would otherwise provide (focus group, locality 3).

Residential segregation and the lack of intergroup contacts were both visible during the participant observation. Stretching from the city center toward areas with large concentrations of migrant residents to the northeast, the public beach also traced gradual changes in the makeup of its visitors. Whereas the westernmost part was close to all white and Swedish speaking, the crowd became increasingly more diverse toward its eastern end. Regardless, the groups that stayed there were internally homogeneous, sharing languages and group styles. To the extent that group boundaries were broken, it was only in conjunction with sports activities, as groups of young men joined for games of multi-lingual football or basketball (field notes by author, loc. 3).

Summary

The fieldwork in the medium-sized town in Jönköping showed the centrality of residential segregation as an obstacle for inter-group relations. More than in any other locality, this basic spatial factor limited social contacts between migrants and long-term residents, exacerbating more general patterns related to political and governance indifference, and to the high barriers of entry into the labor market. Underscoring the sense of distance that characterized

the interviewees' experiences was the lack of any expressions of hostility vis-à-vis individual migrants or against the migrant group as a whole. On the contrary, those migrants who had managed to establish contacts with civil society associations and long-term residents did mention a sense of welcoming and solidarity.

Locality 4: Small town in Gävleborg

Overview

Locality 4 is a medium-sized town in the region of Gävleborg. It is a type D municipality, meaning that it combines economic and demographic decline with a lower level of immigration before the studied period. Unlike the rural town in Blekinge, locality 4 has no dominant private company. Instead, the municipal administration and municipal welfare services are by far the largest employers. Although the municipality reports a shortage of attainable rental housing, the interviewees did not report any difficulties in finding apartments. There are no reports of residential segregation within the urban center. However, the interviewees report that migrants are scarce in the single-household, homeowner areas on the margins of the urban center and in its surrounding villages.

The urban center in locality 4 has basic services including public agencies and service centers, two shopping malls, restaurants, multiple bars, a football arena, a church, and a mosque. On the shoreline, on the edge of the center, is a boardwalk that connects the center to residential and recreational areas to the north. Further north is a large public beach containing a campsite, two restaurants, a playground and some sports facilities. The public beach is connected to the city center by public transportation and an uninterrupted bike lane. Between the beach and the center, however, are an industrial park, an expensive homeowners' neighborhood, and a vacation home area.

In locality 4, a close network of civil society associations and municipal officials have developed around the issue of migrant integration, particularly with a focus on unaccompanied youths (see Annex II). This network has collaborated to organize language cafés, broker employment for unaccompanied migrant youths, and find housing for asylum seekers. Aside from this network, the locality also hosts a large Muslim association, which organizes members from the municipality and surrounding region. In recent years, the association has collaborated with the municipal agencies to provide information about welfare services, about the elections, and other topics. Notably, however, the municipality's involvement in integration has declined over the years, in response to declining numbers of new migrants and state funds.

The high level of activity within civil society also translates into a relatively active protest arena. The civil society associations have also organized protests against racism, racist organizations and national asylum policy on a yearly basis since before the beginning of the studied period. However, the majority of protest mobilizations in the period have targeted national asylum and migration policies (Annex II).

In contrast to the vital pro-migrant networks in the locality, there has been relatively limited mobilization against migrants during the studied period. The sole exception is the neo-Nazi NMR, which has organized rallies, handed out flyers, and made symbolic threats against municipal authorities with some frequency throughout the period. However, these protests have not connected to local events, and it is not possible to discern any wider mobilization coming out of the NMR activities. Likewise, the SD has performed more poorly in the municipal elections than they have done in the country as a whole. In different coalitions, this has allowed the Social Democrats to rule the municipal council across the entire period.

Detailed overview of fieldwork

Fieldwork in the medium sized town in Gävleborg took place at the end of July 2022, in addition to the focus group in May. The interview material consists of six interviews with a total of eight post-2014 migrants with backgrounds in Yemen, Jordan, Iraq and Afghanistan, in addition to a focus group with four migrants and four long-term residents, born in Sweden, Afghanistan, and Eritrea. Most of the interviewees were members of – or had been associated with – either of the municipality's civil society networks. Some were members of multiple associations at once. The participants ranged between 20 and 70 years in age. Whereas all long-term residents were women, all except one of the post-2014 migrants were men.

The participant observation took place in the urban center and on the public beach on the north margin of the center (described above). The researcher conducted one observation in the urban center in conjunction with the focus group in May, and the three remaining rounds during the fieldwork trip in July. During the fieldwork trip, there was a festival by the boardwalk in the urban center. Therefore, the point of gravity shifted from the main pedestrian street (where most people were in May) to the boardwalk for the second round of observation. However, the researcher included observations from both areas during both occasions. The observations were made at around lunchtime (11–14) and in the late afternoon-early evening (15–19) on one weekday and one Sunday. During the fieldwork, at the height of the Swedish summer holidays and during a local festival, there was no discernable difference in behavior or attendance between weekdays and the weekend.

Social interactions and individual attitudes

The interviewees in the small town in Gävleborg describe largely positive experiences of initiating and maintaining interactions with long-term residents. The interviewees' mention the value of active collaboration between the municipality and various civil society associations, for brokering contacts between migrants, the labor market, and wider social networks. With regard to the contacts between the municipality and the regional Muslim association, the interviewees also mention the value of creating more trusting relationships between migrants and society at large. These contacts have allowed the interviewees to find employment, and thus to deepen their relations with other long-term residents. What is more, those interviewees who had arrived to Sweden with prior professional experience had mostly been able to find employment in appropriate sectors.

The large representation of unaccompanied minors among the focus group participants and in the individual interviews meant that many reflected on their experiences in the Swedish education system. Overall, the interviewees were critical toward the possibilities for integration in school. On a structural level, the focus group participants saw how minor patterns of residential segregation translated into differences of group composition between primary schools. At the individual level, many interviewees noted the difficulties of getting to know native Swedish youths. These difficulties, the participants argued, stemmed from the Swedes' indifference, as well as their lack of understanding of the migrants' situation and experiences. The interviewees also recalled classmates that had spoken poorly of migrants and migration. One young adult reflected on the difficulties of interacting with young vis-à-vis older Swedes:

> *"I was living in a family home, with four children and grandchildren. I tried to hang out with them, but I just can't. I don't know why. I mean, with their children. It's easier to talk to those who are older. Maybe they can understand our situation more easily. Why we come here, why we work here, maybe they can understand those things more easily than others. I think most people of my age, who are foreigners, have more contacts with older Swedes. It's just so hard. I mean, I've gone to secondary school, and I tried to make friends. It just didn't work." (loc. 4, interview 2)*

Protracted asylum processes made for another obstacle against integration. For unaccompanied minors in particular, the requirement of finding steady employment no matter the conditions, as well as sequences of rejections and appeals (with periods of living underground), meant migrants were faced with a lack of time, a lack of stability, and, not least, a lack of money.

> *"Let me put it like this… Swedish youths, they might think it's ok not to chase yourself to death to get a job, a home, to send money to your family back home. They can be like 'I'll go to university, I'll have fun.' […] If I go to a party with other people my age, I can see them drinking their own beers, buying their own alcohol, wearing good clothes, good haircuts, and so on. We're like 'ok, we have one pair of pants, one pair of shoes, one shirt. It makes you feel vulnerable, makes you feel poor.'" (loc. 4, int. 2)*

Outside of the school system, the interviewees noted some experiences of encountering open racism and xenophobia among strangers and co-workers. A young woman recalled a stranger that had let his dog loose on her (loc. 4, int. 3). A young man described the pride he felt every time his (migrant) friend dared speak up against racist abusers on the bus and on the street (int. 3). Others felt disillusionment: "It's really hard. As a minority, we can't really do anything. I only believe in mutual respect" (loc. 4, int. 2).

Social interactions differed in time and space. The landscape shifted dramatically between the two rounds of participant observation in the spring and in the late summer. During the motor

festival, interactions within and between groups were frequent, crowds were tight, and there were generally very large numbers of people occupying public space. At the same time, this pattern appeared to be specific to the city center. In the same period, the crowd at the beach was strikingly homogeneous, and there were very few visible inter-group interactions. Between the two sites, however, there were two factors that likely contributed to these differences. First, there were obvious differences in spatial access. Whereas the city center is located in between several neighborhoods with rental housing, the beach is located practically in the middle of nowhere. Walking there took me 40 minutes, and the bus only left once every hour. Those who did live close to the beach appeared to be of some affluence. Second, there appeared to be economic boundaries. This was especially visible in the city center, where the crowd was most homogenous outside of the seating areas (e.g. in the marina), and in the seating areas once the cafés and restaurants had closed. These were the moments and locations where it was possible could hear the largest number of languages, were the age-balance skewed young, and so on and so forth (field notes by author, loc. 4).

Summary

The interviewees in the small town in Gävleborg have mostly positive experiences of initiating and maintaining interactions with long-term residents, particularly on the labor market and among civil society associations. Further, they find that the networks that exist between the municipality, civil society associations, and society have been of great help in creating these conditions for interaction. Nevertheless, the participants also note multiple experiences of hostile interactions with natives, and great difficulties in interacting with younger long-term residents. Minor patterns of residential segregation, and the difficulties related to the asylum process, exacerbate these difficulties. Through participant observation, it is also possible to note spatial and economic boundaries in differences in the use of public space.

From a theoretical point of view, the narratives from the small town in Gävleborg clearly show how political and governance factors can impact – positively and negatively – on migrants' chances of successful economic and social integration. In contrast to the other cases, the migrants interviewed in the locality illustrated the value of a strong local civil society, particularly with ties to individuals in positions of power. At the same time, the reliance on individuals within the municipal organization also suggests the potential fragility of governance factors in a context where the overall political climate is mostly passive vis-à-vis the migrant population in general. Further, it reveals the gatekeeping functions that civil society associations can and often do perform. While the Islamic association and the refugee support associations did crucial work for their members and target groups, non-members (in the case of the Islamic association), and adult migrants (in the latter case) were not granted the same support. In these cases, the individual migrant was likely to have to rely more on personal skills and experiences in order to break through into a largely indifferent community.

Locality 5: Small town in Dalarna

Overview

Locality 5 is a small town in Dalarna. A type A municipality, it has an improving socioeconomic and demographic profile, after several years of decline before the studied period. The site of two major industrial employers, the locality has a long history of labor immigration. In the years around 2015, it was also one of the largest per capita receivers of asylum seekers and recognized refugees in all of Sweden, with multiple reception centers and homes for recognized refugees in the urban center and the surrounding dwellings.

Locality 5 has a small urban center, extending into a large countryside with multiple dwellings and villages. On all ends, the urban center is flanked with recreational forest areas and industrial facilities. Within the center itself is a main pedestrian street with two hotels, some restaurants, and a bar. There is also a shopping mall, a public library, and two small squares. Unlike in the other cases, there is no obvious public meeting place (e.g. a park or a beach). For this reason, the rationale behind the choice of sites for the participant observation looked different in locality 5 than in the other fieldwork locations (see below).

Despite its small size, locality 5 struggles with residential segregation within the urban center, and between the urban center and the surrounding areas. Within the urban center, the migrant population is largely concentrated to two blocks of rental high rises, both located about two kilometers east of the center. In some of the surrounding dwellings, private landlords have rented out stock to socioeconomically vulnerable groups, many of them redirected from municipalities in the Stockholm area – a practice the local authorities describe as "social dumping" (see Lundstedt et al. 2022a). What makes this situation possible is the locality's rare excess of rental housing.

The municipality in locality 5 is a traditional stronghold for the Social Democrats. In the past two mandate periods, the Social Democrats have led the municipal council through budget coalitions with center-left (2014-2018) and center-right (2018-2022) parties. The SD has performed worse than in the country as a whole, although it managed to become the third biggest party in the 2022 elections.

Along with much of Southern Dalarna, locality 5 is a main hub for Swedish neo-Nazi mobilization. Since before the 2014 elections, the NMR in particular has maintained an active presence in the municipality, campaigning for seats in local government in 2018 and 2022. The organization has also threatened public servants, mobilized supporters at local schools, and held multiple centrally organized demonstrations in the locality. Aside from the events listed in Annex II, the NMR organized more than 200 flyer handouts, poster actions, and so on. The organization's activities intensified particularly around the 2018 elections.

The NMR's presence is visible in the mobilization of civil society associations, which have focused primarily on anti-racist issues. In doing so, left-wing organizations, religious organizations, migrants' associations, private businesses and the municipal government have

collaborated in organizing information events as well as counter-protests on a frequent basis. Mobilization against asylum and migration legislation, and initiatives in support of refugees has been less frequent, although this has also involved support from the municipal government.

At the time of fieldwork, the Red Cross and the Baptist church both organized language cafés, and the municipality's integration coordinator held meetings with pro-migrant and migrants' associations in order to coordinate activities and to identify needs. Notably, the municipality's commitment to integration and to civil society collaboration has decreased in the last years, owing to a lack of state funding and a general reorganization of integration services toward labor market activation.

Detailed overview of fieldwork

Fieldwork in locality 5 took place at the end of August 2022, in addition to the focus group in May. The fieldwork data consists of one focus group with a total of seven participants (three post-2014 migrants and four long-term residents), born in Afghanistan, Eritrea and Sweden, as well as individual interviews with two post-2014 migrants from Syria and Afghanistan. One prospective interviewee cancelled their appointment shortly before the scheduled time. Another declined with reference to her language skills. Overall, the timing made it difficult to find interviewees, as many had not yet returned to Sweden after their summer holidays. The interviewees were recruited through contacts in local civil society associations. The researcher also attempted to find participants through other associations, through contacts from the focus group, and through local social media.

Unlike in the other localities, the participant observation focused on a single area between the two squares on the main street. However, whereas the first two observations were made in "normal" times, i.e. at lunchtime and in the late afternoon on one weekend and on one weekday, the second pair of observations took place during a local festival at the very last weekend of August. Between the two were such significant differences in attendance and in behavior that they qualify as distinct spaces. Aside from taking advantage of the festival, the choice of fieldwork sites also reflects an accommodation of the lack of public gathering spots in the locality.

Social interactions and individual attitudes

The overarching theme in the interviews and in the focus groups was residential segregation. Residential segregation, according to the interviewees, had consequences for the intensity of contacts between migrants and Swedes, and for the decline of trust between groups. The participants also noted the indirect effects of residential segregation on group composition in preschools and primary schools. Combined these factors made it practically difficult for migrants and long-term residents to meet, and it increased inequalities in language acquisition and employment opportunities. Looking ahead, the participants in the focus group feared the development of organized criminality in "segregated areas", akin to "the situation in bigger cities like Malmö, Gothenburg and Stockholm" (focus group, locality 5).

Even without residential segregation, a crucial obstacle to integration is the high barrier of entry into the local, tech-focused labor market. One interviewee notes, "if you don't have an education, you cannot find a job in this town" (loc. 5, interview 1). While some had managed to find employment with some of the big industrial manufacturers, they experienced that they had received positions where there were no native Swedes or long-term residents. The workplaces were functionally segregated, in the sense that Swedes and other categories of migrants occupied higher positions, while migrants with refugee backgrounds worked "on the bottom". For one middle-aged interviewee, the failure to meet any native Swedish speakers, had led him to resign from his job despite the risk of returning to long-term unemployment (loc. 5, interview 1).

The interviewees stressed the experience of deficient adult language training. Several participants in the focus group reported waiting for multiple months to enter the Swedish-language program, while others mentioned floating within the program for multiple months without results, a lack of competent teachers, and too little emphasis on the spoken language. A long-term resident, working in adult education, adds a note on the poor coordination of the program, and its consequences for individual migrants:

> "As a migrant today, you go to a course for a while, then you go home, sit around, wait for another course. It's a bit back and forth like that. […] Many people I knew ten years ago, they know less Swedish now than they did back then. And that really shows there is a lack of planning in the municipality" (loc. 5, interview 1)

Employees in adult education saw the immediate consequences of insufficient programs, both with regard to language and civic orientation. One of the participants in the focus group noted how these problems reinforce obstacles to integration:

> I see this all the time in my workplace. If someone who doesn't know the language gets a rejection because they haven't understood the requirement – who is supposed to help with the appeal, with understanding the decision…? […] Someone like you, you have the solution, because you have all these Swedish friends you can call!" (focus group, locality 5)

Insufficient language skills and a lack of labor market access combined with a general hesitance among long-term residents to take and maintain contacts with migrants. As one participant in the focus group, a post-2014 migrant from Eritrea, noted, "I've lived in this apartment for 7 years now, and it is really difficult to communicate. You say good day, they say good day, and it never goes beyond that" (focus group, locality 5). A long-term resident interjected, stating,

> "There has to be some interest from the Swedes… and I don't see that. If I look at myself, I don't have time. I go to work, play with my kids, tend my garden, and go to church. I don't do so much. But if I look at my colleagues, no one has migrant friends. People are just being too comfortable. […] So

> *that's one thing, that swedes must be more interested." (Focus group,*
> *locality 5)*

The interviewees lauded civil society associations, particularly the Baptist church and the Red Cross, for providing some opportunities for meaningful contacts between migrants and long-term residents. Creating interfaces in the form of language cafés and cultural events, these organizations had managed to establish some ties between groups. These organizations hadalso been able to help resolve problems with public agencies, and compensate for insufficient adult education:

> *I studied Swedish for six years, and I still can't speak or write very good. My*
> *daughter did it for one year, and now she's finished. Her husband did the*
> *same. I've stayed for six years, and I can't finish it. They got jobs as well. I*
> *don't know anything. So I've really struggled. Everyday I go to school, and*
> *every Tuesday I go to the language café. I'm a seamstress, so I've never had*
> *to study, but now… […] I would want to have more SFI. Now I study at*
> *Brunnsvik, but it's so difficult. I have to learn two languages at once. I really*
> *struggle to learn Swedish and English… and math." (focus group, locality 5).*

Despite the municipality's intense recent history of neo-Nazi mobilization, the interviewees did not report any experiences of racism, xenophobia or hostility in their interactions with long-term residents. When asked about the NMR, one interviewee answers (in past tense),

> *"I saw them a couple of times. But they never did anything. They would just*
> *come and protest or something. They have signs and… no, it's nothing.*
> *nothing dangerous. They are actually pretty decent. I met three people who*
> *were very racist against migrants, but once you talk to them, they have some*
> *good sides." (loc. 5, interview 1)*

This interview response differs prominently from the responses that the researchers received from civil society associations, policymakers and local officials. Among the latter, several interviewees had direct experiences of threat and harassment from the organization.[5] Hence, the answer should be seen as an extreme example of how direct experiences of harassment and hostility could be rare despite the presence of a highly mobilized radical right organization in the locality.

At the festival, and in the city center in general, indifference was more pronounced than segregation. Whereas the city center was quite diverse in terms of group composition, there were very few intergroup contacts. This also related to the fact that few people ever sat down or otherwise *stayed* in the city center for longer periods of time, with the exception of the cafes' outdoors seating areas. With the exception of senior citizens, who would meet with

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[5] see Lundstedt et al. (2022a).

some regularity right in the middle of the street, most people were either passing through or making errands at the supermarket or at some of the stores. On the wooden deck at one of the central squares, parties would always maintain at least a few meters of distance between them (field notes by author, loc. 5).

Summary

The interviewees main concerns revolved around residential segregation and the high barriers of entry to the local labor market. Spatial factors exacerbated challenges that had surfaced in other areas, as it kept migrants and long-term residents apart, cut off migrants from labor market contacts, and contributed to the presentation of migrants as a political problem. If migrants managed to surmount the very high thresholds that surrounded the skills-intensive local labor market, they found secondary patterns of segregation, where migrants with refugee backgrounds were largely separated from long-term residents and highly skilled labor migrants.

On a more general level, insufficient adult education posed an obstacle to meaningful interactions within and outside the workplace. In order to make contacts and to improve their language skills, many migrants instead went through civil society associations, particularly the Baptist church and the Red Cross. Notably for a town with a large neo-Nazi presence, the participants report few experiences of outright racism and hostility in their interactions with long-term residents. In combination, these findings suggest a high degree of indifference, rather than hostility, in long-term residents' and local institutions' encounters and engagement with post-2014 migrants. From a political and from a governance perspective, this indifference placed an immense pressure on the individual migrants' personality, prior skills and experiences, and ability to create and maintain private networks.

Locality 6: Medium-sized town in Gävleborg

Overview

Locality 6 is a medium-sized town in the region of Gävleborg. A type C municipality, it combines a declining economy and a stagnant population growth with a long history of immigration. As a regional center, it has a diverse labor market with multiple private companies and public sector agencies. However, it has a growing unemployment rate, and a serious housing shortage. Although the arrival of recognized refugees peaked already in 2014, the municipality currently has large concentrations of migrants settled in two rental-housing neighborhoods located about 3 km to the north and to the south of the city center. Despite signs of residential segregation, the topic is not particularly salient in the interviews or as an object of local integration policy.

The geography of locality 6 gravitates around a large urban center with two broad, perpendicular pedestrian avenues. In the middle of the urban center is a collective transportation hub with buses going to the north and south ends of the center. Along the avenues are many different shops, restaurants and bars, hotels, and two shopping malls. At the collective transportation hub, and outside the main shopping malls, are two squares with large outdoors seating areas, public monuments, and free seating. On the west end of the city center is an extensive public park area with cafés, a small beach, an outdoors gym, and a large playground.

The municipal government in the medium-sized town in Gävleborg is traditionally social democratic. In recent years, the social democrats have ruled in collaboration with center-left coalitions. For two years during the 2014-2018 period, however, the Conservative party managed to replace the Social Democratic majority by brokering support from the SD. This was possible owing to the electoral strength of the SD, which has been close to the national average all through the 2010s.

Locality 6 has a wide range of civil society associations working to support migrants and to combat racism. Some of these associations come out of prior waves of migration (e.g. multiple Somali, Kurdish and Iraqi associations), while others were formed in response to particular mobilizations. Among the latter, a 2012 hunger strike among Iraqi asylum seekers were a large cause for mobilization. Unlike in locality 2, the majority of the relevant associations do not come out of religious communities, but rather from left wing or otherwise secular groups. There are also close contacts between some of the pro-migrant groups in locality 6, and corresponding associations in locality 4, the other town in Gävleborg. Unlike in locality 4, however, there are no reports of formal collaboration between the municipal government and surrounding civil society associations. For instance, in locality 6, it is the municipality itself that organizes recurring language cafés, and there are no formalized communication channels between public- and civil society sector actors. A full list of civil society associations can be found in Annex II.

Throughout the period, civil society associations in locality 6 have been organizing protests against national migration policy, against radical right organizations, and in solidarity with populations in sender countries. Between 2016 and 2018, activists from the municipality were deeply involved in a national campaign against deportations to Afghanistan, involving long-term residents as well as migrant youths. As the only locality in the sample, activists have also protested municipal authorities and the local population for failing to provide housing for recognized refugees.

Anti-migrant mobilization in the municipality has been small-scale and fragmentary. It has also been rather violent. On one hand, radical right organizations have visited the locality in conjunction with the national elections, often resulting in counter-demonstrations from local civil society associations. Between 2013 and 2015, groups of neighbors threatened individual migrants and public servants on multiple occasions in response to the opening of homes for asylum seekers and recognized refugees, primarily outside of the city center.

Detailed overview of fieldwork

The majority of the fieldwork in locality 6 took place in the beginning of July 2022. Owing to several factors, which included the summer holidays, individual migrants' poor experiences of meeting state representatives, complicated asylum processes, and a lack of confidence in their own language skills, it was only possible to conduct individual interviews with a total of four post-2014 migrants. What is more, two of these did not currently live in the municipality, but in localities 2 and 4. Although the researcher offered to come back at a later date, it was not possible to recruit more participants. The interviewees came from Syria, Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Jordan, and ranged from about 20 to 40 years old. In the focus group, conducted in May, the researcher managed to recruit seven people (four long-term residents, one of them a migrant since 2012, and two post-2014 migrants). The participants in the focus group were born in Sweden, Syria, and Palestine. All of them had some type of associational affiliation, either from pro-migrant associations or from a migrants' association in one of the locality's residential areas. For the interviews and for the focus group, the researcher recruited participants through prior contacts, through social media, and through pro-migrant associations in the residential areas. While the researcher attempted to recruit interviewees through the municipality-organized language café, those who participated at the event did not have sufficient Swedish- or English-language skills to be interviewed.

Participant observation in locality 6 took place between the two squares in the city center, and in the public park on its margins. Between the two squares were two large seating areas, multiple restaurants along the sides and on the squares, a collective transport hub, and a small playground. Connecting the two was a broad, fifty-meter avenue with more stores and restaurants. The observations at the squares took place one Friday afternoon in conjunction with the focus group (in May), and on one weekday evening in July. The observation in the public park focused on the beach, seating, and sports area at its westernmost end. Both observations took place in July, the first on a Sunday afternoon and the second at noon the following Monday.

Social interactions and individual attitudes

The focus group participants and the interviewees in the medium-sized town in Gävle emphasized the workplace as the primary site for meaningful interaction between migrants and long-term residents. These are locations where people find common tasks, and where long-term residents in particular have the proper motivation to interact in meaningful ways. Finding employment, therefore, is not just a means for finding contacts, but also for gaining necessary information (e.g. regarding other employment opportunities, other everyday tasks). As one participant in the focus group puts it,

> "*When you find employment, you find new friends…at work. You enter…a tradition. At work, we constantly talk. We drink coffee and talk. We talk about what happens in Sweden, we get more information*" (focus group, locality 6)

The main obstacles to finding employment are insufficient language acquisition and – for asylum seekers – the difficulty of acquiring work permits. For some migrants, protracted asylum processes meant that they would go back and forth between permits, forcing them to rely on their employers' good faith in between. While many employers would allow people to remain at work even when their work permits had been suspended, this was not always the case. Further, for those who hadn't been able to receive a residence or work permit in the first place, the threshold for labor market entry appeared very high. One asylum seeker concluded,

> *"In my home country, I was an accountant. Here, in Sweden, I can only work with cleaning. Because of the migration agency, I can't go to the employment agency. Now, for me, for us, the only ones who can help us find employment are people we know, and I don't know anyone. So I go around telling people that I can do cleaning…" (loc. 6, interview 1)*

When they have managed to find employment, it was often through close personal ties. This served as an advantage for many unaccompanied minors, who could draw on the extensive support networks that had emerged around teachers, social workers and family homes in the period since 2015. At the same time, this group was also the most affected by prolonged and complicated asylum processes.

Outside of the workplace, the participants mentioned that residential segregation greatly limited interactions between migrants and long-term residents. Some believed that the town had a specific local culture that inhibited contacts, particularly in the absence of targeted efforts to promote interaction:

> *"There are some neighborhoods, where almost everyone is from Somalia. Then there are some where there are pretty much only Swedes. You don't see any Somalis there. Maybe… maybe it's just my perspective, but, maybe it has to do with what the municipality does. It doesn't seem like the municipality is so active there, in promoting activities that make sure people have a reason to gather, migrants and and Swedes, that they have a reason to meet each other. […] I've also stayed in Gothenburg for a couple of weeks, and I could immediately tell the difference. People are nicer, they actually want to meet new people. Here, that's not the way it is" (loc. 6, interview 2)*

When asked to mention places where people do meet, the participants in the focus group listed language cafés and other civil society activities. However, they also agreed that these activities primarily involved "old people", among the migrants and among the long-term residents. Further, these activities did not necessarily create lasting social relations, or help improve language skills. Although there were some examples of other activities where migrants could meet with long-term residents, these all required some type of specialized skills or interests (e.g. sports clubs). The focus group therefore concluded that social integration is particularly difficult for young adults without any specific interests. For this

group, employment represented virtually the only opportunity to meet with others outside of one's own group.

The interviewees and the participants in the focus group did not have any immediate experiences of racism. However, in the wake of multiple widely mediatized events in the spring of 2022 – particularly Rasmus Paludan's Quran burnings in multiple cities– one participant had started to feel disillusioned with the Swedish population's commitment to integration. Watching news of the events and reading comments on associated Facebook posts, the participant, who had arrived to Sweden shortly before 2014, had been forced into sick leave to treat her anxiety. Happily, however, she noted that she had found support in the local community and with her employer (focus group, locality 6).

The general sense of indifference, and the lack of intergroup contacts, was reflected in the participant observation. In both locations, there was clearly diversity among those present (in many ways, e.g. language, styles, clothing, activities, age). However, there was very little intergroup contact, and there was a very marked sense of segregation *within* each site. In the city center, the expensive outdoors seating areas in the squares were virtually all white, Swedish-speaking, whereas the public seating areas and the outdoors seating closer to the bus stop were occupied by more varied groups. In the latter, Arabic and other languages were prevalent. In the public park, a very similar distinction held between the cafés and the public park areas, although it was not as marked as in the city center. Regardless of the type of group, the only moment where intergroup contact happened was when, in the city center, two families happened upon each other while playing in the fountain in the middle of the main square. Judging from these and other observations, those locations that offered the most potential for meaningful, spontaneous interactions across groups were public, free of charge, and open to anyone (field notes by author, loc. 6).

Summary

The fieldwork participants in the medium-sized town in Gävleborg found interactions to be scarce but largely positive. They explained this scarcity with reference to a lack of labor market participation, primarily for groups that *could not* meaningfully take part in other organized activities, or in targeted activities such as language cafés. Access to the labor market, however, was predicated on private networks, and it was made even more difficult by the conditions of the asylum process. For some, it meant they could not access the official labor market at all, while for others it meant prolonged anxieties around acquiring and keeping their work permits. Above and beyond labor market access, residential segregation also hindered integration, particularly as the municipality was not actively pursuing new arenas for creating meetings between migrants and long-term residents. This was despite the fact that there was very little visible hostility between locals and migrants. Overall, the participants argued, there were many opportunities for social interaction available to migrants with clearly defined specialties and interests, or for migrants in the civil society volunteers' high age group. For others, it seemed the only solution was to find stable employment.

In relation to the report's theoretical framework, the results particularly show the relevance of social factors, and of the migrants' personal characteristics, for successful social and economic interaction. In a town with high barriers to labor market entry and extensive residential segregation, migrants are required to have strong personal networks that went beyond their own migrant community. As these networks tended to develop in civil society associations, migrants faced yet another barrier of entry. It is thus possible that more active governance initiatives, especially in the labor market, would increase migrants' chances of successful integration by lowering thresholds and creating more channels of inclusion. In contrast to social, governance, and spatial factors, political factors played a limited role in the municipality. While the locality appeared to be "welcoming", the migrants still faced an indifferent local population and a rather passive local government.

3.   Main findings in comparative perspective

Reciprocal interactions and attitudes, and migrants' experiences of integration

> *"That's what's so good about Sweden. Even though they hate you, they don't show it in any way. They just won't look at you. They will just go away"* (loc. 2, interview 4).

Across the six case study localities, the participants gave strikingly similar accounts of the main patterns of interaction between migrants and long-term residents. In order to initiate and sustain meaningful social interactions, it is necessary to have employment, to become part of a civil society association, or go to school with native students. Outside of these arenas, virtually all participants reported difficulties in creating and maintaining social relations. On the most general level, they found long-term residents to be indifferent, distant, and preoccupied with other things. Some also suspected that long-term residents were afraid or prejudiced, even though it was seldom expressed as direct hostility. People, the participants felt, were polite but cold. Despite considerable changes in political climate, and despite a series of "crises" after 2014 (the "refugee crisis", the Covid-19 pandemic, and the current migration from Ukraine), few accounts suggested things had changed over time.

Making contacts

While employment, education, and civil society participation were crucial to the participants' understanding of successful integration trajectories, they were also careful to point out situations in which neither worked. In education, participants who had actually gone through the normal Swedish system, found Swedish youths to be equally distant (if not worse) than people in other areas of life. Almost none of the unaccompanied minors interviewed in the study reported that they had been able to establish lasting friendships with Swedish students. In employment, on the other hand, participants reported ending up in positions where they either wouldn't meet anyone at all, or where they would end up on positions where all their colleagues shared the same migrant background. In civil society associations, the participants sometimes expressed the concern that relations were unequal, and that they weighed heavily toward single categories of volunteers – primarily old, often retired, women.

The general sense of indifference was clearly visible in the participant observations. Not limited to the relationships between migrants and long-term residents, this indifference was displayed in a sense of mutual distancing, wherein people *generally* hesitated to interact across groups. In the largest meeting places – the public squares, the festivals, the beaches and the playgrounds – most people stuck to their preformed groups, or otherwise remained alone. If they did sit down on the same benches, they kept their distance. If they sat down close to each other, they maintained respectful indifference. Even when interactions did

happen, as it sometimes did at the playground or around sports facilities, the observer could often see the long processes it took for individuals to gather the necessary courage.

The lack of contacts between migrants and long-term residents, and perhaps between all groups, was also visible in the difficulty the participants had to pinpoint particular points of interaction. In all focus groups, the question of *where* people met resulted in awkward silences, and it was clear the participants understood the question as somewhat contrived. Whereas some countries may have public cultures that encourage spontaneous meetings and interactions between migrants and long-term residents, or between groups whatsoever, this is clearly not the case in Sweden. As a consequence, civil society associations and employment gained enormous weight in the interviews and focus groups.

As a consequence of the difficulties of establishing relations, many reported feelings of loneliness and vulnerability. When asked to describe a typical day, interviewees described going on long solo walks, spending time by themselves in nature, and so on. For some interviewees, this combined with, and exacerbated, the anxieties they felt in connection to an unpredictable asylum processes, long-term unemployment, and a lack of security more generally. In more practical terms, the lack of social contacts, particularly to long-term residents and other more established groups, put limits on the migrants' language acquisition, on their access to information, and to potential labor market opportunities. In this sense, weak social networks combined with a sense that public agencies did not successfully reach more vulnerable groups of migrants.

The difficulties that the interviewees mentioned in relation to the three arenas also pointed to the deep interconnectedness of social and economic integration. On one hand, economic integration, in the form of stable employment, was seen as a prerequisite for social integration. The workplace was generally seen as the main arena for social integration, and the lack of financial and social stability that came with unemployment was generally regarded as an additional obstacle to making meaningful social relations. On the other hand, some degree of social integration, in the sense of making meaningful contacts with long-term residents, was seen as a prerequisite for finding a job. This tension highlights the complex and immensely difficult situation that migrants find themselves in when attempting to find social and economic footing in their new society.

Encounters with hostility

Although the participants found it difficult to connect with Swedes, they seldom experienced immediate hostilities. This impression also applied to those communities where migration and integration issues were more polarized, and where there were mobilized chapters of the major neo-Nazi organizations. Despite relatively large differences in the extent of anti-racist as well as anti-migrant mobilization (see fig. 2), there were no corresponding differences in the participants' encounters with organized racism and anti-migrant politics. It is important to note, however, that most protest events targeted national migration policy rather than locally specific policies, groups, or events. Further, when protest events targeted locally specific

conditions, such as migrant accommodation, they tended to occur *before* the migrants' arrival.[6]

The lack of distinction in experiences of hostility and support is equally striking with regard to the differences in pro-migrant mobilization. As developed in the previous section, the scope of civil society initiatives varied greatly, from an almost complete absence in Scania and Blekinge to the proliferation and partial formalization of municipality-civil society relations in Dalarna and Jönköping. Likewise, the two municipalities in Gävleborg and the medium-sized town in Jönköping stand out from the rest in terms of the frequency of pro-migrant and antiracist protest (fig. 2). In the medium-sized town in Gävleborg in particular, this type of protest far outnumbers the reported anti-migrant protest events. Regardless, there is very little that distinguishes the migrants' experiences from those in other places.
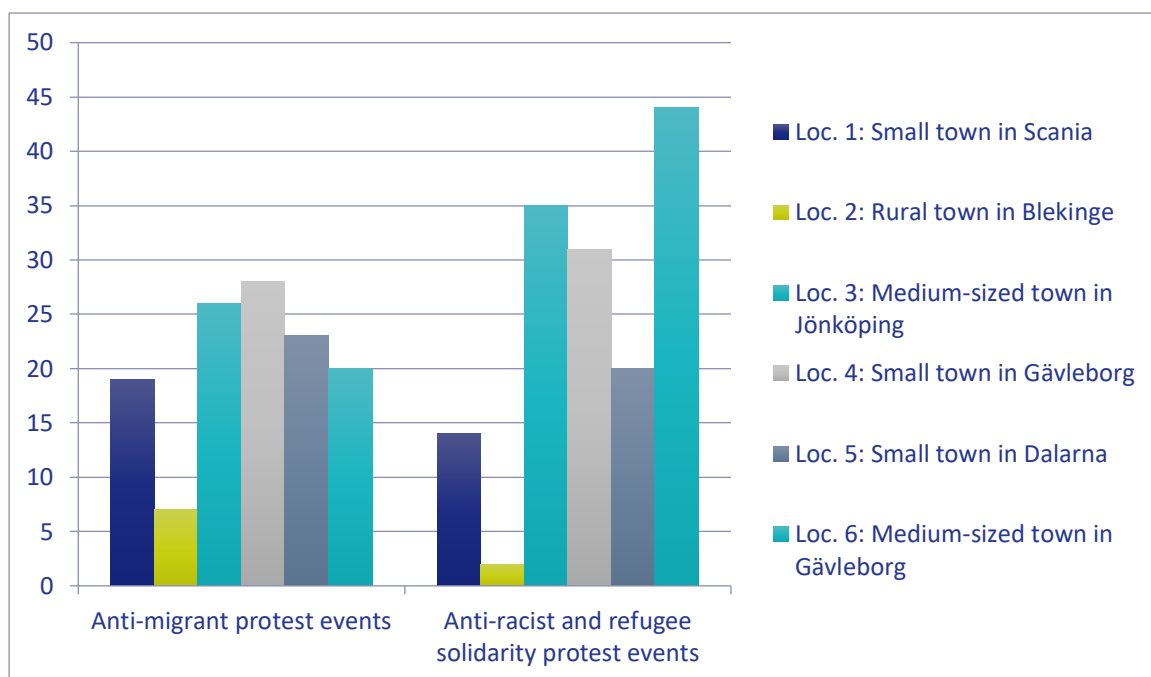
Fig. 2 Frequency of anti-migrant and anti-racist/pro-migrant protest events, 2012–2022[7]

To the extent that the participants did experience hostility, it either occurred at school or in the workplace. In most cases, the targeted migrants received support from management or the school leadership. The exceptions to this rule were reported in the small town in Scania, where the participants in the focus group were very critical of the lack of initiative from their

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[6] Across the country as a whole between 2012 and 2017, 75 % of all protest actions (including demonstrations, flyer campaigns, appeals, arson attacks, etc.) against migrant accommodation occurred *before* the migrants' arrival (Lundstedt 2021).

[7] The quantitative data greatly underestimate the extent of neo-Nazi activity in locality 5. Of the hundreds of actions the NMR initiated in the period, very few were reported in the mainstream press, and most consisted of flyer handouts or poster actions, types of protest that were not regarded in the data collection.

respective employers and the surrounding society. Some also reported cases of racist abuse on the street or in public transportation. In the latter cases, the perpetrators were lone strangers, with no prior relationship to their victims.

Change over time

The period since 2014 has seen a series of impactful "crises", alongside more gradual changes in political attitudes and in the governance of integration. Yet, there are very few participants that mention any meaningful changes in their experiences of integration. While some note that long-term residents have now become "used to" seeing people with different skin colors, or encountering women in headscarves, the overall patterns of interaction do not appear to have changed much. Even for the Covid-19 pandemic, it is only representatives of civil society associations that report any meaningful differences in the ways that they would interact with migrants and others. This might have to with the relatively open Swedish strategy, but it could also relate to the fact that many migrants felt isolated even before restrictions were put in place. As will be further elaborated in the next chapter, post-2014 migrants' responses to the wave of refugees from Ukraine mainly consisted in the feeling that they had been "forgotten" by the Swedish population and by the Swedish government, and that the Ukrainian refugees were treated so much more benevolently than those who had come from other countries.

In a context of rapidly politicized migration, it is surprising that most migrants *did not* experience a negative change in the quality of their interactions with others. Some felt local relations had improved, as the local community had gotten "used" to seeing and accommodating diversity. Even when they reflect on urgent national-level issues (e.g. the protests against Paludan's Quran burnings), they mainly see an escalation of hostilities outside of their local communities. While meaningful to many, they still claimed that their local communities were, in some sense, safe havens.

The events that led to the breakdown of the fieldwork in Scania might represent the sole exception to the observed pattern. Here, it was most certainly the politicization of migration that deterred migrants to participate in the fieldwork. It is also easy to link this fact both to the general political developments in the municipality, most particularly the unusual strength and influence of the SD, and to the unusually negative experiences that the remaining participants told in the focus group. At the same time, it is hard to disentangle these more stable patterns from the exact timing of the campaign.

The lack of any sense of worsening relations can also be related to a contradictory pattern in the public *expression* of opposition to migration and integration. Observable in virtually all cases, radical right and other mobilization against migration, in the protest arena, appears to have peaked sometime before the 2018 elections. After this point, the public expression of anti-migrant positions largely spilled over into the mainstream parties, and into public discourse more broadly. With the exception of the Covid-19 pandemic, pro-migrant and anti-racist mobilization took the opposite route, growing in frequency as the general political landscape moved toward more restrictive positions. It is possible that the combination of

these processes – the demobilization of anti-migrant protest, and its diffusion into a considerably wider social space – made anti-migrant politics simultaneously less visible *and* more impactful.

As developed in section 1, the six municipalities were selected in order to represent different combinations of socioeconomic and demographic patterns. Whereas some municipalities had a relatively large representation of foreign-born inhabitants long before 2014, others saw their cultural and national diversity increase rapidly in the studied period. Likewise, whereas some had an improving economic situation, with falling unemployment rates, others were developing in the opposite direction. Finally, whereas some municipalities were growing, others were stagnant or in decline.

The six municipalities were selected to represent different combinations of socioeconomic and demographic conditions, as well as different experiences of cultural diversity. These factors mattered, in different ways, for the migrants' experiences of interactions with long-term residents, and for their opportunities to create meaningful and sustained relationships within the three arenas. First, municipalities with small and one-sided labor markets put up high barriers for labor market entry. This was most visible in the small town in Blekinge and the rural town in Dalarna. Second, the larger municipalities (in Gävleborg and in Jönköping) had by far the worst problems with residential segregation. These were municipalities with strongly pressured housing markets, in which migrants tended to find homes mainly in tenement areas on the urban periphery. This problem was considerably less prevalent in those municipalities that had experienced demographic decline, and where the availability and cost of housing was therefore smaller. The sole exception was the rural town in Dalarna, where the small size of the rental market produced similar effects as those in the other municipalities, despite unusually good access to housing. Finally, the past experience of migration was difficult to interpret in the selected municipalities, largely due to the fact that all did have some type of prior migrant settlement. What seemed to matter, however, was the degree to which local support networks had developed around prior waves of migration, and whether these could help introduce new arrivals. In the rural town in Blekinge and in the small town in Scania, this had not happened. In Jönköping and Gävleborg, on the other hand, there were civil society networks that could be activated once the new refugees and asylum seekers arrived.

Value of social/ideational-political/governance/spatial dimensions/factors in explaining and understanding interactions/attitudes/experiences

Governance, political, social, and spatial factors impacted integration opportunities differently in the labor market, through civil society associations, and through the education system. Rather than directly supporting or hindering migrants' integration, however, what these factors seemed to amount to was the *separation* of migrants and long-term residents, and an attitude of *indifference* and *passivity* that extended from interpersonal encounters and all the

way up to interactions with municipal and national authorities. While there were migrants who had managed, through luck, personal skill, and enormous diligence, to successfully gain footing in the labor market and in civil society, thresholds into, and within, these arenas were often very high. In other words, the *lack* of proper governance structures, the weak influence of pro- as well as anti-migrant political tendencies, and the negative effects of residential segregation, placed great importance on the majority of migrants' personalities, experiences, and private networks. These patterns held, to a different degree and in different combinations, for all six case studies.

This section discusses the value of the integration opportunity structure framework for each arena separately. Within each arena, the section thereby discusses, in turn, the value of social, governance, political, and spatial factors. The final subsection extends the presentation to interactions in public space. While this gives the section a slightly different structure from the corresponding parts in the other country reports within the same work package, it will hopefully help underscore the difference and nuances that exist within the data, and improve the assessment of the theoretical framework.

Integration opportunity structures and the labor market

The labor market was widely emphasized as *the* location where migrants and long-term residents were or should be able to create meaningful and lasting interactions. However, there were numerous obstacles that limited migrants' possibility to enter the labor market, and, once inside, to access its networks. This was related in part to the wider structure of local labor markets, as mentioned above. However, the adverse effects of political and corporate *governance* also put immense pressure on individual migrants' *personal and social* factors. *Political and ideational factors* mattered insofar as they informed patterns of discriminatory hiring practices and workplace discrimination, but also corresponding patterns of antiracist support within the workplace. *Spatial* factors, and primarily residential segregation, caused unequal access of contacts and information.

As developed in the introduction, the municipalities' policy with regard to migrants' labor market access revolved primarily around language training. Across municipalities, the interviewees' felt that the municipal SFI courses failed to deliver satisfying results. The participants felt progress in SFI was too slow, and that the standard program focused too heavily on reading and writing. Many also felt that there was too large a gap between the labor market and language education, although some municipalities had made positive developments in creating vocational tracks within the SFI system. The effect of insufficient language training was that many migrants were effectively barred from labor market participation. The lack of labor market participation, in turn, made it all the more difficult to acquire the relevant language skills.

Beyond the SFI system, the medium-sized towns in Jönköping and Gävleborg, and the rural town in Blekinge, were all blamed for being too passive in in helping migrants acquire work experience and labor market contacts. This was partly due to differences in local policy, as the

small towns in Dalarna and Scania both had very comprehensive labor market activation programs. However, the differences were also due to more informal differences, as shown in the small town in Gävleborg. In the latter case, labor market activation for unaccompanied youths relied exclusively on the close relationship between the municipal bureaucracy and local civil society associations.

Even when migrants managed to enter the labor market, however, it did not necessarily lead to successful social integration. Here, the problem was not political governance, but rather the governance of individual firms or workplaces, whether in the public or private sector. Some workplaces were functionally segregated along ethnic lines, meaning that native-speakers and learners were concentrated in different parts of the same workplace, or at different companies. Others forced migrants to work alone, or on short contracts, and the workplace was one of the primary arenas where migrants experienced discrimination and racism. In other words, it was not necessarily enough to have a job, but what mattered was to find *the right* job.

Aside from corporate governance, political factors appeared in the form of hiring and workplace discrimination. Importantly, however, it was only in the small town in Scania that the participants believed so themselves. Unlike in the other cases, the participants in the Scanian focus group did not report receiving any support as victims of racism, and their stories suggested more frequent victimization. This would be consistent with that locality's large degree of support for the far right, its very restrictive stance on integration, and the relatively widespread mobilization of anti-migrant protest. Even here, however, political and ideational resistance to migration appeared to be restricted to certain individuals or organizations, rather than to reflect local society as a whole. Inversely, the strong support networks that existed in Gävleborg and in Jönköping did not contribute to any *general* differences in opportunities for integration, aside for migrants that new the civil society actors personally.

In the absence of sufficient language training and active labor market policies, and in the presence of discriminatory hiring practices, labor market participation was greatly determined by personal and social factors. It was clear that labor market participation required a set of personal skills, including remarkable self-discipline, sociability, and the willingness to engage repeatedly with an unwelcoming environment, as well as contact networks that many simply did not have. For many migrants, the experiences they had gone through before, during and after migration had caused trauma and recurring periods of depression, making it more difficult to find paths into the labor market (or the other two arenas). Finally, labor market access was virtually closed for those migrants who had come to Sweden at an old age, for at-home mothers without prior work experiences, and, of course, for minors. For these groups, school and civil society associations represented potential alternatives for social integration and, potentially for some, subsequent entry into the labor market.

To an extent, the PES' labor market activation program (and its antecedents in Scania and Dalarna) was meant to alleviate some of the pressure on social and personal factors. By helping to broker contacts, and by helping migrants develop necessary skills, these programs

set out to even out differences between migrants and long-term residents. Still, stories of successful trajectories into the labor market clearly revolved around chance encounters and individual diligence. Most of the interviewees had been able to find personal contacts in family care homes, through SFI teachers, or otherwise through people they had met during the asylum process. In the rural town in Blekinge, a network of Syrian migrants helped generalize these contacts across the migrant group. Those who did not rely on these types of "accidental" contacts described extremely diligent job-seeking procedures, where they routinely experienced or suspected discrimination in hiring.

The relationship between labor market participation – as an arena for social interaction – and social and personal factors was not one-sided. As many of the quotes in the previous sections show, the failure to enter the labor market could have a profound impact on migrants' mental health. Over time, obstacles surrounding the labor market risked diminishing the social and personal factors that migrants' could otherwise have used to their advantage.

For many migrants, participation in the labor market was also hindered by spatial constraints. This was most clearly visible in the two larger municipalities, the medium-sized localities in Jönköping and Gävleborg. In these localities, residential segregation limited potentially useful contacts between migrants and long-term residents. As will be developed further in the section on education, this was not merely an issue of geographical distances, but also of the way that residential segregation caused further segregation in schooling and in other areas of everyday life. The lack of contacts impacted on labor market opportunities in direct and indirect ways, limiting exposure to concrete job openings and limiting exposure to information that could be useful to find employment more broadly. For those migrants who had been allocated to peripheral areas outside of the urban center, as in the medium-sized town in Jönköping, the physical distances to potential workplaces was an equally important obstacle to labor market participation, particularly for those without a drivers' license.

Integration opportunity structures and civil society

An alternative to labor market participation was to join civil society associations and other voluntary activities. Indeed, among those that had managed to establish good relations with long-term residents, many had been, or were, active in these types of contexts. In accordance with the framework established in the introduction, the presence and makeup of local civil society is itself a crucial social factor. However, like the labor market and the workplace, social, political, governance and spatial factors also impacted on the ways migrants could enter into, and maintain relations within, civil society associations. On a general level, governance factors affected the size and type of civil society that existed within each locality. Here, political and ideational factors played an indirect role, as they influenced municipal governance and support for civil society. It is also possible that different ideational currents within local civil societies impacted on relations within the dominant groups. Whatever the case, personal and social factors mattered greatly for what categories of migrants would interact with civil society associations (including their intersections with gender, employment status, and so on), and what experiences they made within these associations. Finally, spatial factors played a very

different role in comparison to their impact on the labor market and educational system, as residential segregation would often inform civil society associations' targeting strategies as well as patterns of municipal funding.

There were wide differences in the municipalities' governance of, and support for, civil society associations. This was both a question of scope, where some municipalities had extensive collaboration with selected associations, and of municipal targeting strategies, as the municipalities all chose very different associations to collaborate with. With regard to the former, the medium-sized town in Jönköping stands out with its highly formalized civil society network. With regard to the latter, it is notable that it is only the small town in Gävleborg that works extensively with a Muslim association in the implementation of its integration-related tasks. In the small town in Scania, where the political leadership and the wider public opinion was most negative toward migrant accommodation, there was hardly any support for civil society at all. As a consequence, very few civil society associations offered any services or meeting points. Hence municipal governance determines both what resources civil society associations can access, and what associations are allowed to access them. This impacts both on the capacity for associations to support migrants, and on the types of activities and target groups that become relevant in each case. Clearly, these differences were located at the intersection of political and governance factors.

By affecting the makeup of civil society within each municipality, local governance clearly had a direct impact on the wider social factors in the integration opportunity structure. However, aside from being seen as a factor in itself, the way that migrants could access and interact with others *within* civil society associations actualized a series of *other* personal and social factors.

In the municipalities where relevant civil society networks were present, it was clear that they – sometimes unintentionally – favored limited categories of migrants. According to post-2014 migrants and long-term natives, the churches, aid organizations and others typically attracted older women. This was in part due to the social profile of these associations, where most of the native volunteers were female retirees. It was also due to the fact that the scheduling of the associations' activities tended to conflict with school or work hours. Hence, they limited the possibility for minors, parents with young children, and others with more limited time. Of course, many interviewees noted that language cafés, sowing cafés and other social activities that typically took place in these venues simply did not interest them very much. For those who did not want to go to these activities, the main option seemed to be sports activities, which many municipalities attempted to support. These activities, on the other hand, tended almost exclusively to be used by young men.

Even for those that participated in civil society associations, it was not certain that participation would lead to meaningful and lasting relationships. Across cases, participants reported feelings of inequality and of encountering patronizing activists. Depending on how the language cafés (and similar activities) were organized, they could involve more or less top-down dynamics, and it was far from certain that the participants would develop relations that lasted outside of the meeting hall. At an individual level, some migrants were too shy, too

anxious, or did not have sufficient language skills to participate in the same terms as the others in the associations' activities. The interviewees frequently returned to the issue of how shy and traumatized migrants, migrants who were locked at home with their children, or others who would be less likely to actually join the schedule of the civil society associations, would be able to "enter" society. Put in more trivial terms, it was hard to see how someone without specific personal skills or interests would be able to find any relevant integration trajectory beyond potential employment.

It is possible that the quality of interactions within civil society associations were connected to political and ideational differences across civil society networks. In the small town in Dalarna, where most civil society associations had a religious or humanitarian profile, the participants reported more unequal interactions. In the towns in Gävleborg, on the other hand, where civil society had a more politicized, pro-asylum profile, there appeared to be more equal relations between migrants and long-term natives, as both would participate in the organization of protest events, in educational activities, and so on. However, given the very limited data access, this should only be read as a hypothesis.

Sometimes, the wider migrant community offered the type of civil society networks otherwise inhabited by the red cross, the protestant churches, and so on. This happened in Blekinge, and in the small town in Gävleborg, where extensive network ties had developed between groups that shared the same language, the same nationality, or the same migration backgrounds. In these networks, migrants helped each other find employment, solve problems in relation with public agencies, and so on and so forth. Importantly, however, these networks were strongly localized, and they were, like civil society associations and other support networks, far from comprehensive. As an interview in the medium-sized town in Jönköping warned, there were also dangers inherent to relying too heavily on information from within the migrant group, owing to the risk of misinterpretations and misinformation. The same, of course, also went for reliance on non-professional civil society associations.

Spatial factors played a rather different role in civil society interactions than in the labor market or in the educational system. This was due to the fact that many organizations consciously targeted neighborhoods with large proportions of migrant inhabitants. As such, residential segregation, in a way, *increased* access to civil society associations for those migrants who had ended up in these types of neighborhoods. These were also the neighborhoods where municipal governments were most likely to fund or otherwise actively support civil society initiatives.

Integration opportunity structures and the educational system

Integration in the third arena – education – appeared to be somewhat separate from local factors. This is likely due to the strong centralization of the Swedish school system, which leaves local policymakers and political currents with very little latitude to succeed or fail in developing locally specific systems. Yet, central governance impacted on how spatial factors informed the composition of individual schools and classes. Further, the experiences that

migrants drew in school had much to do with personal and social factors, e.g. their migration background and time of enrolment, and with prevailing political and ideational factors.

Integration through the education system was closely linked to spatial factors. While the Swedish school system is relatively liberal in allowing parents to choose schools for their children, this right is unevenly exercised. On one hand, it means that migrant parents are much more likely to place their children in the vicinity of their home. On the other hand, it means that long-term residents with stronger economic resources can relocate their children to schools with few migrants. This pattern is mentioned across the case study locations, as it exacerbates existing patterns of residential segregation and greatly reduces opportunities for interaction between post-2014 migrants and long-term residents. Notably, the effects of residential segregation on segregation in education were clearly visible even in those localities where residential segregation was relatively limited.

Within the individual school, the migrants' experiences were closely tied to personal and social factors. One such factor was the migrant's age of enrolment. Here, there were great differences between those who had arrived as small children, and those who had arrived as teenagers. Whereas the former group was largely able to interact on equal grounds with their native peers, the latter group found it very difficult to make meaningful contacts. According to the interviewees, this had to do with the lesser "openness" of older youths, the pressures that unaccompanied youths (in particular) faced in order to secure their residence permits, and the experience of migration itself.

Particularly for older migrants, the difficulties of making contacts with long-term residents and natives were also connected to political and ideational factors. Indeed, like the workplace, the school was one of the main arenas for expressions of racism. Although staff and other peers would step in to support the victims, the proliferation of racist discourses, bullying and other types of hostile encounters further increased the distance between migrant and native students. These hostilities clearly did not emerge within the school environment, but rather

Interaction in public space

The report has repeatedly noted that spontaneous inter-group interactions rarely occurred in public space. This was visible from the participant observation, and it was clearly reflected in the interviewees' and focus group participants' accounts. To a great extent, this lack of interactions appeared to stem from a considerably broader scheme for how people use and think about public space in Sweden. This section will briefly reflect on how this general pattern was supported by spatial and political and ideational factors.

In the participant observation, it was possible to observe how spatial divides, and the social structure of individual spaces, added further obstacles to integration. First, initial residential segregation was visible in the distribution of groups more widely. As seen in the medium-sized town in Jönköping, the areas with the most diversity in terms of languages, religious markers, and so on, were all found in proximity to neighborhoods with large concentrations of migrants. In other places, it was possible to see similar dynamics as one closed in on large public

transportation hubs. Second, even within individual areas, there was often a functional separation between migrants and long-term residents, where one group or the other would serve as customers or patrons, while the other would serve as service providers. The exact distribution of roles looked different depending on the location, and on the specific functions of the place (e.g. a service center or a resting stop for people in personal care), but the pattern was persistent nonetheless.

There were some locations where the design and location of public space encouraged not only diversity, but intergroup interactions too. Without exception, these were places where the facilities invited spontaneous and collective activities, such as play or sports. In most sites, sports facilities in particular formed focal points for interactions between groups. In others, playthings (e.g. in playgrounds, but also in public squares) served a similar purpose for interaction between children as well as between their parents and other adults. Of course, it is doubtful that these interactions led to any long-term interactions. However, given the sense of loneliness and vulnerability that many migrants reported (and one can presume similar experiences among many long-term residents as well), it seems obvious that these fleeting encounters are better than no encounters at all.

The field notes from the participant observation describe public space mainly as a space of mutual indifference. For the most part, this also holds for the accounts in the focus groups and individual interviews. However, in these data there are also stories of public space as a space of racist hostilities. It is therefore obvious that political and ideational factors also impact on migrants' interactions with long-term residents. What is notable, however, is that these hostile interactions always appear to involve lone strangers – whether screaming, spitting on, or sending their dogs on the victim – rather than collective actors. The lack of collectively mobilized hostilities against individual migrants is particularly striking in those localities where neo-Nazi and other far right organizations have had a long and weighty presence (see former section). In a sense, it appears that for individual interactions, political and ideational factors are more likely to be channeled into indifference and a sense of migrants' "invisibility", rather than to collective attacks.

Impact of Ukrainian refugee crisis on social interactions, individual attitudes and integration experiences in SMsTRAs

The arrival of migrants from Ukraine occurred unevenly across cases, and it did so very late in the fieldwork process. The localities where the new arrivals were most visible during fieldwork were the small town in Gävleborg, and the rural town in Blekinge. In both cases, the regional and municipal government set aside resources for housing, for cultural activities, and for material support (e.g. subsidized public transport), largely mirroring the development of Swedish reception in the early fall of 2015. Municipal governments developed and once again deepened their relations to civil society associations, to make sure that reception worked well enough, and that it did not cause conflicts with the local community. Judging from available evidence – interviews and newspaper reporting – these conflicts never did materialize during the time of fieldwork (and they still have not materialized).

Some of the interviewees had personally participated in supporting migrants from Ukraine. One interviewee, who had received his education in Russia, volunteered as a translator at a reception center, while others had participated in fundraising activities. Nevertheless, many felt the reception of Ukrainians, and particularly the public reactions that accompanied it, revealed racist structures in Swedish migration policy and opinion. In discussing this matter, the interviewees particularly focused on the provision of material goods, and the ease with which Ukrainians were admitted into the country. Granted the small size of the data, this impression appeared to be the strongest among migrants from Syria, who noted that they had *also* fled from Russian forces.

The discrepancy between the current treatment of Ukrainian refugees and post-2014 migrants from Syria, Afghanistan, and elsewhere was an obvious source of mistrust. This is a matter that European policymakers should take seriously. If managed the right way, it would also allow policymakers and communities to reap the benefits of a growing subset of civil society where people with private experiences of migration are actively contributing to the practical solution of new migrants' reception and integration. If not, it might prove to be yet another instance of how policy creates indirect obstacles for integration, primarily among those that already have a stronger sense of mistrust, weaker networks, and weaker attachment to the host society overall.

4. Concluding remarks and final considerations on the Ukrainian refugee crisis

This report has discussed opportunities and constraints on integration from a Whole-of-Community (Whole-COMM) perspective, focusing on six small and medium-sized localities in Sweden. The report finds that social integration, or the creation of social ties between migrants and long-term residents is crucial in migrants' narratives of positive interaction trajectories, as it provides access to employment opportunities, aids language acquisition, and helps migrants improve their psychological well-being and sense of belonging in the new society. Several factors, however, act as constraints on the creation and maintenance of meaningful relations. Following the *local integration opportunity structure* framework proposed at the start of the report, these constraints relate to the migrants' personal and social characteristics, the governance of local labor markets, housing markets, and integration policy, political and ideational factors and the spatial relations.

The socioeconomic indicators in the Whole-COMM can help explain some of the minor differences that exist between the municipalities. In growing municipalities, residential segregation appears to be a bigger problem than in those municipalities were population decline has lifted some of the pressure off of demand for housing. In these localities, residential segregation limits migrants' contacts with the otherwise advantageous labor markets. In declining localities, on the other hand, one-sided and/or highly competitive labor markets raise high thresholds for entry into the workforce, and for gaining its economic and social benefits. While all municipalities had prior experience of refugee migration, what appeared to matter was the extent to which previous waves of migration had resulted in lasting and mobilized support networks among civil society and municipal organizations. At the same time, one should note that these differences do not map neatly onto the 2x2 matrix, but that they follow idiosyncratic differences on each of the three dimensions.

Overall, the cross-case comparison shows a manner of indifference and passivity in long-term residents', employers', and public agencies' interactions with migrants. On an interpersonal level, the interviewees and focus group participants find long-term natives to be cold and distant, even though few encounter direct hostilities. In contacts with public agencies, they found a lack of personal investment and interest in their cases, leading to slow processes with unclear outcomes (e.g. in language training). In the workplace, many migrants found themselves in lone labor, or in working teams where they were segregated from long-term natives. In the housing market, they encountered spatial segregation, with all it entailed for contacts with native language speakers, school segregation, and access to information. In combination, insufficient governance structures, an indifferent political climate, and persistent spatial divides put immense pressure on the individual migrant's skills, prior

experiences, and private networks. Differences in experiences of interaction with long-term residents therefore differed widely between migrants of different ages, different genders, different countries of origin, and different employment status before migration. These differences extended to alternative arenas of interaction, most prominently the educational system and local civil society associations.

Social factors, and particularly those related to the migrants' personal characteristics, skills, and networks, played a profound role in allowing access to different arenas of interaction. Workplace integration required that the migrant had sufficient work skills, language skills, and the contacts necessary to find employment. This excluded many old migrants, and migrants that lacked prior work experience. High barriers into the Swedish labor market exacerbated these exclusionary effects, particularly in locations with undifferentiated and skills-intensive labor market structures. Further, workplace integration was only possible in so far as the workplace allows for encountered between migrants and long-term residents. In workplaces where migrants were functionally segregated from native speakers or other long-term residents, or where workers had to do most of their work alone, employment did not produce opportunities for meaningful interactions and long-term social integration.

Integration in the school system was obviously only available to people of a certain age. Judging from the interviews, these opportunities were better the younger the migrant was when entering the school system. For migrants who came to Sweden in their teens, the interviews indicated difficulties creating relationships with native youths, similar to the sense of indifference and mild hostility that many migrants encountered in society more broadly.

Integration through civil society associations was deeply meaningful for some participants. However, they also pointed out that civil society participation necessitated particular interest and personal traits, and that it could often conflict with the work, family, and educational schedules. On one hand, given the relatively narrow scope and capacities of Swedish civil society associations, in a system where such associations play a limited social role, participation is predicated on the migrants' practical interest in a given set of values, a given sport, or a given political program. Further, civil society participation necessitates time and some comfort in contacting and interacting voluntarily with strangers. These factors, when combined, made civil society participation a particularly useful integration trajectory for older women (who often matched the social profile of the wider associations) without stay-at-home children, particularly if they had prior experiences of organizational work.

The high barriers of entry and the immense pressure it put on migrants' personal characteristics, were to a large extent the consequence of factors related to public and corporate *governance*. These included the *de facto* breakdown of the PES's labor market activation program, and what many perceived as inadequate municipal adult education programs. In response, many municipalities have attempted to introduce more labor market

orientation in adult education, and, in some cases, to create local labor market activation programs to complement the national level. In the small town in Scania, where these attempts had been taken the furthest, it appeared that local integration policy could improve migrants' labor market participation. However, if these solutions cannot solve issues of functional segregation and lone work, it is not sure whether they will actually contribute to successful long-term integration. This is also true insofar as they rely on subsidized, short-term contracts.

Governance also had an indirect effect on spatial relations, specifically residential segregation. With the exception of the small town in Dalarna, all case study localities experience different degrees of housing shortages, leaving migrants with crowded housing and informal contracts (see country report 4). In all six municipalities, further, the housing that is accessible to migrants tends to be concentrated to publically owned rental housing in neighborhoods in the urban periphery. While the extent of residential segregation differs widely between the case study localities, participants note how it limits social interactions, creates inequalities in access to information, and creates obstacles for labor market participation. In the absence of a buffer of available and publically owned housing, even those municipalities that have formally committed to an active housing policy (e.g. offering housing quotas for migrants) have few instruments to address the ensuing residential segregation. In the medium-sized town in Jönköping, where residential segregation was most broadly addressed, the municipality's solution has been to tie social benefits to migrants' area of residence.

Political and ideational factors played a varied, if surprisingly limited role in the participants' narratives. Overall, political and ideational factors affected the prevalence of discrimination within and outside the workplace and the educational system. It also impacted on the direction that municipal governments would steer the governance of integration policy, and of the labor and housing markets. Political and ideational currents also showed in expressions of direct racism – typically from individual strangers rather than organized and/or collectively mobilized far right actors, as well as in the support that many victims of racism and discrimination received from co-workers, leaders and civil society associations. However, it seems plausible that negative attitudes toward migrants were far more impactful as an element of the indifference that many migrants felt in encounters at work, at school, and in public space. The sole exception to this rule could be the small town in Scania, where the prevalence of racism, and the relative absence of support structures, appeared to expose migrants to more intensely hostile interactions.

At the time of fieldwork, migration the Ukraine was not a salient issue in all of the fieldwork locations. In those localities where it had been widely visible, and where there had been local mobilization in support of the Ukrainian refugees, many post-2014 migrants had participated as volunteers. Encountering local mobilization and government initiatives to support the new migrant group, however, many interviewees who had migrated from the Middle East, Afghanistan, and other countries saw a type of support that they had wanted when they

arrived in the years prior. It was common to perceive a degree of hypocrisy in Swedish government agencies and in Swedish society more generally, where "white" and European refugees were more desirable than others. The post-2014 migrants' experience of the current wave of migration from the Ukraine risked lowering their trust in government institutions, and contributes negatively to their sense of belonging in Sweden. This is not due to the welcoming paid to the Ukrainian migrants, but to the discrepancy between the current situation and the state of migrant reception more broadly in the wake of 2015.

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Annex I

Methods and data collection

The method combined in-depth interviews with post-2014 migrants, focus groups with post-2014 migrants and long-term residents, and participant observation of interactions in public spaces. One researcher collected all data (and two research assistants during the focus groups) between April and August 2022. Participants were selected and contacted through civil society associations, through personal contacts, and through networks developed during the fieldwork for the previous work packages. Before fieldwork, the researcher assembled data on protest events and support associations through two complementary methods: a keyword search in the Retriever media database,[8] and a manual inventory of the association registers for each municipality.

After the fieldwork was over, interview transcripts and field notes were assembled into a single document for each case study location. The author read through the materials, noting quotes that either described experiences of social interaction, and the arenas where interactions take place. The author also noted quotes that touched upon the key theoretical themes: social, political, spatial, and governance factors. This led to the crystallization of the workplace, school, and civil society associations as the predominant settings of interaction, and how surrounding factors affected the opportunities for meaningful interaction within these arenas. As the analysis shows, however, these factors had a limited and, most of all, uneven impact in the participants' narratives. After this point, the researcher used findings from desk research (e.g. on the extent of anti-migrant mobilization, or the scope of civil society associations) and from the field observations to contextualize and further substantiate the findings from the qualitative interviews. This way, it was possible to note the paradoxical *lack* of impact of anti-migrant mobilization in the participants' everyday experiences, and the lack of meaningful cross-group interaction in the localities overall.

It was apparent from the analysis that the localities, with minor differences, shared many of the same patterns and challenges. While these challenges were sometimes exacerbated by political differences, differences in the degree and pattern of residential and workplace segregation, and in the absence or presence of supportive civil society networks, they all revolved around access to the main arenas of interaction. In order to save space, and to avoid repeating the same analysis across all the narratives, the written results therefore emphasize the things that keep the localities apart.

As described in chapter 1, the amount of data differed prominently between the case study locations. In the small town in Gävleborg, and in the medium-sized town in Jönköping, it was

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[8] The search string, translated into English, read ("protest*" OR "demonstration*" OR "rally*" OR "appeal*") AND (Migrat* OR "immigra" OR refugee*) AND [name of locality].

relatively easy to find interviewees, and the interviewees differed widely in their age, reasons for migrating, national background, and so on and so forth. In the small town in Scania and the medium-sized town in Gävleborg, on the other hand, it proved very difficult to access participants that fit the project's profile and who were also willing to participate in interviews or focus groups.

In Scania, the fieldwork coincided with the Swedish electoral campaign. Shortly before the beginning of the fieldwork, the right-wing populist SD had launched a local ad campaign against providing financial support for an "Islamist" educational association. As this campaign circulated on social media, many Muslims became afraid that contacts with educational institutions overall would label them as religious extremists. The problem was exacerbated when it turned out that the project's most central gatekeeper had been associated with the targeted association. From one day to the next, almost fifteen people cancelled their participation in the focus group, and the contacts that the project had developed refused further contact.

In the medium-sized town in Gävleborg, and in the small town in Dalarna, the problems were more closely associated with timing and the structure of local relations. Using gatekeepers from civil society associations, it turned out to be very difficult to identify people with sufficient language skills to participate in the project. Many were also wary to participate owing to negative experiences in their home countries, because they were busy with their own asylum processes, or simply because they were working too much. These problems were made even more difficult by the fact that most of the fieldwork took place during the summer, a time when many were either taking seasonal employment or travelling out of the cities.

Participant observation

The participant observation was meant to take place in sites where post-2014 migrants and long-term residents either did or did not typically meet. This would then allow the researcher to identify the different social and spatial factors that facilitate or constrain inter-group interaction. The participant observation thereby relied in part on the interviews and focus groups in order to identify relevant locations. However, because none of the focus group participants or the individual interviewees managed to identify any such sites, it became necessary to develop an alternative means of case selection. Instead of following the interviews, the researcher therefore chose two locations in each municipality, one commercial (e.g. the square outside of the central shopping mall) and one primarily recreational (e.g. a public park or beach area). The rationale was that these were places were large groups of people gathered, but where the locations' different functions created different obstacles and opportunities for interaction.

The biggest challenge for participant observation, however, were the moral and analytical risks associated with ethnic profiling. The initial plan partially solved this problem, as it allowed the observer to focus more on the spatial properties of the site. The solution that the project developed when the first plan failed, on the other hand, needed to take into account both

how people interacted (and who they were), and where they did so. Because it is obviously impossible to judge who is or is not a post-2014 migrant based on looks alone, the observer took a more distant analytical perspective. At the top level, the participant observation documented how people behaved in general, and to what extent different groups mixed and mingled with one another. At a more specific level, it focused on whether people interacted across language boundaries, and across differences in style, age, and other visual cues that are more directly observable. From this starting point, the researcher conducted 12 hours of participant observation in each municipality, meaning a total of 72 hours total. As the analysis will show, however, even this very rough sorting allowed for some general conclusion about inter-group interactions in Swedish public spaces.

In-depth interviews

The in-depth interviews focused on the 24 interviewees' experiences and everyday activities in the municipalities. In order to secure more participation, the researcher kept the interviews rather short, at about 30-40 minutes. The shortest interview lasted for 20 minutes, while the longest interview lasted for 95. In the interviews, the interviewer asked the respondents to describe a typical day, their social relations, and their experiences on the labor market. The interviews also touched upon relations to organized society, i.e. civil society associations, contacts with municipal agencies, and so on, and experiences of racism and anti-migrant mobilization. At the end of the interviews, the interviewer asked for suggestions for sites to conduct participant observation of interactions among and between long-term residents and post-2014 migrants. Notably, no single interviewee suggested any such location.

The majority of the interviewees had originally migrated from Syria (n=11) or Afghanistan (n=8), although many of them had stayed in other countries during migration. All of the interviewees from Afghanistan were men, and they had all arrived to Sweden as unaccompanied minors. The Syrian migrants, on the other hand, had arrived as adults or as part of families, and one third were women. Five of the Syrian interviewees were above 40 years old at the time of fieldwork. The two groups therefore had different experiences of encounters with Swedish society and with the Swedish migration and integration infrastructure. The migrants from Afghanistan had all gone to school in Sweden, and many of them had grown up in family care homes. All of them had managed to find full-time employment after graduating from upper secondary school. For the Syrian migrants, post-migration trajectories were much more diverse. While some were working in the same fields as they had in their home countries, other had experienced long stretches of unemployment.

Interviewee no.	Gender	Age range	Country of origin	Year of arrival	Date of interview
Locality 2, int. 1	F	40-50	Syria	2015	2022−06−17
Locality 2, int. 2	M	40-50	Syria	2014	2022−06−17
Locality 2, int. 3	M	20-25	Syria	2016	2022−07−15
Locality 2, int. 4	F	20−25	Syria	2015	2022−07−15
Locality 2, int 5	M	20−25	Syria	2015	2022−08−04
Locality 3, int. 1	F	20−25	Turkey	2020	2022−06−21
Locality 3, int. 2	M	20−25	Afghanistan	Declined to say	2022−06−21
Locality 3, int. 3	M	20−25	Afghanistan	Declined to say	2022−06−21
Locality 3, int. 4	F	50−60	Syria	2017	2022−06−23
Locality 3, int. 5	M	50−60	Syria	2017	2022−06−23
Locality 3, int. 6	M	50−60	Syria	2016	2022−06−23
Locality 4, int. 1	M	25−30	Syria	Declined to say	2022−07−19
Locality 4, int. 2	M	20−25	Afghanistan	2014	2022−07−20
Locality 4, int. 3	M	20−25	Afghanistan	2014	2022−07−20
Locality 4, int. 3 Locality 6, int. 4[9]	F	30−40	Jordan	2014	2022−07−21
Locality 4, int. 4	M	20−25	Afghanistan	2015	2022−07−21

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[9] The interviewee had moved back and forth between localities 4 and 6. The researcher took the opportunity to ask questions about both localities.

Locality 4, int. 5	M	35–40	Yemen	2013	2022–07–21
Locality 4, int. 6	M	25–30	Syria	2015	2022–07–21
Locality 4, int. 7	M	20–25	Afghanistan	Declined to say	2022–07–22
Locality 5, int. 1	M	30–40	Iraq	2015	2022–08–27
Locality 5, int. 2	M	20–25	Afghanistan	Declined to say	2022–08–28
Locality 6, int. 1	F	40–50	Russia	Declined to say	2022–07–04
Locality 6, int. 2	M	20–25	Afghanistan	2015	2022–07–04
Locality 6, int. 3	M	20–25	Syria	2015	2022–07–15

Focus group discussions

The six focus groups consisted of between 3 and 8 people, chosen to represent long-term residents and post-2014 migrants. As in the individual interviews (see below), the majority of the post-2014 migrants had come from Syria or Afghanistan. Others came from Eritrea, Iraq, Palestine and Turkey. Within this group, some of the participants from Afghanistan had arrived as unaccompanied minors. While most of the long-term residents were born in Sweden, some had previously migrated from Finland, Eritrea and Syria. While most of the long-term residents were born in Sweden, some had backgrounds as migrants from Finland, Syria, and Eritrea. While the project aimed to recruit participants without ties to civil society associations, this proved to be extremely difficult. Therefore, most of the participants were either members of associations that supported refugees, or had been in close contact with such organizations through their participation in language cafés and voluntary initiatives. This went for long-term residents as well as for post-2014 migrants, and extended to the participants in the individual interviews.

This mix was achieved in all locations but one: the small town in Scania. In the latter, the focus group consisted solely of post-2014 migrants (albeit only 4, following the events described above), and it was conducted mostly in Arabic with the help of a hired assistant.

The focus groups revolved around six pre-defined questions. The first question asked the participants to describe what a "good community" looks like. The first and second questions focused on what spaces and activities facilitate contacts between migrants and long-term residents in the municipalities, and whether or not there were any obstacles to contacts. The fourth question asked whether there had been political mobilization for or against migration

in the community, and whether integration and migration is something that is discussed as an issue of local policy. The fifth question allowed the participants to identify something they would like to change in the local community in order to better facilitate contacts between migrants and long-term residents.

Locality	Long-term residents	Post-2014 migrants	Long-term residents country of origin	Post-2014 migrants country of origin	Gender ratio (M/F)
1	0	4	-	Syria	0/4
2	2	1	Sweden, Finland	Palestine	2/1
3	2	3	Sweden	Syria, Turkey	2/3
4	4	4	Sweden, Eritrea	Afghanistan	4/4
5	4	3	Sweden	Eritrea, Afghanistan	3/4
6	5	2	Sweden, Syria	Iraq	4/3

Annex II:

Pro-migrant and anti-racist protest events, locality 1

Mobilization	When	Where	Target /issue	Organizer/supporter
Counter-rally against SD	2014	City center	Radical right organization	Social Democrats, Left party
Rally against racism	2015	City center	Racism	Not mentioned
Counter-rally against SD	2015	City center	Radical right organization	Local antiracist organization
Rally for the right to asylum in the EU	2015	City center	EU asylum policy	Local antiracist organization, Social Democrats, Green party, Left party, Centerpartiet, Local party, Sports' association
Rally against racism	2016	City center	Racism	Local antiracist organization
Rally against racism	2017	City center	Racism	Local antiracist organization
Counter-protest against far right demonstration	2017	City center	Radical right organization	Not mentioned
Rally against racism	2018	City center	Radical right organization	Left party youth association, Church of Sweden, Left party
Rally against racism	2018	City center	Racism	Local antiracist organization
Rally against racism	2019	City center	Racism	Local antiracist organization, education association
Picnic against racism	2019	City center	Racism	Local antiracist organization
Rally against racism	2020	City center	Racism	Local antiracist organization, education association
Rally against racism	2021	City center	Racism	Local antiracist organization, education association

Pro-migrant and anti-racist protest events, locality 2

Mobilisation	When	Where	Target	Organizers
Demonstration against racist violence	2015	City center	Racism	Left party youth association
Anti-racist demonstration	2015	City center	Racism	Left party, Social democrats, UN association, Amnesty

Pro-migrant and anti-racist protest events, locality 3

Mobilisation	When	Where	Target	Organizer
Anti-racist demonstration	2014	City center	Racism	SSU, S, M, C, KD, V, Swedish-Cuban association, cultural association, RFSL, educational association, sports team, local newspaper,
Counter-demonstration against SvP	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	The Church of Sweden, Radical left organization, local antiracist organization, antifascist action, pentecostal churches
Counter-demonstration against SD	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Not mentioned
Rally in support of religious converts' right to asylum	2014	City center	National asylum policy	Pentecostal church, Syrian congregation, Assyrian congregation
Counter-demonstration against SvP	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	M, The Church of Sweden, Local antiracist organization
Counter-demonstration against SDU	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Not mentioned
Demonstration against ISIS, in solidarity with refugees from the middle east	2014	City Center	ISIS	Not mentioned
Rally at the Assyrian association, against vandalism	2015	Neighborhood	Racism	Local antiracist organization (2)
Demonstration against racism, following attacks against mosques across sweden	2015	City Center	Racism	Local antiracist organization (2), Left party youth association
Rally for more humanitarian asylum policies	2015	City Center	National asylum policy	Local antiracist organization (2), Kurdish association, Bosnian Muslim association
Vigil against the closure of a local reception center	2015	Migration agency	National asylum policy	Migrants
Demonstration against anti-migrant violence	2015	City center	Racist / far right organization	Local antiracist association (2), education association
Rally against more restrictive asylum legislation	2015	City center	National asylum policy	Local antiracist association (2)

Rally against more restrictive asylum legislation	2015	City center	National asylum policy	Local antiracist association (2)
Rally against more restrictive asylum legislation	2016	Not mentioned	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association, Local antiracist association (2), education association, Afghan cultural association
Rally against more restrictive asylum legislation	2016	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association, Local antiracist association (2), Educational association, Afghan cultural association
Physical confrontation with the Soldiers of Odin	2017	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antifascist Action
Rally in support of unaccompanied minors' right to asylum	2017	City center	National asylum policy	Educational association, pro-migrant association (2), Local antiracist association (2)
Counter-demonstration against NMR	2017	City center	Racist / far right organization	Unknown
Vigil for family reunification for afghans	2017	Migration agency	National asylum policy	Private individuals
Rally against rejections of afghan asylum seekers	2017	Not mentioned	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association
Rally against rejections of Afghan asylum seekers	2017	Not mentioned	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association
Demonstration against the EU's asylum deal with Libya	2017	City Center	EU border policy	Private initiative
Rally for rejected afghan asylum seekers	2018	City center	National asylum policy	Pentecostal churches
Rally in commemoration of a deceased asylum seeker	2018	City center	National asylum policy	Protestant and Catholic churches
Rally for religious converts' right to asylum	2019	City center	National asylum policy	Protestant and Catholic churches
Bell ringing against restrictive national asylum policy	2019	City center	National asylum policy	Protestant and Catholic churches
Solidarity rally with the people affected by the crisis in Lebanon	2019	Not mentioned	Lebanese government	Lebanese association
Rally for the right to asylum for unaccompanied minors from Afghanistan	2019	City center	Swedish government	Protestant churches

Black lives matter-demonstration	2020	City center	Racism	Left party
Rally in support of asylum for Ukrainian refugees	2022	City center	Ukrainian refugees/Russia	Social democrats, liberal party
Counter-demonstration against Rasmus Paludan/Stram Kurs	2022	Neighborhood	Racist / far right organization	Islamic congregation, The Church of Sweden, Sports clubs
Rally against restrictive national asylum policy	2018	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant associations

Pro-migrant and anti-racist protest events, locality 4

Mobilisation	When	Where	Target	Organizer
Counter-protest against SD	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist association, Left party, Feminist party
Counter-protest against SD	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist association
Counter-protest against SDU (Sweden Democrats' youth association)	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist association
Torchlight procession against racism	2014	City center	Racism	Antiracist association, media corporation, Church of Sweden
Rally against racism	2015	City center	Racism	not mentioned
Anti-racist national holiday celebration	2015	City center	Racism	Anti-racist association, Municipal office
Midsummer celebration against racism	2015	City center	Racism	Antiracist association, municipal office, educational association, social corporation, Church of Sweden
Rally in support of the Kurdish territories in Afrin	2015	City center	Turkey	not mentioned
Torchlight procession against racism	2015	City center	Racism	Antiracist association, municipal office
Picnic against racism	2016	City center	Racism	Antiracist association

Rally against deportations to Afghanistan	2016	City center	National asylum policy	Antiracist association, Church of Sweden, Educational association, Left party, Baptist church, Mission covenant church, pro-migrant association, Save the children, social corporation, Teachers' union
Torchlight procession against racism	2016	City center	Racism	Antiracist association
Demonstration against deportations of migrant youths	2017	City center	National asylum policy	Antiracist association, pro-migrant association, save the children
Rally to criminalize racist organizations	2017	City center	National policy	Antiracist association (1, 2)
Picnic against racism	2017	City center	Racism	Antiracist association
Rally against deportations to Afghanistan	2017	City center	National asylum policy	Antiracist association, pro-migrant association
Rally to criminalize racist organizations	2017	City center	National policy	Antiracist association, Left party, Christian Democrats, Church of Sweden
Rally against deportations to Afghanistan	2017	City center	National asylum policy	Antiracist association, pro-migrant association
Torchlight procession against racism	2017	City center	Racism	Antiracist association
Rally in support of Kurds in Afrin	2018	City center	Turkey	Kurdish association, Left party
Picnic against racism	2018	City center	Racism	Antiracist association, pro-migrant association
Torchlight procession against deportations to Afghanistan	2018	City center	Swedish government	Pro-migrant association
Torchlight procession against racism	2018	City center	Racism	Antiracist association
Rally against the deportation of religious converts	2019	City center	National asylum policy	Antiracist association, pro-migrant association, antiracist association (2), Church of Sweden
Picnic against racism	2019	City center	Racism	Antiracist association, pro-migrant association

Rally against the migration act (more restrictive asylum policy)	2019	City center	National asylum policy	Antiracist association, pro-migrant association, Church of Sweden
Torchlight procession against racism	2019	City center	Racism	Anti-racist association
Rally against the deportation of Afghan youths	2020	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association
Rally against racism	2021	Village	Racism	Antiracist association, Youth center, Save the children
Torchlight procession against racism	2021	City center	Racism	Antiracist association

Pro-migrant and anti-racist protest events, locality 5

Mobilisation	When	Where	Target	Who has organized/promoted / supported the mobilisation
Antiracist rally	2014	City center	Racism	Communist party
Antiracist demonstration	2014	City center	Racism	Antiracist association, Conservative party, Left party, Communist party, Liberal party, Social democrats
Rally against racist violence	2014	City center	Racism	Antiracist association
Counter-demonstration against SD	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Left party
Rally against racism in healthcare	2014	City center	Regional healthcare policy	Somali association
Counter-demonstration against SD	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist association
Antiracist rally	2014	City center	Racism	Antiracist association
Rally against NMR	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist association

Antiracist demonstration	2015	City center	Racism	Antiracist association
Rally against the Dublin accords	2015	City center	European union	Antiracist association
Demonstration against NMR	2018	City center	Racist / far right organization	Conservative party, Social democrats, Liberal party, Center party, Green party, Left party, Christian Democrats, SD
Counter-demonstration against NMR	2018	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist associations, Church of Sweden, Red Cross, Save the Children, Baptist Church, Media corporation, Private company, Green party, Feminist party
Counter-rally against NMR	2018	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist associations
Counter-rally against NMR	2018	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist associations
Eat-in in support of migrant-owned pizza restaurant targeted by NMR	2018	City center	Racist / far right organization	Conservative party, Center party, Liberal party
Counter-demonstration against NMR	2019	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist associations Private companies, Church of Sweden, Media corporation, Sports association, Save the Children, Municipal office, Center party, Social democrats, Red cross, Baptist churches, Educational association
Antiracist rally	2019	City center	Racism	Antiracist association (4)
Rally in support of nazi targeted church	2020	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist association (4)
Counter-demonstration against NMR	2022	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist association (4)

Pro-migrant and anti-racist protest events, locality 6

Mobilisation	When	Where	Target	Organizer
Rally against racist violence	2014	City center	Racism	Syndicalist youth association, Syndicalist union

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Rally against racism	2014	City center	Racism	Antiracist association, pro-migrant association, culture center, educational association, Iraqi cultural association
Demonstration against deportations to Iran	2014	City center	National asylum policy	not mentioned
Demonstration against deportations to Iran	2014	City center	National asylum policy	Syndicalist youth association
Counter-demonstration against SDU	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Private individuals
Counter-demonstration against SD	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Social democrats, Left party youth association, Mission covenant church
Counter-demonstration against SD	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	not mentioned
Anti-racist park party against SvP	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Feminist party
Anti-racist picnic against SvP	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist association
Counter-demonstration against SvP	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist association
Symbolic display of cut-out-hearts against racism	2014	City center	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist association
Rally in support of Albanian asylum seekers	2014	City center	National asylum policy	Antiracist association
Demonstration in support of the Kurdish struggle in Syria	2014	City center	ISIS	Kurdish association, Trotskyist party
Demonstration against racism and racist violence	2015	City center	Racism	Antiracist
Rally for the right to asylum	2015	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association, Save the children, Kurdish association

Demonstration in support of migrant housing, against local xenophobia	2015	City center	Local migration policy	Social democratic youth association, Green party youth association, Left party youth association, Social democrats
Demonstration in support of migrant housing, against local xenophobia	2015	City center	Racism	Church of Sweden
Rally against the restrictive temporary migration act	2015	City center	National asylum policy	Antiracist association
Rally against the restrictive temporary asylum act	2016	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association
May day rally with Pro-migrant association	2016	City center	National asylum policy	Left party youth association, Left party, Pro-migrant association
Rally against the restrictive temporary asylum act	2016	Rådhustorget	Swedish government	Pro-migrant association
Symbolic display of blankets on public statues, in support of asylum seekers	2016	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association
Rally against deportations of unaccompanied minors	2016	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association
Rally against deportations of unaccompanied minors	2017	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant associations, Iraqi cultural association
Rally against racism	2017	City center	Racism	Pro-migrant association
Rally against deportations to Afghanistan	2017	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association
Rally against deportations to Afghanistan	2017	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association, Iraqi cultural association, Educational association
Rally against deportations to Afghanistan	2018	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant associations
Rally against deportations to Afghanistan	2018	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association, educational association
Rally for amnesty to unaccompanied minors	2018	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association, educational association

Counter-demonstration against Alternative for Sweden	2018	missing	Racist / far right organization	not mentioned
Counter-demonstration against SD	2018	Slottstorget	Racist / far right organization	Antiracist association
Demonstration against racism	2018	City center	Racist / far right organization	Private individuals
Rally against racism	2018	City center	Racist / far right organization	Amnesty, Pro-migrant associations, Iraqi cultural association,Cultural center, RFSL, Church of Sweden, Save the children, Educational association
Rally against the deportation of Afghan asylum seekers	2018	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant associations; Save the children; Educational association
Rally for the right to family reunification	2018	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant association
Rally to commemorate the crystal night	2018	City center	Racism	Left party youth association, Social democratic youth association, Green party youth association
"Circle of silence" against deportations of afghan asylum seekers	2019	City center	National asylum policy	not mentioned
Rally against the temporary asylum act	2019	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant associations
Rally for refugee amnesty	2020	City center	National asylum policy	Pro-migrant associations, private company, cultural association
Anti-racist demonstration	2021	City center	Racist / far right organization	Left party youth association, Syndicalist union
Rally in support of ukrainian refugees, against Russia	2022	City center	Russian government	Not mentioned
Counter-demonstration against alternative for Sweden	2022	Rådhustorget	Racist / far right organization	not mentioned

Anti-migrant protest events, locality 1

Protest Event	When	Where	Target/issue	Who has organized/promoted / supported the protest
SD rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	SD
Mobilization against reception center	2014	City center	Local migration policy	Ad hoc neighborhood group
Rally against migration	2015	City center	National migration policy	SD, Nationell framtid, Party of the Swedes (SvP)
Vigil	2015	City center	Migrants	Sweden democrats
Mobilization against reception center	2015	Village	Local migration policy	Ad hoc neighbourhood group
Rally against Islam	2016	City center	Muslims	För frihet/For frihed
Vigil	2016	City center	Migrants	Soldiers of Odin
Mobilization against reception center	2016	City center	Local migration policy	Sweden democrats, Ad hoc neighborhood group
Attempted assault against municipal employees responsible for reception centers	2016	City center	Local migration policy	Not mentioned
Death threats against municipal staff responsible for reception centers	2016	City center	Local migration policy	NMR
Death threats against staff at reception centers	2016	City center	Local migration policy	Not mentioned
Rally in support of "south African whites"	2016	City center	South African government	NMR
Rally against migration	2016	City center	National migration policy	SD
NMR cordons off the private homes of local politicians responsible for migrant accommodation	2016	City center	Local migration policy	NMR
Mobilization against reception center	2016	Village	Local migration policy	Ad hoc neighbourhood group
NMR demonstration against asylum reception	2017	City center	Local migration policy	NMR
Anti-migrant demonstration	2017	City center	National migration policy	Folkets demonstration (SD, NMR)
NMR rally	2017	City center	National migration policy	NMR

Anti-migrant protest events, locality 2

Protest Event	When	Where	Target	Organizer
SD rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	SD
SD rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	SD
NMR cordons off adult language education offices	2015	City center	Municipal migration policy	NMR
SD rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	SD
SD rally	2017	Village	National migration policy	SD
AfS rally	2022	City center	National migration policy	AfS

Anti-migrant protest events, locality 3

Protest Event	When	Where	Target	Organizer
SvP electoral rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	SvP
SD electoral rally	2014	Not mentioned	National migration policy	SD
SvP electoral rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	SvP
SvP demonstration	2015	City center	National migration policy	NMR
Vandalism against the Assyrian association	2015	Neighborhood	Migrants	Unknown
SD rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	SD youth
NMR Rally	2016	Neighborhood	Swedish government	NMR
Soldiers of Odin march	2016	City center	Crime, migrants	Soldiers of Odin

Posters and flyers against migrant accommodation	2016	Village	Local migration policy	NMR
Neighbor mobilization to information meeting about refugee reception center	2016	Village	Local migration policy	Neighbors, SD
SD rally	2016	Village	Local migration policy	SD
Mobilization against reception center	2016	Village	Local migration policy	Neighbors
Mobilization against reception center	2016	Neighborhood	Local migration policy	Neighbors
Mobilization against reception center	2016	Village	Local migration policy	Neighbors
Mobilization against reception center	2016	Village	Local migration policy	Neighbors
Mobilization against reception center	2016	Village	Local migration policy	Neighbors
Soldiers of Odin march	2016	City center	Crime, migrants	Soldiers of Odin
SD rally	2017	City center	National migration policy	SD
SD rally	2017	City center	National migration policy	SD
NMR rally	2017	City center	Anti-racists	NMR
Soldiers of Odin vigil	2017	City center	Migrants, "security"	Soldiers of Odin
Arson attack against migrants' housing	2017	Neighborhood	Local migration policy	Unknown
Demonstration	2018	City center	National migration policy	NMR
SD electoral rally	2018	City center	National migration policy	NMR

NMR rally	2018	Village	National migration policy	NMR
Quran burning	2022	Neighborhood	Muslims	Rasmus Paludan/Stram kurs

Anti-migrant protest events, locality 4

Protest Event	When	Where	Target	Organizer
NMR rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	NMR
SD rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	SD
NMR rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	NMR
SD rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	SD
SDU Rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	Sweden Democratic Youth
NMR rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR cordons off city hall, media houses for spreading multiculturalism/semitism	2014	City center	Municipal government	NMR
NMR cordons off Swedish public television for spreading multiculturalism/semitism	2015	City center	Media	NMR
NMR rally	2015	Village	National migration policy	NMR
NMR rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR cordons off media house for spreading multiculturalism/semitism	2015	City center	Media	NMR
NMR rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	NMR

NMR rally	2016	City center	National migration policy	NMR
Soldiers of Odin patrol	2016	City center	Crime, migrants	Soldiers of Odin
NMR rally	2016	City center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR rally	2016	City center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR cordons off exhibition about the holocaust	2017	City center	Jews	NMR
NMR rally	2017	City center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR rally	2017	City center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR rally	2017	City center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR rally	2017	City center	National migration policy	NMR
SD rally	2017	City center	National migration policy	SD
NMR rally	2017	City center	National migration policy	NMR
SD rally	2018	City center	National migration policy	SD
Death threats against local politicians for accepting migrants	2019	City center	Local migration policy	NMR

Anti-migrant protest events, locality 5

Protest Event	When	Where	Target	Organizer
SD Rally	2014	City Center	National migration policy	SD
SD Rally	2014	City Center	National migration policy	SD
NMR cordons off "multicultural" neighborhood	2015	Neighborhood	Migrants	NMR
NMR rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	NMR

NMR cordons off asylum center	2015	Neighborhood	Migrants	NMR
NMR rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR rally against accommodation center	2015	City center	Local migration policy	NMR
NMR rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	NMR
Flyer campaign against local migration policy	2015	Neighborhood	Local migration policy	NMR
NMR rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	NMR
SD rally	2015	City center	National migration policy	SD
Flyer campaign against local migration policy	2015	Neighborhood	Local migration policy	NMR
Banner drop against the commemoration of the Holocaust	2016	City center	Jews	NMR
NMR rally	2016	City center	National migration policy	NMR
Rally against local migration policy	2016	Neighborhood	Local migration policy	NMR
NMR rally	2017	City center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR cordons off the public housing company offices for housing migrants	2017	City center	Local migration policy	NMR
NMR rally at a local school	2017	City center	Migrants	NMR
Rally at Lorensbergaskolan against alleged migrant crime	2018	City Center	Migrants	NMR
Counter-demonstration against anti-racist demonstration	2018	City Center	Municipal government	NMR
Threats against a migrant-owned pizza restaurant (verbal)	2018	City Center	Business	NMR
NMR demonstration	2018	City Center	National migration policy	NMR
Threats against a migrant-owned pizza restaurant	2018	City Center	Business	NMR
Assault against staff at a migrant-owned pizza restaurant	2018	City Center	Business	NMR
NMR demonstration	2019	City Center	National migration policy	NMR
NMR rally	2019	City Center	National migration policy, municipal government	NMR
NMR rally	2019	City Center	National migration policy, municipal government	NMR

| NMR vandalizes church for its support of migrants | 2020 | City Center | Antiracism | NMR |
| NMR rally | 2022 | City Center | National migration policy | NMR |

Anti-migrant protest events, locality 6

Protest Event	When	Where	Target	Organizer
SDU rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	SD youth association
SD rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	SD
SvP rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	SvP
SD rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	SD
SvP rally	2014	City center	National migration policy	SvP
Repeated verbal abuse against migrant family	2014	Village	Migrants	Not mentioned
Firecrackers thrown against migrants outside a reception center	2014	Village	Migrants	Not mentioned
Racist slogans painted on an accommodation facility	2015	City center	Migrants	Not mentioned
Neighbors mobilize against the opening of a reception center	2015	Neighborhood	Local migration policy	Not mentioned
Death threats against local politicians responsible for a reception center	2015	Neighborhood	Local migration policy	Not mentioned
SD rally	2016	City center	National migration policy	SD
Soldiers of Odin patrols	2016	City center	Crime, migrants	Soldiers of Odin
Neighbors mobilize against the opening of a reception center	2016	Village	Local migration policy	Not mentioned
Arson attack against Mosque	2016	City center	Muslims	Not mentioned
Rally to commemorate "genocide against South African whites"	2016	City center	South African government	NMR

Alternative for Sweden electoral rally	2018	City center	National migration policy	Alternative for Sweden
SD electoral rally	2018	City center	National migration policy	SD
NMR rally	2021	City center	National migration policy	NMR
Alternative for Sweden, May day	2022	City center	National migration policy	Alternative for Sweden

Pro-migrant associations, locality 1

Name	Found. year	Formal / Informal	Purposes and activities	Leadership and membership	Offers services to post-2014 migrants	Participates in pro-migrant / anti-racist mobilization	Migrants' / minority cultural association
Afghan association	2019	Formal	Social activities	Migrants	No	No	Yes
Church of Sweden	2000	Formal	Mobilization, language cafés	Local	Yes	Yes	No
Language café association	2018	Formal	Language café	Unknown	Yes	No	Yes
Lions	1951	Formal	Social activities, integration projects	Local	Yes	No	No
Local antiracist organization	2014	Formal	Mobilization, language cafés	unknown	Yes	Yes	No
Sports association	1971	Formal	Mobilization	Local	No	Yes	No

Pro-migrant associations, locality 2

Name	Found. year	Formal / Informal	Purposes and activities	Leadership and membership	Offers services to post-2014 migrants	Participates in pro-migrant / anti-racist mobilization	Migrants' / minority cultural association

Youth center	1966	Formal	Youth center	Locals	Yes	No	No
Swedish United Nations Federation	unknown	Formal	Anti-racist mobilizations	Locals	No	Yes	No
Amnesty	2002	Formal	Anti-racist mobilizations	Locals	No	Yes	No

Pro-migrant associations, locality 3

Name	Year of foundation	Formal/Informal	Purposes and activities	Leadership and membership (e.g., locals and migrants, only migrants, only locals)	Offers services to post-2014 migrants	Participates in pro-migrant / anti-racist mobilization	Migrants' / minority cultural association
Public education association	1910	Formal	Tutoring and language courses	Locals	Yes	Yes	
Afghan association		Formal		Migrants		Yes	Yes
Mission covenant church	1971	Formal	Language cafés		Yes	Yes	
Mission covenant church	1955	Formal	Language cafés		Yes		
Antifascist action	1992	Formal	Antiracist /pro-migrant protest			Yes	
Taekwando club		Formal	Sports classes for migrants		Yes		
Public education association	1947	Formal	Classes and language training		Yes		
Football club	1929	Formal	Sports activities for migrants	Locals	Yes		

Basketball association	1976	Formal	Sports activities for migrants		Yes		
Islamic cultural assocation	2010	Formal		Migrants			Yes
Aid organization (East africa)	2015	Formal		Migrants			Yes
Christian aid organization	1967	Formal	Fundraising, provides resources for migrants		Yes		
Eritrean association	2001	Formal					
Eritrean islamic assocation	2002	Formal					
Eritrean association		Formal		Migrants			Yes
Music association	1993	Formal	Integration activities with music	Migrants	Yes		
Gardening association	2007	Formal	Integration activities, gardening		Yes		
Cross-country skiing club	1929	Formal	Sports activities for migrants		Yes		
Islamic cultural association	2016	Formal		Migrants			Yes
Football club	1919	Formal	Sports activities for migrants		Yes		
Evangelical church	1976	Formal	Language cafés, integration activities		Yes	Yes	
Social corporation	2015	Formal	Supports migrant entrepreneurs	Migrants and locals	Yes	Yes	

Women's International al League for Peace and Freedom	1915	Formal			Yes		
Iraqi cultural association	cultural	Formal		Migrants			Yes
Frisbee golf club	2010	Formal	Sports activities for migrants		Yes		
Cricket club	2016	Formal	Sports activities for migrants	Migrants	Yes		
Sailing club	1971	Formal	Sports activities for migrants		Yes		
Taekwand o club	2009	Formal	Sports activities for migrants		Yes		
Swedish United Nations Federation	1957	Formal				Yes	
Islamic associatio n	1993	Formal		Migrants		Yes	Yes
Christian Young Men's Associatio n	1966	Formal	Sports activities for migrants		Yes		
Football club	1998	Formal					Yes
Pentecosta l church	1971	Formal	Integration activities		Yes		
Kurdish associatio n	1999	Formal				Yes	Yes
Refugee solidarity associatio n	2018	Formal	Integration activities		Yes		
Public education	1974	Formal			Yes		

association							
Mission covenant church		Formal			Yes		
Public education association / Temperance association	1894	Formal			Yes		
Pakistani cultural association		Formal		Migrants			Yes
Pentecostal church	1924	Formal			Yes	Yes	
Polish association	1947	Formal		Migrants			Yes
Public education association	1985	Formal			Yes		
Save the children	1919	Formal			Yes		
Red cross	1865	Formal			Yes		
Shia islamic association	1991	Formal		Migrants			Yes
Shia islamic association	2008	Formal		Migrants			Yes
Somaliland migrants' association	2003	Formal		Migrants			Yes
Somali association	2007	Formal		Migrants			Yes
Temperance association	2010	Formal			Yes		

Turkish association	2012	Formal		Migrants			Yes
Church of Sweden	2000	Formal	Integration activities, protest	Migrants	Yes	Yes	
Syrian-orthodox association	1993	Formal		Migrants		Yes	Yes
Anti-racist association	2014	Formal	Integration activities, protests	Locals	Yes	Yes	
Football club	1969	Formal	Sports activities for migrants		Yes		
Hungarian association		Formal		Migrants			Yes
Public education association	1967	Formal		Locals	Yes		
Basketball association	1983	Formal	Sports activities for migrants	Locals	Yes		
Social corporation	2019	Formal	Supports migrants' entrepreneurship	Migrants	Yes		
Football club	1970	Formal	Protest activities	Locals		Yes	
Lebanese association	2019	Formal	Protest activities	Migrants		Yes	Yes
Liberal party	1934	Formal	Protest activities	Locals		Yes	
Migrant support association	2018	Formal	Protest activities, integration activities	Migrants	Yes	Yes	
Ung i Sverige		Formal	Protest activities	Migrants		Yes	
Migrant support	2018	Formal	Protest activities,	Locals	Yes	Yes	

association			integration activities				
Salvation army	1882	Formal	Fundraising, provides resources for migrants	Locals	Yes	Yes	
Roman Catholic Church	1950	Formal	Protest	Locals		Yes	
Migrant support association	2016	Informal	Protest, provides resources for migrants	Locals	Yes	Yes	
Anti-racist association	2013	Informal	Protest	Locals		Yes	
Swedish-cuban friendship association	1966	Formal	Protest			Yes	
Cultural assocation	1982	Formal	Protest	Locals		Yes	
RFSL	1950	Formal	Protest			Yes	
Ice hockey club	1971	Formal	Protest			Yes	

Pro-migrant associations, locality 4

Name	Found. year	Formal / Informal	Purposes and activities	Leadership and membership	Offers services to post-2014 migrants	Participates in pro-migrant / anti-racist mobilization	Migrants' / minority cultural association
Antiracist association	2013	Formal	Anti-racist mobilization, language cafés (in collab. With the Red cross)	Migrants and locals	Yes	Yes	No
Baptist church	1858	Formal	Participates in anti-racist and pro-migrant protest			Yes	
Media corporation	1909	Formal	Participates in anti-racist and pro-migrant protest			Yes	

Mission covenant church		Formal	Participates in anti-racist and pro-migrant protest			Yes	
Public education association	1909	Formal	Participates in anti-racist and pro-migrant protest, supports other civil society associations			Yes	
Public education association	1959	Formal	Participates in anti-racist and pro-migrant protest, supports other civil society associations			Yes	
Save the children	1919	Formal	Organizes activities for refugees, particularly for unaccompanied youths		Yes	Yes	
Teachers' union	1991	Formal	Participates in anti-racist and pro-migrant protest			Yes	
Pro-refugee association	2017	Formal	Organizes housing and other resources for migrants	Migrants and locals	Yes	Yes	No
Red Cross	1923	Formal	Organizes language cafés, fundraising		Yes		
Anti-racist association (2)	2010	Formal	Participates in anti-racist and pro-migrant protest			Yes	
Islamic association	1992	Formal	Organizes activities for Muslims, collaborates with the municipal government in matters pertaining to the Muslim minority	Migrants and locals			Yes
Kurdish association	2015	Formal	Migrants' association				Yes
Afghan association	2014	Formal	Migrants' association				Yes
Church of Sweden	2000	Formal	Organizes language cafés and other activities		Yes	Yes	
Pro-refugee association	2016	Formal	Migrants' association	Migrants	Yes	Yes	
Social corporation	2013	Formal	Support for training and entrepreneurship, targeting local youths	Locals	Yes	Yes	

Pro-migrant associations, locality 5

Name	Found. year	For mal	Purposes and activities	Leadership and membership	Offers services to post-2014 migrants	Participates in pro-migrant / anti-racist mobilization	Migrants' / minority cultural association	Name
Antiracist association	2014	Formal	Anti-racist mobilization, mutual aid	Migrants and locals	Yes	Yes	No	No
Antiracist association	2018	Informal	Anti-racist mobilization	Locals	No	Yes	No	No
Antiracist association	2013	Informal	Anti-racist mobilization	Locals	No	Yes	No	No
Red Cross	1914	Formal	Integration activities and antiracist mobilization		Yes	Yes	No	No
Baptist church	1995	Formal	Integration activities		Yes	Yes	No	No
Neighborhood association	2019	Informal	Integration activities	Locals	Yes	No	No	No
Tenants' association	unknown	Formal	Integration activities, collaboration with the municipal government	Migrants and locals	Yes	No	No	No
Save the Children	1919	Formal	Integration activities, anti-racist protest	Locals	Yes	Yes	No	No
Antiracist association	2018	Informal	anti-racist protest	Locals	No	Yes	No	No
Somali association	2016	Formal	Cultural activities, collaboration with municipal government		Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Syrian association	unknown		Cultural activities		No	No	Yes	No
Afghan association	unknown		Cultural activities		No	No	Yes	No

Pro-migrant associations, locality 5

Eritrean association	2019		Cultural activities		No	No	Yes	No
Kurdish association	2019		Cultural activities		No	No	Yes	No
Islamic association	unknown		Cultural activities		No	No	Yes	No
Syrian cultural association	2018		Cultural activities		No	No	Yes	No
Syrian cultural association	unknown		Cultural activities		No	No	Yes	No
Somali cultural association	unknown		Cultural activities		No	Yes	Yes	No
Corporation	1988	Formal	anti-racist protest		No	Yes	No	No
Corporation	1897		anti-racist protest		No	Yes	No	No
Church of Sweden	2000		anti-racist protest		No	Yes	No	No
Media corporation	1987		anti-racist protest		No	Yes	No	No
Sports association	unknown		anti-racist protest		No	Yes	No	No
Baptist church	1938		anti-racist protest		No	Yes	No	No
Christian aid association	unknown		anti-racist protest		No	Yes	No	No
Educational association	2002		anti-racist protest		No	Yes	No	No
Business association	2018		anti-racist protest		No	Yes	No	No
Antiracist association	2018	Informal	anti-racist protest		No	Yes	No	No
Church of Sweden	2000		anti-racist protest		No	Yes	No	No

Pro-migrant associations, locality 6

Name	Found. year	Formal / Informal	Purposes and activities	Leadership and membership	Offers services to post-2014 migrants	Participates in pro-migrant / anti-racist mobilization	Migrants' / minority cultural association
Red Cross	1907	Locals	Fundraising, integration activities		Yes	No	No
Syndicalist trade union	1910	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No
Public education association	1912	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest, collaborates with municipal government	Locals	Yes	Yes	No
Save the Children	1919	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest, collaborates with municipal government	Locals	Yes	Yes	No
Rotary	1926	Locals	Integration activities		Yes	No	No
Amnesty	1964	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No
Public education association	1967	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest, collaborates with municipal government	Locals	Yes	Yes	No
Syndicalist commemoration society	1970	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No
Islamic center	1982	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes
Local theater	1984	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No

LGBTQ interest organization	1993	Formal	Councelling and legal support for LGBTQ Refugees	Locals and migrants	Yes	Yes	No
Syndicalist youth association	1993	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No
Islamic association	1994	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes
As Migrant support organization	1999	Formal	Provides financial and legal support for asylum seekers	Locals	Yes	Yes	No
Church of Sweden	2000	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No
East african association	2001	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes
Migrant support organization	2003	Formal	Supports unaccompanied youths	Migrants	Yes	Yes	Yes
Migrant support organization	2008	Formal	Organizes language cafés	Locals	Yes	Yes	No
Somali association	2008	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes
Cultural association	2009	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No
Somali association	2009	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes
Somali association	2009	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes
Cultural and sports association	2009	Formal	Organizes a service center, integration activities, language café	Locals	Yes	Yes	No
Somali association	2010	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes
Kurdish association	2010	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes

Somali association	2011	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes
Kurdish association	2011	Formal		Migrants	Yes	No	Yes
Somali association	2012	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes
Islamic association	2013	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes
Business	2014	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No
Social corporation	2014	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No
Anti-racist facebook page	2014	Informal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No
Anti-racist association	2014	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No
Afghan association	2014	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest, tutoring	Migrants	Yes	No	Yes
Somali association	2014	Formal		Migrants		No	Yes
Migrant support organization	2016	Formal	Supports unaccompanied youths, organizes protest events	Migrants	Yes	Yes	Yes
Migrant support campaign	2016	Formal	Supports unaccompanied youths, organizes protest events			Yes	No
Migrant support organization	2017	Formal	Supports unaccompanied youths, organizes protest events	Locals and migrants	Yes	Yes	No
Mission covenant church	missing	Formal	Pro-migrant/antiracist protest	Locals		Yes	No

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