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## Migration, Boundaries and Differentiated Citizenship

Editor

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Migration, Boundaries and Differentiated Citizenship

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Editorial

## Migration, Boundaries and Differentiated Citizenship: Contested Frameworks for Inclusion and Exclusion

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### Abstract

Contemporary migration across borders is beset by contradictory pressures and challenges. Some borders remain relatively open, especially for potential immigrants with valued skills and assets or for humanitarian reasons, but in many other cases borders are becoming increasingly more regulated or impermeable. The differential capacities for mobility that accompany these developments are contributing to new categories and hierarchies of citizenship and belonging which are being shaped by and exacerbate significant social, economic and political inequalities. This editorial highlights core relationships that have emerged in the process of regulating geographical and social boundaries in different national contexts, focusing on the intersections between dynamics of social inclusion and exclusion and the construction of differential categories of citizenship. The editorial establishes a framework for the articles that follow in this thematic issue, emphasizing the contested, fragmented, variable and highly uneven nature of borders and citizenship regimes.

### Keywords

citizenship; diversity; inclusion; migration; nation-state; rights

### Issue

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### 1. Introduction

Many millions of people cross international borders each year. Most crossings, undertaken by those with economic resources, human capital, and other valued assets, are relatively routine, facilitating tourism, family visitation, work-related activities, business transactions, and other short-term pursuits (International Organization for Migration, 2018). For growing numbers of people, however, border crossings have become more unsettling and dangerous. As populations displaced by armed conflict, natural and human-induced disasters, violence, and other risks rise to unprecedented levels (United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 2018), borders have come to take on new symbolic as well as political-geographical significance. Politics of nationalism, xenophobia, racism, and hostility to outsiders (redefined in many cases to include immigrants and racial minorities who have long been part of a particular national fabric) stand in sharp contrast to visions guided by aspirations

for more fluid forms of mobility and global rights. Heightened attention to the maintenance and policing of borders and border crossings has intensified new discourses and debates over citizenship, including questions about who is eligible to belong in a given nation-state and which kinds of rights and obligations accompany transience, residency and belonging. Running through all of these concerns are issues of social inclusion and exclusion.

This editorial piece highlights core issues and themes in recent literature concerning borders and boundary maintenance in relation to migration and citizenship rights. It is guided by a focus on the ways in which national policies, and the socioeconomic and political contexts within which these policies have been framed, have contributed to varied and distinct categories of citizenship and entitlements which, in turn, have unequal consequences for socioeconomic opportunities and well-being within and across populations. These phenomena, regulated principally through sovereign nation-states as well as non-state entities, are multilayered,

highly complex and contradictory in nature as they come to be shaped by and contribute to unequal relations of power and differentiated social positions both within and among populations.

## 2. The Contested Nature of Borders and Citizenship

### 2.1. *Citizenship as Inclusion and Exclusion*

Boundaries have different layers of significance in relation to citizenship and migration. Nation-states represent markers around which identity, belonging, and heritage are defined, but they also establish legal and social frameworks that have material consequences. Nation-states, as bounded entities, are circumscribed as distinct geographic and political spaces that intersect with other types of boundaries, of a social and symbolic nature; access to essential rights, responsibilities, and resources of various kinds may be extended or restricted on a differential basis in relation to the kinds of distinctions represented through these bounded relationships (Lamont & Molnár, 2002). Through their capacity to define and regulate criteria for entry, citizenship and other forms of status, nation-states establish policy frameworks that contribute to the determination of specific rights along with various entitlements and obligations that accompany those rights. Citizenship, in other words, involves much more than abstract conceptual and legal frameworks that articulate principles, rights and obligations associated with social and political participation and belonging; rather, it is given meaning and substance in the context of the particular material conditions in which these have come to take shape.

The boundaries that delineate each of the elements identified above—the physical contours and forms of sovereignty that define specific nations, the regulation of migration, and the citizenship regimes within particular state formations—are socially and politically constructed and contested. They are played out in conjunction with more general tensions and configurations through which social actions and relations have real and unequal consequences for people within different geographical, political and social spaces. Balibar (2015, p. 75) situates these elements of citizenship in relation to dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, which “are not impersonal processes; they are relationships of force exercised by institutions and power apparatuses over individual and collective subjects”. Bauder (2008), drawing on Bourdieu, emphasizes further that citizenship itself represents a form of capital around which distinctions linked with unequal positions, capacities for influence, and forms of exclusion are produced. Over the past two decades prolific bodies of literature have emerged, offering several distinct perspectives and assessments concerning the impact of globalization and other major social and economic changes on migration, citizenship and nation-state formations, reflected in particular policy directions and dilemmas emerging within specific decision-making

contexts as well as in general discourses on citizenship-related matters.

With respect to substantive orientations, economic activity contributes to migration both directly, from dislocations produced by changes in technology, production and flows of capital, and indirectly, through displacement by human-induced climate change, political instability, conflict, and other factors. Underlying many of these phenomena is the restructuring of capitalism on a global basis, contributing to changing patterns of immigration as well as to surges in temporary and irregular migration (McNevin, 2011; Rygiel, 2010). Phenomena related to migration also stimulate economic activity in numerous ways. In order to regulate, administer or restrict migration activities, for instance, state officials and private sector agencies are engaged in roles devoted to immigrant screening, visa processing, border security, policing, immigration law, consultation services, transportation, and many other activities; on a less official basis, human trafficking, production of false documentation, and other illegal activities can also be highly commercialized and profitable (Gammeltoft-Hansen & Sørensen, 2013). The consequences of these processes are highly uneven. For some, high initial costs may be compensated for by enhanced personal, financial or family security over time. For many others, exposure to vulnerability to a wide range of material, physical and psychological risks may create longer-term difficulties from which full recovery may not be possible even as some individuals or agencies in positions to broker or exploit these vulnerabilities benefit substantially. At a more general level, citizenship may offer protection against markets (Somers, 2008), but the capacity to sustain a broadly-based framework for citizenship and deliver the guarantees encompassed within it are threatened by fiscal and political limitations including those associated with neoliberalism and other challenges to state autonomy (Castles & Davidson, 2000; Cohen, 2009; Rygiel, 2010).

Changing discourses and analyses of state sovereignty and citizenship reflect the tensions and contradictions associated with relations of inclusion and exclusion. Extending from the late nineteenth into the latter half of the twentieth century, intersecting with growth in the scope and scale of welfare state activities, notions of citizenship focused especially on the expansion of rights across territories and domains, informed most powerfully by Marshall’s (1950) elaboration of the civic, political and social. Whereas debates concerning the growth phase of welfare state activities tended to be framed within a relatively narrow set of parameters marked by considerable degrees of consensus over key elements of citizenship, the analysis of more recent trends, amidst growing uncertainty produced by major economic, social and political upheavals since the mid-1970s, has been more fragmented.

Significant structural transformations manifest in changes in global flows of capital and labour, changing demographic and geopolitical trends, and shifting re-

relationships across other mutually intersecting spheres have been accompanied by a remarkable array of initiatives to reframe, redesign and in some cases eradicate welfare state activities, in the process challenging prevailing assumptions about nation-state sovereignty. Considerable attention, whether in relation to specific cases, comparative analysis, or more general trends, has been focused on the erosion or restriction of rights as states lose their capacity to regulate and enforce the terms of citizenship and meet accompanying demands posed by continuing and emerging social risks. This analysis is especially oriented to concerns about subgroups within national or migrant populations, including asylum seekers, refugees, undocumented workers, temporary migrants, and displaced workers and family members, confronted with exposure to ever-greater levels of social and economic vulnerability (Bonoli, 2005; McNevin, 2011). However, there is also parallel interest in the role that entities other than the nation-state, including the European Union and other quasi-state structures as well as hybrid economic and political bodies stretching within or across nations, have come to play in citizenship-related activities (Fahrmeir, 2007; Soysal, 1994). These developments have also given rise to work that advocates more comprehensive frameworks for citizenship. Several new possibilities, oriented to expanding citizenship rights both to ensure that all persons have protection from exposure to market forces and to mobilize capacities to address emerging global risks, are represented in concepts like cosmopolitan or transnational citizenship as well as advocacy to enshrine into particular legal and constitutional frameworks the principles articulated in the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights and other guiding statements (Ballin, 2014; Held, 2006; Linklater, 2002).

## 2.2. *Citizenship as Fragmented and Incomplete*

Empirical evidence drawn from diverse national and regional settings suggests a more complex reality than tends to be encompassed within broad discourses and frameworks of citizenship and rights. In many cases rights and benefits are becoming more fragmented or polarized as linkages among citizenship, rights, identities, and nation-states break down, but these tendencies should not be taken as indications that nation-states have surrendered sovereignty to global forces (Bloemraad, Korteweg, & Yurdakul, 2008; Lem, 2013; Sassen, 2006). There is tremendous diversity, on a global scale, of welfare state and citizenship regimes (Gough & Thornborn, 2010; Rygiel, 2010). Variations and contradictions associated with border regulation and citizenship entitlement are evident even within the context of the European Union and other supranational frameworks oriented to principles of free movement and common state provision for access to core rights and services (Benhabib, 2004, p. 168; Guild, 2009; Jenson, 2007). In some cases, nation-states, influenced by various forms of populism or authoritarian regimes, may rely on nationalism and

xenophobia to justify the imposition of rigid controls on border crossings or the restriction of rights and entitlements for selected groups (McNevin, 2011; Ní Mhurchú, 2014), sometimes mutually reinforced with public perceptions that overstate significantly the actual numbers of immigrants (Guskin & Wilson, 2017, p. 25). Lyon (2016, p. 15) goes so far as to suggest that global migration has become dominated by three main trends expressed as border security and militarization, criminalization of migrants and migration, and enactment and enforcement of laws in the guise of anti-terrorism. New political arrangements, economic relationships and technological applications have also contributed to the externalization of border control as migrants become subject to screening, surveillance, detention, or deportation in various locales in the process of moving across national settings (Mezzadra & Nielson, 2011, p. 13). Standing in contrast to processes linked with the restriction and control of migration are practices whereby nation-states (or localized state units in federal systems) may relax regulations or introduce more flexible arrangements to secure investment capital and accommodate labour market demands, especially those oriented to the most highly skilled occupational categories (Plascencia, Freeman, & Setzler, 2003). Differences in national frameworks for citizenship and immigration also reflect a range of other mitigating factors, including attention to social cohesion as the desires and circumstances of newly arrived populations come to be balanced in relation to demands posed by pre-existing national populations (Bevelander & Pendakur, 2012, p. 144). Greater attention is being paid to the ways in which the voices and capacities of the most vulnerable groups, typically considered as relatively powerless, are able, both directly and in conjunction with advocates and allies, to contribute to the framing and direction of conceptions and policy orientations related to citizenship (Isin, 2015; Johnson, 2014; Lem & Barber, 2010).

Citizenship, understood in relation to the complex dynamics and struggles through which citizenship rights come to be defined, regulated and realized, represents a project that is fundamentally incomplete and contradictory. The most common reference points by which progress towards full citizenship in a given context is assessed are typically aligned with measures reflecting the terms of political philosophic debates, especially in relation to either the advancement of liberal orientations concerned with equality of individuals or communitarian and republican alternatives that establish different parameters for membership and participation (Lister & Pia, 2008; Miller, 2000). However, more critical analyses grounded in empirical studies have brought to the forefront numerous conflicts, tensions and material constraints with respect both to the boundaries that determine eligibility for particular forms of citizenship and discrepancies between formal rights and substantive entitlements. Lockwood (1996) emphasizes that citizenship in capitalist or liberal democracies is inherently incomplete and stratified because, through its interconnec-

tions with markets and state bureaucracies, it is embedded within and helps to legitimize unequal social relations. Mackert and Turner (2017, pp. 2–3) situate processes of inclusion and exclusion in relation to three core tensions within modern conceptions of citizenship, expressed with respect to citizenship as status (rights associated with the individual) versus praxis (citizen as political actor), formal equality as opposed to substantive social inequality, and its universal applicability to all versus the particularistic terms within which citizenship rights are actually extended. Cohen (2009) further delineates boundaries and categories through which particular citizens or members of a political community who have relatively strong citizenship rights are differentiated from those, including children, convicted criminals, migrants, guest workers, and many other categories of “semi-citizens”, whose status limits or denies them full access to one or more clusters of rights.

Cohen’s analysis, though focused most fully on the logics through which rights and citizenship come to be categorized, also returns attention to the insight that these categories and the forms of recognition associated with them are subject to contestation and change. Isin (2017), employing the concept of “performative citizenship”, extends the understanding of citizenship as relational and dynamic in nature. The focus on performativity signifies that citizenship is not merely a legal mechanism or symbolic category that defines statuses in accordance with specified kinds of rights and duties; rather, and more importantly, citizenship derives meaning as a focus of social struggles and claims advanced, enacted and transformed by differentially positioned social actors (Isin, 2017, pp. 501–502). The meaning and terms of citizenship may be modified, expanded or nullified, in various ways, whether procedurally through legal and political challenges or in relation to declarations of sovereign exceptionalism, colonization, and other more violent processes (Agamben, 1998; Svirsky & Bignall, 2012). Individuals and collectivities can also undergo changes in status, through redefinition and in conjunction with significant transitions in identity, life course stage, or dislocation within existing citizenship frameworks. For nation-states there are several reasons, in addition to the management of ongoing activities such as the regulation of migration or allocation of resources, why it is important to maintain capacities to define and transform distinct categories of citizenship as well as to maintain possibilities for subjects to change statuses. Processes of citizenship education and naturalization, oriented to anticipated or desired changes in citizenship status, for instance, represent in part disciplinary processes oriented to foster social cohesion; social control can also be exerted more negatively by threats or actions to revoke particular statuses or limit entitlements. Citizenship, as all of these examples demonstrate, is neither a static nor a unified phenomenon; rather, citizenship comes to be constituted both symbolically and through social practice in highly differentiated ways in relation to multiple reference points and levels of activity.

### *2.3. Citizenship, Modernity, and Post-Colonial Configurations*

It should not be surprising that citizenship has come to be understood as a nuanced and incomplete project in a social and ideational context in which modernity itself has been called into question. Contemporary discourses related to citizenship have been framed in terms of a cluster of common reference points (including individual rights, markets and state formations) within discourses associated with liberal democratic practice. Marked transformations in the key relationships underpinning the social positions, identities, and institutional structures represented through these phenomena have given rise to new politics and policy frameworks as the relative rights and obligations of private, state and market entities come to be realigned in multiple ways (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Pierson, 1996). These changes, especially framed through debates concerning the essence and status of modernity in relation to post-modernism, multiple modernities, and other socio-historical configurations, have also informed critical assessment of the Eurocentric nature of dominant conceptions, structures and practices associated with modernity.

Postcolonial theory along with a growing range of alternative critical social theories have informed an understanding of how concepts and practices associated with modern citizenship are themselves embedded in western epistemic and social structures which, through colonization, Orientalism and other relations of domination and subordination have denied, marginalized and misrepresented significant institutional and cultural characteristics of non-western societies and ignored the impact of mutual interactions produced through these relationships (Go, 2016). Critical postcolonial analysis has been enriched by attention to diverse conceptions and practices associated with citizenship within Indigenous societies and other social contexts; it has also highlighted how imperial powers have employed citizenship in conjunction with other colonial practices as a mechanism to categorize, regulate and govern subaltern populations through colonization (Isin, 2015; Ray, 2007). In a post-colonial global order, practices related to border control and regulation of migration and citizenship rights in many nations which claim formal adherence to non-discrimination demonstrate the continuing significance of racialization and stigmatization of subaltern populations. Moving beyond critique, the shifting focus on citizenship in non-western contexts has made it possible to develop a more nuanced understanding of issues related to migration, border control and rights throughout Asia, Africa, and many other sites where previous research on these phenomena has been relatively limited or not widely known outside specific regional or linguistic contexts (e.g., Gaventa & Tandon, 2010; Goldman & Perry, 2002; Sadiq, 2009).

These insights have reinforced the understanding of citizenship as a signifier for distinct statuses which, in



turn, enable or limit in a differential manner access to important political, social, economic, and psychic resources within and among populations. It is framed within territorial and social boundaries that are subject to periodic internal and external challenges concerning who may cross those borders, and under what conditions, as well as to the rights and duties associated with particular forms of citizenship status. Contestation over how citizenship is defined and regulated and distinct approaches to the realization of citizenship aspirations and practices are expressed as relations of inclusion and exclusion, contributing to an extensive array of diverse social categories in which rights for some are being expanded while those for others are restricted or endangered.

### 3. Citizenship: Fragmentation and Hierarchies

The major themes highlighted in the preceding discussion have revealed citizenship as contested, partial, and somewhat fluid, having both symbolic and material significance. In designating the terms, nature and scope of membership within a nation-state or other political unit, it thereby establishes terms in accordance with which exclusion as well as inclusion come to be associated with distinct forms of status. The notion of citizenship as differentiated in these ways encompasses a more general and diverse set of citizenship practices than those typically referred to in conjunction with concepts of “differentiated citizenship” employed to advance a more socially inclusive or active framework for citizenship (Lister, 2000). Differentiated citizenship, as articulated by Young (1990), is advocated to address circumstances in which universal rights associated with membership in a particular national community are insufficient and therefore in need of enrichment to ensure equity for designated groups; it is intended to advance political representation for oppressed groups in order to realize opportunities that are inhibited by barriers embedded within dominant assumptions and institutional arrangements represented in discourses of universal or conventional coverage (Young, 1990). In contrast to analyses that focus on the decline or diminishment of contemporary citizenship and rights, this notion of differentiated citizenship suggests that contemporary citizenship remains a meaningful reference point for exploring possibilities to broaden the terms by which social inclusion may be advanced. In these respects, there is some affinity with recent work that draws attention to the various ways in which citizenship has become meaningful not simply within the nation-state but also at other levels, as expressed through conceptions such as “nested citizenship” and embeddedness in a “multi-levelled polity” (Castles & Davidson, 2000; Delanty, 2000; Kivisto & Faist, 2007). Understood in these terms, a broadened conception of differentiated citizenship makes it possible to focus on the varied ways in which citizenship forms and rights are being alternatively expanded and constricted in complex ways.

Processes related to globalization have contributed to new regulatory frameworks and pathways across borders, some of which constrict or blur national autonomy in important ways, but these coexist with new and continuing forms of national expression and hybrid social, political and economic entities. These are reflected in a vast array of citizenship regimes in which statuses, rights, entitlements, and obligations are characterized by differentiation or fragmentation along several dimensions and levels within and across nations. At the most general level, it is important to understand how citizenship is understood in any particular social context. At the most general level, variations in abstract human rights principles, legal frameworks, and rights are further distinguished as they come to be translated into practices through particular domains associated with political, social, and economic, and other activities. The degree to which formal rights are effective varies in accordance with mechanisms and procedures to protect and enforce them, including the safeguards, entitlements and obligations conveyed through particular categories of citizenship and community membership.

The practical or empirical experience of citizenship is highly differentiated, with numerous points of variation between and within both incoming and pre-existing populations. Migration and border controls contribute to differentiation based on the degree to which conditions of entry are open or restrictive, explicit and hidden immigration criteria (such as language and skill requirements, immigration and visa classifications, and designated or restricted national sources), and restrictions or conditions associated with temporary or guest workers, refugees, undocumented persons, and other irregular migrants. Across all of these groupings there exist significant variations in post-entry status categories and rights with respect to extent and timing of access to and degree of coverage provided for education, health care, political participation, and other specified services. Related to the latter are issues related to portability of rights across nations or regions, conditions and various limitations associated with eligibility for and pathways to naturalization and citizenship status. Internally, citizenship is differentiated in additional ways, including protections for or restrictions of ethnic minorities, diverse forms of Indigenous rights and status, and residence-based population registration and regulation. All of these factors, along with other dimensions, contribute to differentiated forms of citizenship which are produced by and contribute to unequal opportunities and access to essential resources and prospects for well-being in social, political, economic, and other realms.

### 4. The Thematic Issue

This thematic issue highlights recent research that explores many of the complex intersections between capacities for mobility, citizenship and belonging. The focus, in particular, concerns factors contributing to the

production of differential categories of citizenship and entitlement, representing research within specific national contexts as well as comparative studies within western Europe, Canada and Turkey. The articles explore the impact these changes are having for diverse populations, in many cases reinforcing broader trends contributing to inequalities in the distribution of income, access to health care, education, social welfare, political participation, and other services essential for social well-being. The analysis, nonetheless, reveals that there is no unilinear trajectory either within or across national cases, as pathways diverge or change course periodically across nations, populations, and time periods. The articles are organized into three thematic areas, focusing, respectively, on regulation of entry and citizenship rights, processes of integration and citizenship development, and changes in citizenship participation and entitlements over time.

#### *4.1. Regulating Borders and Access to Citizenship Rights*

The regulation of international borders has emerged as a prominent focus of media attention and heated political discourse across much of Europe, the United States and many other contexts, especially with respect to asylum seekers, refugees and undocumented migrants. While issues of border policing and regulation of entry are accorded most attention, states must also attend to the welfare of those who have arrived. Four articles highlight some of the specific ways in which nations, in efforts to manage migration, have established complex legislative and administrative frameworks that have contributed to new categories of citizenship giving rise to differential rights and opportunities.

The first article in this section, by Synnøve Bendixsen (2018), highlights the nuanced ways in which citizenship is constructed and regulated through “hierarchies of belonging”. With particular reference to concerns about rejected asylum seekers and other irregular migrants in Norway, the article focuses on ways in which the state has sought to regulate mobility by producing differential status categories and requirements that determine rights to work and access to health care and social assistance benefits.

Anne-Kathrin Will (2018) also demonstrates the ways in which boundaries of citizenship and belonging contribute to hierarchies within populations. Focusing on several recent legislative changes in Germany, her work reveals how asylum seekers increasingly have been differentiated in accordance with several criteria into numerous categories, each of which is associated with differing entitlements and resources.

Citizenship rights for members of a designated status do not necessarily guarantee access to services or resources for which they may be entitled, as Andy Jolly (2018) shows with reference to the case of support services for undocumented children in the UK. Despite legislative safeguards to support the welfare of all children,

“statutory neglect” produced through inadequate or conflicting guidelines and practices has resulted in severe social, economic and physical hardship for many undocumented family members.

Elisabeth Scheibelhofer and Clara Holzinger (2018) examine critically the extent to which objectives to establish free movement accompanied by portability of social rights within the European Union have been realized. Drawing on the experiences of several migrants from “new” (2004 and after) member states living or working in “old” European Union member states, the analysis highlights several barriers that contribute to a gulf between formal and substantive rights, resulting in uneven and incomplete forms of social protection for many individuals and family members.

#### *4.2. Integration and Transitions to Citizenship*

Citizenship entails more than prescribed sets of rights and status distinctions; it is also configured through social actions, identities and relationships. Three articles explore various dimensions along the pathway to gaining or practicing new types of citizenship status.

Observing the experiences of Eritrean refugees living in a community in Denmark, Peter Kærgaard Andersen, Lasse Mouritzen and Kristine Samson (2018) demonstrate how citizenship represents processes of becoming as newcomers seek to find meaningful spaces between their communities of origin and their new homes. Although citizenship is framed through dominant discourses and expectations in the host country, it is also enacted, expressed and transformed through interactions among populations drawing from diverse social and cultural resources.

Elke Winter (2018) also demonstrates the importance of acknowledging the understandings and perspectives that immigrants and other newcomers hold with respect to expectations and processes related to integration. Focusing on pathways to citizenship through naturalization, her research reveals the ways in which immigrants come to recognize the differential capacities they have to achieve citizenship status, which they see, in part, as embedded and reinforced through distorted and uneven expectations, assumptions and silences encompassed within official citizenship documents and protocols.

Kenneth Horvath (2018) addresses how educational inequality may be reproduced in conjunction with negative representations of migrants. Data concerning teachers’ perceptions of student backgrounds and educational problems in the German context reveal that teachers tend to hold lower educational expectations and are more likely to associate educational problems with students with foreign-born parents and those in relatively disadvantaged positions. However unintended this may be, by framing particular categories of immigrants in negative or deficit terms, educators contribute to the likelihood that social inequalities are reproduced over time.

### 4.3. The Immigrant Experience over Time

Differential citizenship status can reinforce social and economic inequality, but this is not always the case. Those in positions of relative disadvantage, including many immigrants and refugees looking to establish themselves in a new environment, may be able to cultivate sufficient skills, experiences, credentials, and social and political connections to pursue meaningful social positions and opportunities. Varying dynamics associated with immigration and its impact over time are the focus of three articles in the last section of this issue.

Per Adman and Per Strömblad (2018), drawing on survey data, observe that while immigrants to Sweden appear to be somewhat disengaged from the political system, this is not necessarily the case. Their knowledge of and participation in political systems tend to be a function of their conditions at the time of arrival, whereas experiences in the Swedish context, particularly insofar as they are able to achieve higher levels of education and language proficiency, come to be associated with greater political knowledge and participation. These findings suggest that political representation for minority populations is likely to be more effective as many groups become more established over a period of time.

Christiane Timmerman, Meia Walravens, Joris Michielsen, Nevriye Acar and Lore Van Praag (2018) shift attention to the impact of out-migration on those who remain in their home communities. Focusing on Emirdağ, a district in Turkey which experienced high levels of emigration in the late 20th century, the analysis reveals a situation in which limited prospects for secure employment and other barriers for migrants to Europe have contributed to the breakdown of traditional patterns of family care and fiscal support, leaving an aging population that has become highly vulnerable to poverty, isolation, and other problems. The analysis points to the need to understand migration as part of a circuit involving extensive, and highly uneven, interactions among people, communities, and resources.

Yaojun Li (2018) also draws attention to intergenerational factors, focusing especially on prospects for ethnic minorities and immigrants in the UK. His analysis suggests that while immigrants, reflecting in part initial selection criteria and parental investment in their children's success, tend to have relatively high levels of educational attainment, this does not translate equally into subsequent occupational and class mobility. Socio-economic opportunities are influenced, in particular, by country of origin and race-based factors, contributing to sustained disadvantage for many racial minorities.

The picture that emerges collectively from the articles in this thematic issue is one in which prospects for social inclusion are highly unequal, especially for migrant and minority populations. Although nearly all, with some exceptions, are encouraged to participate in core venues of social and economic activity, new status categories and regulatory regimes have contributed to complex and

highly differentiated forms of citizenship and rights that have produced multiple, highly uneven dynamics of inclusion and exclusion. The variance in citizenship rights across several important dimensions creates conditions, sometimes by design and in other cases as a result of unanticipated intersecting factors, in which many members of a nation or community have limited or no access to work, health care benefits, adequate housing, or other resources essential for meaningful social participation and well-being.

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The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

## Differentiation of Rights in the Norwegian Welfare State: Hierarchies of Belonging and Humanitarian Exceptionalism

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### Abstract

Controlling mobility and borders has become a central, defining feature of the state today. Using the Norwegian welfare state as a case study, I argue that the differentiation of rights depending on status categories is an important way in which the state deals with irregular migration. It is also an integral element of border construction and how mobility is managed. How is the Norwegian welfare state differentiating the rights to work, health care, and economic welfare benefits and through which argumentations does the state legitimate these differentiations? This article argues that the practice of differentiation contributes to establishing hierarchies of belonging and enforces the nexus of welfare rights–migration management. Further, the exclusion of certain categories of people from accessing basic welfare services and, consequently, creating precarious lives, is legitimized by the discourse of humanitarian exceptionalism, through which migrants gain some support outside the welfare state system. This facilitates policies and regulations that are “tough on migration”, and produces the irregular subject as apolitical, a victim, and unwanted. The differentiation of rights and the discourses that the state uses to legitimate these differentiations are keys in the negotiation of who should be entitled to which rights in the future.

### Keywords

asylum; borders; differentiated rights; health care rights; humanitarian exceptionalism; irregular migrants; Norway; welfare state

### Issue

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### 1. Introduction

In the spectacle of borders, citizenship and its subsequent rights play a key part in how and where borders materialize. The politics of citizenship as institutionalised in immigration law and elsewhere create unequal access to rights and shapes differentiated forms of belonging. It also produces statuses that are precarious and subject positions that are characterised by “illegality” and deportability. The state legitimizes its sovereign and disciplinary power based on its claim over a territory and that it serves a representable population, the citizenry—a population that must be continuously produced, which is one of the most fundamental tasks of the state. The existence of irregular migrants—i.e., migrants without a legal permit to stay in the country—is considered as a

sign of the lack of control over the territory, a security problem and as contributing to the undermining of the welfare state. In Norway, there are around 18,000 irregular migrants—mostly rejected asylum seekers who have not returned to their country of origin (Oslo Economics, 2014). Increasingly, how to deal with irregular migrants is high on the political agenda in Norway as in other European nation-states. This article examines the differentiation of welfare rights as part of how the Norwegian state deals with irregular migrants in particular and migration management in general, and how this transforms the welfare state.

The literature on asylum seekers in Europe has taken notice to the proliferation of borders (e.g., Balibar, 2002; Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013; Rumford, 2010). Borders are no longer, if they ever were, geographical markers of

state territories, but rather come into existence in various social spaces (Balibar, 2002). Contemporary borders are multifaceted social institutions composed through relationships constituted by the law, the market, and social relations (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013; Vuolajärvi, 2018). Scholars have suggested that policies for managing migration have been shifted up, out and down (Guiraudon & Lahav, 2000), involving actors such as EU bodies (Europol and Frontex), private parties such as airlines, and local government and service providers (Lavenex, 2006).

The multiplicity of borders—e-borders, offshore borders, juxtaposed borders, smart borders (Rumford, 2010)—has been linked to how the border has become a spectacle (de Genova, 2002) due to the politicization and securitization of migration (Bigo, 2002). De Genova (2002) has shown how deportability has become an important feature of how nation-states control migrants: irregular migrants face the possibility of coercive expulsion from the space of the state, making them live in permanent fear and vulnerability.

In this article, I explore how welfare rights are used as an important technique of control and management of irregular migration. I will examine the construction of three rights, namely the right to work, the right to health care, and economic welfare benefits. While the two latter are related to welfare benefits, the right to work is indirectly linked insofar that the Norwegian constitution § 110 declares that if one cannot “support oneself” one has the right to support from the public (Kongeriket Norges, 2018, § 110). These are fields of rights that represent important constituents, as will be discussed, in the production of who should belong and be included in the Norway welfare state. The differentiation of these rights, I argue, are important boundary-producing and normality-constructing discourses that are instrumental in establishing over which citizen-subjects the state can claim to realize its sovereignty and right to rule. The production of such differentiated rights is part of the statecraft that produces a particular image of the citizen who should be supported by the welfare state and the “illegal” non-citizen who should be cast away. My discussion draws on public documents, parliamentary reports, regulations, the media, and public statements. Due to the complexity of these developments, the description will be a general overview.

I first lay out the mechanisms by which the modern welfare state creates a type of inclusion/exclusion dynamic and then turn to the Norwegian welfare state as my case study. In this part, I explore the policies concerning health care for irregular migrants, followed by an investigation of how the right to work has been regulated for refugees and a discussion of how changes in economic benefits of irregular migrants have played out. I then briefly discuss the parallel voluntary health care offered to irregular migrants. Before I offer a conclusion, in the final part I discuss how these rights and their representations are part of (re)defining, (re)producing, and (re)constituting migration management and people

production in contemporary Norway by investigating aspects of belonging and humanitarian exceptionalism.

## 2. The Welfare State’s People Production as an Analytical Framework

In order for the modern state to be considered as a practical and effective institution, there must be a community of citizen-subjects that both anchor and are represented by it. How to carve out, stabilize, and operationalize a particular citizen figure that the modern state can represent is a foundational assignment of the state (Soguk, 1999, p. 39). This is the “people production” of the state (Appadurai, 1996, p. 43)—an essential task for legitimizing the state’s power and a task that it must continually perform. Here, I follow Abrams’s (1988) call for studying the state not as a singular abstract-formal entity, but as an idea, an ideological project, as well as consisting of “real power” such as immigration departments, prisons, and deportation orders. The state comes into being through: 1) ideas of the state that are produced and converted under particular historical conditions, and 2) political and public practices that are carried out in the name of the state (Abrams, 1988). Rather than considering the state as a coordinated strategic entity, this view of the state recognizes the coexistence of contradictory, divergent and overlapping processes, discourses, and practices.

The welfare state has played an important role in states’ success in generating particular kinds of subjects and identities (Roseberry, 1994). One consequence of the development of the welfare state was that the borders shifted from being geographical—at the physical border of the nation-state—to being structural borders: in order to be included at various levels, the subject had to be in “the system” (Bommes & Thränhardt, 2010). Most welfare states have established “thresholds of inequality” (Bommes & Thränhardt, 2010), contributing to the constitution of nations as entities with power to provide or deny political and social rights, determine access to social welfare for specific social groups and generating a naturalized understanding of the world by its production of social normativity and practices (Skey, 2013). The internal loyalty of citizens is guaranteed through a welfare policy that promotes possibilities for inclusion for some that are based on external closure and exclusion of others from the welfare state.

The welfare provided by the nation-state was territorially marked: the political form of membership, i.e., citizenship, constructed a people considered as belonging to the state territory, the primary addressee of the welfare state provision, and an idea of substantial equality for all members of this national community (Bommes & Thränhardt, 2010). While the nation was defined in various ways (e.g., through culture in Germany and in republican terms in France), the common welfare of the people—the community of national citizens—came to be the wide-ranging frame of reference (Bommes, 1999).

In this construction of the state, citizens and the insider alien without citizenship (the Other) are mutually constitutive: an insider identity is made possible by a parallel marking of the outsider (Isin, 2002). The insider/outsider dynamic is a continuous feature of all political communities, although modified in time and space as the form and character of the polity changes. Yet, the citizen/non-citizen division should not be thought of as overly dichotomous (Anderson, 2013). Instead, there is a sliding transition between the categories in terms of rights, precariousness and mechanisms of inclusion/exclusion. Non-citizens are categorized into various subgroups, such as “illegal” migrants, Au Pairs, and European Union/European Economic Association (EU/EEA) nationals, depending on the legal status they are granted by the state. Notably, while EU citizens have more rights than “third-country nationals” (non-European citizens), they can also be considered irregular migrants if they do not fully comply with regulation of the rights to residence (Caudra & Staaf, 2014). Rather than thinking about citizenship as the door-opener to all rights in the state and the end of precariousness, Anderson (2013) urges us to recognize and reconsider the continuous forms of differentiations pursued within the citizenship category. These differentiations are produced by the construction of certain categories and immigration statuses, which create specific forms of exclusion and incorporation.

### 3. Differentiated Rights to Work, Health and Economic Benefit

The way the Norwegian state deals with irregular migrants must be understood from the concept of the “nation” as tied up to its particular welfare state model.<sup>1</sup> Social services are considered a public responsibility, which emphasize equal rights for all citizens, financed through taxation. The right to welfare is based on residence and legal status (as a permanent or temporary resident), rather than employment, income, or previous contributions to the welfare system. While the social democratic welfare state historically had a means-tested insurance scheme, since the 1960s, different kinds of arguments were made in favor of universal (general, adequate) welfare schemes. After the Second World War, the concept of “unworthy” people lost ground, simultaneously as the concept of human rights and the idea that all citizens are “equal” were introduced. Together with dignity arguments (self-respect and equality), economic and bureaucratic efficiency arguments were part of promoting the principle of universal social programs (Kildal & Kuhnle, 2005). Additionally, the social democratic parties made the universal welfare state part of their image and trademark, promoting it as endorsing egalitarianism, fighting social differentiation, and encouraging solidarity across class compared to selective, means-testing, and stigmatizing programs

which the middle classes and well-off would presumably be more reluctant paying taxes to maintain. Since the 1990s, modifications in the Norwegian welfare policy developments have been implemented, representing a move towards selectivism, targeting, and a norm of reciprocity (Kildal & Kuhnle, 2005). For example, a new work approach has strengthened the link between contribution and benefits, both practically and morally. There is also increased use of private providers of social and health services.

In European welfare policy reforms, general trends have been towards active instead of passive measures, negative sanctions, duties instead of rights, and selectivity instead of universal social rights (Kildal & Kuhnle, 2005). Still, the Norwegian version of the universal welfare state remains socially constructed and institutionalized as an egalitarian sociocultural order (Bendixsen, Bringslid, & Vike, 2018): it is partly built on the cultural construction of homogeneity (Jöhncke, 2007) and perceptions of equality. The ambition to integrate immigrants has largely involved resorting to traditional welfare state arrangements, and particularly labor market policies. The welfare state in Norway is part of the branding of the nation-state, a component of national identity (Vike, 2004), and is supposedly expressing and underpinning solidarity, equality, universality, and market independence, or decommodification (Cox, 2004). The national identity of the Norwegian state includes both that of the “universal welfare state”, and, since the mid-1990s, that of being a “humanitarian superpower” through its engagement as mediator and facilitator in various conflicts around the world (Fuglerud, 2005). The Norwegian welfare state constitutes an emotional and moral community (Vike, 2004): the welfare state should provide care to groups, alleviate suffering, and make sure that no one lives under so-called undignified conditions. These values have become references to which policymakers must justify their proposals for reforms (Cox, 2004). Yet, this ambitious and almost unlimited way of taking responsibility for citizens’ requirements has been challenged over the last few years as the former simplified perceived correlation between citizens and the nation-state’s territory has been challenged.

#### 3.1. Asylum Seekers: The Right to Work

Asylum seekers had the right to work while awaiting an answer to their application until the policy was changed in 2009. The condition for obtaining a work permit had been that there was no “doubt about the subject’s identity”, yet the applicant was not required to submit a passport or national identity card. This changed January 2009, when the Norwegian government set up new documentation requirements. Asylum seekers had to document their identity with a valid travel document in order to be granted the right to work.

<sup>1</sup> At the EU level, there are ongoing processes of harmonization policies and development of common standards in terms of chances for recognition and treatment of asylum seekers, including reception conditions across the EU, and in terms of rights that are granted to various categories of people.



In Parliamentary Report 9 (2009–2010), the scheme is referred to as follows: “The reason for the change is the goal of making it less attractive for asylum seekers without protection needs to come to Norway primarily for the purpose of working”. With the tightening of ID requirements, the government sought to stimulate asylum seekers into helping to clarify their identity: “as of today, only about 5% of applicants document their identity with a valid travel document when applying for asylum with the police” (Justis- og politidepartementet, 2010, Section 3.4.2). It was also meant to prevent asylum seekers whose identity was not formally confirmed from participating in society, which the permission to work during the application period would entail. Increased knowledge of asylum seekers’ identities should also facilitate return and deportation. The government’s aim was for Norway to become a less appealing destination for asylum seekers ‘without protection needs’ and for those who came from third countries to Norway to work (Valenta & Thorshaug, 2011).

A report that evaluated the consequences of these tightened requirements argued that one of the consequences was that significantly fewer asylum seekers were granted temporary work permits (Valenta & Thorshaug, 2011). Yet, the new prerequisites did not lead to more asylum seekers documenting their identity or obtaining identity documents (Valenta & Thorshaug, 2011). Instead, asylum seekers’ decisions concerning the obtaining of documents were shaped by factors such as the possibility of acquiring the necessary documents and their assessments of how that documentation would affect their asylum application process. These evaluations taken by the asylum seekers appear as more relevant than the possibility of potentially obtaining the right to work while waiting for the answer to their asylum applications. Simultaneously, this is not necessarily a rational decision left to the asylum seeker to take: for some asylum seekers, the documents are difficult or impossible to obtain. Further, in contrast to the government’s aim that the tightening-up of documentation requirements would make Norway a less attractive country in which to seek asylum, the variations in asylum seeker arrivals were hardly or not at all affected by these changes (Valenta & Thorshaug, 2011). Explanations for this are manifold. One is that the government overestimated the detailed information flow concerning the various nation-states’ regulations and policies. Asylum seekers arriving in Norway may be unaware of the new requirements beforehand. Additionally, the government underestimated the degree to which asylum seekers arrive in the country where they seek asylum due to a number of reasons, including their social network, par hazard, family, social contacts, and economic abilities that are not linked to finding immediate employment. Those fleeing insecurity and violence appear to be less guided by the short-term (im)possibility to work and more by the longer-term possibility of achieving security and socio-economic integration in their country of asylum application.

Since there were no more asylum seekers who submitted their travel documents due to the changed regulations (Valenta & Thorshaug, 2011), the measures did not facilitate return and deportation for the government. Yet, it enforced the production of the asylum seeker as a potentially deportable subject in the (near) future. Further, the document requirements made the wish to be economically and socially included through work into a right only available to some selected groups. While work is presented as a “duty” for those who are “on the dole” in the welfare state, work becomes a “right” for others whose intentions are not to be trusted.

### 3.2. Irregular Migrants: The Right to Health Care

From the moment they apply for asylum, asylum seekers and their family members have full rights to health care (Søvig, 2011). Children under the age of 18 have full rights to health and care services regardless of their residence status. Section 3-1 of the Health and Care Services Act (2011) states that municipalities must provide the necessary health services to all residents in the municipality.

For irregular migrants, the right to health care is more complex. In 2010, the government started a process of clarifying the legal situation of irregular migrants, but liberalization was not the intention. Today, people without a legal permit to stay have the right to “emergency health care”—health care that cannot be put on hold. They do not have the right to “necessary health care” given by the specialized branch of the health services. An exception is made for children (under the age of 18) in administrative practice, and this is done by the authorities with reference to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Committees’ practice (Søvig, 2011). All pregnant women living in the country are entitled to necessary health care before and after childbirth, including maternity care. However, since they are not members of the National Insurance (*folketrygden*), they run the risk of paying for the health services themselves. Irregular migrants have the best legal position under the Act on Infectious Diseases (1994). While this right may be important for irregular migrants, it is based on the rationale of public health concerning the population more than concern for irregular migrants’ medical conditions (Bendixsen, 2018).

In the government’s clarification of the right to health care for people without legal permission to stay in the country, the starting point of accessing the right to health care should be that the patient should use the health services in his or her own country (Langset, 2011). It also specified that social and health caseworkers should make individual assessments on when the migrant “in practice” was going to or could leave the country before making a decision on health care provisions. This requires that the caseworker has knowledge about immigration policies and practices, such as return agreements and forced return (Karlsen, 2015). It exemplifies

how case assessments have become connected to migration control.

### 3.3. Economic Welfare Benefits

The welfare state system has been opened up for the increased use of differentiation based on legal status not only when it comes to health care, but also when it comes to economic benefits. Currently, irregular migrants are allowed to stay in regular reception centers. Yet, the financial support a person would receive in the center is regulated according to the person's legal status. While the economic benefits for both asylum seekers and irregular migrants have been reduced since 2012 (see Table 1), the economic benefit for those with the right to receive social benefits from the state has increased in the same period, from 5,373 NOK in 2012, to 6,050 NOK in 2018 (Utlendingsdirektoratet, 2018). Reception centers can diminish the amount of money residents receive if they break house rules, such as not participating in activities presented as obligatory (Kjærre, 2015).

The rates for asylum seekers have always been well below social assistance rates and a slight growth up to 2015 was reversed so that the benefits in 2018 are lower than the rates were in 2011. The government decided to reduce the economic benefit for those living in the reception center by 20% in 2016 in comparison to the 2015 rates. These changes can be understood in light of the idea of a "refugee crisis" in 2015 (Seeberg, 2017). Even though the number of asylum seekers arriving in Norway was lower than in several other countries, including Sweden and Germany, the "crisis" discourse contributed to a political approach that the government called the "necessary tightening in the asylum politic" in an agreement across political fractions on measures to meet the "refugee crisis" in November 2015 (Prime Minister's Office & Ministry of Justice and Emergency Affairs, 2016, author's translation). In the UDI, the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (*Utlendingsdirektoratet*), 2016 allocation letter (Justis-og beredskapsdepartementet, 2016) concerning reception centers, two new aspects were included: 1) the aim of developing a way to replace cash benefits with benefits, such as cash cards without the possibility of withdrawal, and 2) that

residents in reception centers should not receive benefits at a level that makes Norway more attractive than other countries. In consequence, the UDI will ensure that the level of benefits and its arrangements for residents in reception centers of relevant European countries are made available in Norway. They will also pay attention to changes in benefits that these countries make. The arguments for implementing cards instead of cash were that it would prevent asylum seekers from being pressed to give the benefits they receive to pay debts to human traffickers and should prevent unaccompanied minors from being forced to send money to their families. According to the government, this would reduce the incentives families have for sending their children on the dangerous journey to Europe.

Introducing the idea that residents in asylum reception would no longer receive cash benefits can be seen as a strong indication that residents in asylum reception are not considered to be part of Norwegian society proper, despite the fact that many people either have received or will receive a residence permit and live in the country. It is also worth mentioning that in 2016 the living conditions of the population in reception centers were for the first time not compared to the living conditions of the rest of the population in Norway, but instead with the conditions for asylum seekers in other European countries, and sometimes with the living conditions for different groups in their countries of origin (Seeberg, 2017). One may ask whether it has become easier to keep asylum seekers completely outside the social and symbolic boundaries of Norwegian society.

### 3.4. Responses to Differentiations of Rights: Parallel Care

The variation in having certain rights makes it the duty of street-level bureaucrats, i.e., caseworkers at the Norwegian Labor and Welfare Administration (NAV), to know the specific status of the person in front of her/him who seeks to solicit health care rights. This can in some instances lead to the person's health needs, necessities, or requirements being put on hold. The caseworker should thus not focus on providing for the need that the person might have, but rather on whether the person meets

**Table 1.** Economic benefit rates, in NOK (2011–2018).

	Rejected asylum seekers (irregular migrants) living in reception center without meals	Asylum seekers living in reception center without meals	State guidelines for social benefits (single)
2011	1,910	3,158	5,288
2012	1,960	3,220	5,373
2013	1,960	3,260	5,500
2014	1,980	2,920	5,600
2015	1,980	2,920	5,700
2016	1,780	2,340	5,850
2017	1,830	2,404	5,950
2018	1,861	2,447	6,050

the state categorization of who should prosper within the nation-state constellation. This is nothing new per se: street level bureaucrats have had a gate-keeper role in distinguishing between the deserving and undeserving citizen for a long time. In the case of irregular migrants, this role adds another dimension as it takes on a bordering function. Additionally, welfare state policies towards irregular migrants are typically made through administrative decrees (regulations and circulars issued by directors, state departments, and instructors). This means that they are easily changed, which contributes to the general uncertainty and unpredictability in irregular migrants' lives (Karlsen, 2015). It also establishes a form of temporariness.

One consequence of the differentiation of rights and thus the limited right to health care for irregular migrants is the introduction of a parallel health care structure in Norway. I deal specifically with the construction of the parallel health care center here because it suggests how health care rights have become linked to discourses of humanitarian exceptionalism, compassion, and care. The health care center for paperless in Oslo, set up in 2010, along with a smaller one in Bergen, set up in 2014, offer free health care to irregular migrants. Those working there are professional volunteers (i.e., doctors, nurses, psychologists, laboratorians), who were frustrated that they cannot provide medical service to everyone through the public health care service in their everyday working life. Indeed, the ethics of welfare professionals on human values are at odds with the rationality of territorial sovereignty. The health care centers collaborate with the diaconal hospitals, facilitating some access for some irregular migrants. One response to this initiative came from the right-wing Progress Party (FrP) leader Siv Jensen:

Several non-profit organizations like the City Church Mission and the Red Cross are today offering help to illegal migrants in Norway who become sick. We understand the humanitarian and human assessments behind such help. But they are actually not allowed to live here, and the organizations contribute in prolonging their illegal stay. (NTB, 2010)

The number of organizations that provide clothes and food handouts expanded from the late-2000s onwards. Some of these were directed towards poor people in general: a large majority of these services were primarily oriented towards people with alcohol and drug problems, women in prostitution (Karlsen, 2015; Nuland, 2007), and "Roma-beggars". Again, such parallel institutions are nothing new; voluntary organizations have initiated activities, such as shelters for battered women before becoming an obligatory municipal task, often run by the municipalities themselves (Sivesind, Lorentzen, Selle, & Wollebæk, 2002).

Yet, these parallel structures are structured and tolerated as humanitarian responses (Ticktin, 2006) towards people in need. Compassion and exceptional care be-

come the core value in the approach towards asylum seekers and irregular migrants. The production of irregular migrants as not entitled to health care, but still provided for through humanitarian discourse, illustrates the effort of the nation-state to mark people as belonging to certain categories who should leave the territory. Differentiations of health care are also enabled by the existence of these parallel systems—the state accepts that these people should not be left to die, yet none of the state actors facilitate their continued lives (see, Agamben, 1998). In consequence, the message that irregular migrants are unwanted remains unambiguous.

#### 4. Discussion

Restricting the possibility of obtaining a work permit, limiting health care rights and differentiating economic benefits underscore efforts by the welfare state to distinguish between a population for whom the welfare state is set up to provide service and the population that it seeks to get rid of. Restraining irregular migrants' access to public services is a frequent practice in several countries with broad welfare systems (van der Leun, 2006). What are the effects of this differentiated population management in the Norwegian case? Here, I will discuss three aspects: hierarchy of belonging, humanitarian exceptionalism, and enforcing the nexus of welfare rights–migration management.

First, the differentiation of rights produced by the welfare state contributes to generating hierarchies of belonging and inclusion. Borders become constituted not as material institutions that separate the alien from the citizen, but as tied up to a different set of rights. This differentiation multiplies and brings material and non-material consequences to the different legal positions that non-citizens occupy, such as asylum seekers, refugees, irregular migrants, EU migrants, students, victims of trafficking, or family members. Differentiating rights is presented as the moral order of welfare society and as a naturalized part of the state's people production.

While the regulation of access to rights is a fundamental way of differentiation that structures people's conditions, representation has become vital in the negotiation of who should be entitled to certain rights in the future (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2013). In dealing with migrants, the state has turned the neoliberal construction of employment in which work is the *duty* of all citizens into a *privilege* only accessible to citizens (Chauvin & Garcés-Masareñas, 2014). In Norway, the changed regulations contribute to limiting the public space available for asylum seekers to be viewed as a potential resource in a welfare state model in which *Arbeidslinjen*, the focus in social assistance on reducing dependency on the welfare state through the work approach, has become a central feature: it dictates that in order to maintain a high level of welfare spending, people must engage in productive work (Brochmann, 2016). There is a presump-



tion that a universal, “generous” welfare state rests on a well-functioning and strongly regulated labor market, and that this is not sustainable if some people or groups are not participating in the labor market (Bendixsen et al., 2018). Being a taxpayer becomes morally important in a context in which working citizens are thought to pay for a generous social and health benefits system (Bendixsen, 2017). Yet, by making it almost impossible to work, asylum seekers have a slim chance to position their group as contributors to the welfare state through paying taxes with consequences on how they can promote deservingness to rights. Instead, making it illegal to work feeds into the description of irregular migrants as a source of social problems and expensive welfare. Categorical inequalities linked to degrees of (un)deservingness (re)produce and confirm the process of Othering. Othering “defines and secures one’s own identity by distancing and stigmatizing an(other). [The] purpose is to reinforce notions of our own ‘normality’, and to set up the difference of others as a point of deviance” (Grove & Zwi, 2006, p. 1933). In this process, the Other is marginalized and frequently dealt with through services and assistance that are set up and defined by a humanitarian logic. In the case of refugees and migrants, these “Others” are sometimes viewed as a threat to the citizen population, i.e., the lack of identity documentation is viewed as a danger to national security, while their rights under the Act on Infectious Diseases (1994) can portray migrants as potential contaminants of public health.

Second, humanitarian exceptionalism becomes an instrument through which the welfare state can both confirm its efforts to manage and control migration and retain a humanitarian face. Irregular migrants receive care in a different logic than the welfare state’s frame of solidarity, equality, and universality, namely through humanitarian exceptionalism. While excluding certain categories of people from welfare services, and thus the basic needs of the human body, the Norwegian welfare state accepts the existence of exceptional services that are legitimized and presented as humanitarian services, such as the health care center for paperless in Oslo. Such humanitarian exceptionalism (Fassin, 2012; Ticktin, 2011) characterizes how European welfare states deal with their irregular migration population today. Humanitarian exceptionalism is based on centering some human beings as victims, non-agentive and apolitical, who should be saved by a caring state, but who are offered only limited access to care. Charity and compassion for the suffering body are key elements of humanitarian governments of how irregular migrants are governed by a politics of control and politics of pity (Fassin, 2012). It produces and affirms irregular migrants as an “unwanted” population that is administrated through exceptional charity and care instead of through social rights.

By tolerating and in some cases providing basic services to irregular migrants in a different way than its citizens, the state can alleviate suffering through which it saves its image as a humanitarian power while uphold-

ing the idea that deservingness, inclusion, and solidarity should be grounded on citizenship. The discourse of humanitarianism facilitates that the welfare state continues its limited assistance to “illegal residents” while continuing to portray an image of a just and caring state that will not let “anyone starve” on its streets. This is also, I suggest, the part of the reason why the state tolerates, and sometimes finances, parallel structures: their existence makes it possible for the state to continue withdrawing welfare rights from this population without attracting critique against its moral qualities. Simultaneously, through the dispersal of rights, the government confirms the narrative both to citizens who are concerned about “too much migration” and to prospective migrants that Norway is “hard on migration”.

Third, these differentiations illustrate how migration management works through welfare regulations and its norms of deservingness. The welfare state has always included mechanisms for excluding certain people and evaluating who should have access to what (Ryymin & Ludvigsen, 2013). Yet, in the case of irregular migrants, welfare rights become part of the border regime. The increased differentiation of residence permits systems that limit and prolong migrants’ access to rights is both a part and a continuation of the physical border inside the nation-state (Rigo, 2005). Welfare state borders work through their differentiation of people within the territorial space by constructing different legal statuses with different sets of rights (Vuolajärvi, 2018). The borders are produced by the welfare state’s differentiating function concerning rights, as well as the residence permit and visa system. Regulation of rights also produces social and symbolic boundaries between people who physically reside in Norway. Providing a limited right of access to health care to people without legal residence is part of the government’s effort to appear “tough on migration”, as a sanctioning tool for those irregular migrants who have a “duty to return” (Bendixsen, 2017), and to prevent health care migration in which migrants would come to Norway in order to receive free health care. It generates a differentiated and hierarchical fragmentation of legal subjectivities living in the same territory. It also contributes to a “(re)assertion of a national logic of territorialized prioritisation and concern” (Darling, 2010, p. 134) in the nation’s work to define who has the right to belong.

## 5. Conclusion

The regulation of rights and access to welfare services is one way through which the welfare state deals with irregular migration and pursues its “people production”. This article has investigated how the politics of differentiation works by examining the regulation of the right to work, health care and economic benefits. These aspects touch the core of being human. The different statuses and the differential rights linked to these statuses produce different forms of vulnerabilities, precariousness, and representations of the (irregular) migrant.

This article has shown how the dispersal of rights has increasingly become part of structural differentiation and a part of the proliferation of borders. The regulation of the categories of people that have access to the good(s) of the welfare state simultaneously produces ideas of deservingness and inclusion/exclusion and puts weight on the welfare state–migration management nexus. By simultaneously introducing a humanitarian aspect, the government can avoid chaos, vociferous protests against how they treat irregular migrants, as well as keeping up the image of a caring welfare state and a humanitarian superpower. Humanitarianism becomes a way of making policies and the differentiating of rights more acceptable for citizens who are concerned with how refugees and migrants are treated. By providing some economic means to irregular migrants living in reception centers, the state can also have a better overview of who is in the country “illegally”. This is useful in order to facilitate deportation.

Despite the fact that this discussion is mainly based in Norway, the conclusions reflect the broader direction of how regulation and welfare rights are used by EU member states. All European countries have a residence permit system by which applicants are differentiated, some of which are standardized according to the Schengen agreement. The production of differentiation in the legal statuses of non-citizens and the differentiation of rights are important in the proliferation of borders in Europe. The form and shape of the consequent hierarchy of belonging, humanitarian exceptionalism, and the welfare rights—migration nexus that are proliferated in the various European nation-states need, however, to be further explored and compared.

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### Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

# On “Genuine” and “Illegitimate” Refugees: New Boundaries Drawn by Discriminatory Legislation and Practice in the Field of Humanitarian Reception in Germany

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## Abstract

A high number of legal changes accompanied the increase of people seeking asylum in Germany throughout the 18th legislative period from 2013–2017. These changes have transformed the field of humanitarian reception in Germany, especially along the axes of citizenship, integration performance and deviation from administrative and legal rules. Half of the legal measures from this period have led to differential rights for different groups of asylum seekers according to one of these three axes. The axis of citizenship has also structured the development of administrative procedures referred to as “integrated refugee management” which was established to speed up asylum seeking processes, classifying persons applying for a humanitarian residence visa in Germany into four clusters. This categorization, too, led to different entitlements regarding the admittance to state-financed German courses and integration measures focussed on education and the labour market. In this article I employ the notion of differential inclusion (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2012) to analyze these legal and administrative changes. I show that they have reshaped the substructures impacting the lives of those categorized as “genuine” and “illegitimate” refugees and thus redrawn the boundaries and created hierarchies among those seeking humanitarian protection in Germany.

## Keywords

differential inclusion; Germany; humanitarian reception; integration; refugee management

## Issue

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## 1. Introduction

People who migrate are often categorized according to the aim which led them to migrate or to the governments’ reasons for granting or not granting residency rights. The German National Contact Point of the European Migration Network (EMN) differentiates between four kinds of migration in its annual reports: “legal mi-

gration and mobility”, “irregular migration”, “return migration” and “international protection and asylum”. This categorization implies that migration for humanitarian reasons is not considered a legal form of entry per se. Only if an individual’s asylum procedure<sup>1</sup> is successful can he or she have access to integration measures<sup>2</sup> available to those categorized under “legal migration and mobility” (BAMF, 2017b, p. 7). This raises questions about

<sup>1</sup> During asylum procedures it is decided which kind of protection applicants are entitled to: 1) asylum as enshrined in the German constitution, 2) recognized as refugees under the Geneva Convention, 3) subsidiary protection, or 4) protection due to an (inter-)national ban on deportation (BAMF, 2016d, p. 35). In public use the term “refugee” is not exclusively used for these four groups as also evident in administrative terms such as “integrated refugee management”, which concerns all new asylum seekers or “refugee integration measures”.

<sup>2</sup> Integration measures contain foremost the official German language and society course (Integrationskurs), further German language courses linked to the labour market, employment opportunities and measures which aim at vocational education and entrance into the labour market.



who is seen as a “genuine” refugee: who is entitled to receive support or simply to reside in Germany and who may thus transfer into the category of “legal migration and mobility”. The table of contents of the annual reports of the EMN mirrors the hierarchical logic of the migration regime and the potential upward movement of an accepted refugee’s or asylum seeker’s status inside this hierarchy. During asylum-seeking procedures, it is not clear into which category the applicants will fall in the end: if they will be accepted and potentially rise to the category “legal migration and mobility” or be denied and drop to the category “return migration”. For this article all three groups (i.e., asylum seekers in mid-process, those accepted and those denied) are considered together as target group of the system of humanitarian reception in Germany.

This system is fragmented. In 2009 seventeen legal forms of humanitarian protection existed (Parusel, 2009, p. 43). Since then four additions have been made in the section regulating humanitarian and political residence rights (§25 was restructured, including a European and national ban on deportation, §25a and §25b were new additions) and a fifth addition is included in §18a (employment-based residence permits for qualified persons with an exceptional leave to remain) in the labour-related regulations of the Residency Act. Thus, a total of 22 different types of humanitarian residence rights exist in Germany, accompanied by three additional status categories which are bound to registration and administration of foreign nationals without a right to residence (i.e., exceptional leave to remain/“toleration”, preliminary entitlement to remain in the country and proof of arrival). To describe humanitarian reception in Germany, all these different kinds of rights and non-rights have to be considered together, since people’s statuses change and these statuses are related to one another in a hierarchical way, as evident from their differential access to resources.

Mezzadra and Neilson employ the concept of “differential inclusion” to describe the stratified rights granted to migrants in immigration countries. They link this concept to labour migration and highlight its relation to capital (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2012, p. 183). But differential inclusion is also relevant for the part of migration to Germany which I describe under the overarching term “humanitarian reception”. By definition, international protection and asylum should not be tied to capital. But the new regulative policy in the field of humanitarian reception makes demands on applicants’ performance with regard to what is called “integration”, including gaining knowledge of the German language and contributing to the social welfare system by paying obligatory social security and pension insurance, and therefore not becoming dependent on social benefits. Since 2015, measures have been taken to support the labour market entry of people with a high probability of receiving a residence permit on humanitarian grounds. Labour experts characterize this policy move as a “lane change” (Spurwechsel), pointing to the formerly unthinkable connection be-

tween labour market interests and humanitarian protection (Bojadzijev, Mezzadra, Altenried, Höfler, & Wallis, 2016, p. 269).

To understand this “lane change” one has to consider that until 2005 different kinds of residence status were strictly divided. For example, international students had to leave Germany after graduation, even if they had found employment. But from 2005 on students gradually came to be viewed as “model migrants”, resulting in several liberalization measures aiming to promote their stay in Germany after graduation (Morris-Lange & Brands, 2015, p. 15f; Sykes & Ni Chaoimh, 2012). Since the reissued Residency Act (Aufenthaltsgesetz) came into force in 2005, these categories have increasingly become intertwined, blurring the divisions between them (Grote & Vollmer, 2016). Even humanitarian residence statuses have become increasingly infused with performance-based conditions and rights, most intensively between 2014 and 2016. After the Integration Act was issued in 2016 performance-based conditions and rights even became relevant for persons found to be entitled to asylum and recognized refugees under the Geneva Convention. People in this group now have to wait two years longer for a permanent residence visa if they do not quickly and successfully “integrate”. Until 2016 a permanent residence permit was issued after a minimum of 3 years, dependent upon whether or not the applicants’ claims for humanitarian protection were still found to be relevant. This minimum waiting-time to get a residence permit was prolonged in 2016 to 5 years. It could only be reduced to the previous waiting-period of three years if the applicant showed a high level of integration performance at that point, having mastered the German language and attained financial independence.

In this article I argue that a series of legal changes during the 18th legislative period from 2014 until 2017 has restructured the field of humanitarian reception in Germany. I isolate three factors used to differentiate between different groups: applicants’ citizenship, his/her performance and criminalized deviations. Criminalized deviations include strictly penalized conflicts with the German administration which most commonly arise when individuals “fail to cooperate” as required by the application or appeal procedures (Mitwirkungspflichtverletzung). Symptomatic for the factor citizenship is a new set of procedures called “integrated refugee management”, employed in 2016 and abandoned in 2017. I discuss the three structural factors for humanitarian reception at the end of the main part of this article, using the concept of differential inclusion, and I will make my concluding remarks about the consequences for humanitarian reception in Germany.

## 2. Legal Changes from 2014 to 2017: Restructuring of the Field of Humanitarian Reception in Germany

Humanitarian reception in Germany is co-regulated by international laws and also by the transnational laws of

the European Union. The incorporation of European law requires regular adjustments at the national level. This was also the case in 2014, since all three directives of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) were reissued a year before. Thus, in response to the EU's revised Reception Conditions Directive, the German government, led by the Christian-Democratic party in coalition with the Social-Democratic party, began the 18th legislative period by issuing the "Act to Classify Other States and Safe Countries of Origin and on Facilitating Labour Market Access for Asylum Seekers and Foreign Nationals with Exceptional Leave to Remain".<sup>3</sup> This was followed by eleven more laws influencing the conditions for people applying for a residence permit on humanitarian grounds (see Table 1).

All twelve laws, except the last one, contain at least one measure benefitting asylum seekers in Germany (see Table A1 in the Annex for an overview of the concrete improvements and restrictions regarding the asylum procedure and applicants' reception; see also BAMF, 2015b, 2016d, 2017b; Grote, 2018). I will concentrate the following analysis on those six laws which restructured the humanitarian reception in Germany most profoundly. The first law, which aims to facilitate access to the labour market, reduced the time for which asylum seekers are prohibited from gaining employment to three months, in accordance with the Reception Conditions Directive of the CEAS. However, more consequential for the structure of humanitarian reception was this law's extension of the list of so-called "safe countries of origin" to include Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia—already included in the list were all member states of the European Union, Ghana and Senegal; safe countries of origin are countries "in which, on the basis of their laws, enforcement practices and general political conditions, it can be safely concluded that neither political persecution nor inhumane or degrading punishment or treatment exists" (Asyl & Migration, n.d.).

Nationals of safe countries of origin are to undergo shortened asylum procedures and have fewer opportunities to appeal a negative decision. This measure was created in the context of increasing numbers of migrants from Southeast Europe who claimed asylum after traveling to Germany as tourists, which had become easier after a liberalization of visa regulations in 2009. Thus, the first migration-related legislative initiative of the government after the elections in autumn 2013 was a law which addressed this situation by excluding migrants from Southeast European countries from the standard asylum procedures.

Since "the summer of migration" in 2015, this attempt to reduce humanitarian migration from the Balkans has run parallel to a supportive gesture for those perceived as "genuine" refugees, mostly from war-

shaken Syria. The first law from this period is the Asylum Package I, officially referred to as the Act on the Acceleration of Asylum Procedures, issued in October 2015. It took less than a month from the first draft until its release, which is highly remarkable given the fact that all parliamentary decisions concerning migration legislation not only have to pass the parliament (Bundestag) but also the federal assembly (Bundesrat). Table 1 gives evidence that all these laws were issued extremely fast; none took longer than six months, and most were issued in about two to three months' time.

Part of the Asylum Package I was a series of provisions which aimed at the fast incorporation of particular asylum seekers into German society, but not all of them. German courses and certain measures supporting one's integration into the labour market were opened for "foreigners...for whom an enduring and rightful residence is to be expected" (Bundesgesetzblatt, 2015, p. 1728, author's translation). However, the law does not offer any indication of what the grounds for this expectation may be. In practice, the selection is based upon a list published by the Federal Office on Migration and Refugees naming the countries whose nationals are allowed to attend the official German language and society courses (Integrationskurs). Explicitly excluded are asylum seekers from Southeast Europe: "For an asylum seeker who according to §29 asylum law comes from a safe country of origin, it is assumed that an enduring and rightful residence is not to be expected" (Bundesgesetzblatt, 2015, p. 1728, author's translation).

The list of safe countries of origin was also extended as part of Asylum Package I, this time to include Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro. In exchange for these restrictions in the humanitarian sector, some restrictions in migration legislation concerning access to the labour market were eased for nationals of these countries, changing the migration pattern from Southeast Europe to Germany (Brücker & Burkert, 2017). Since then work permits can easily be gained at the German diplomatic establishments in one's respective (safe) country of origin, but will not be issued to persons who have received benefits as asylum seekers in Germany within the 24 months prior to their application for a work permit (Burkert & Haase, 2017). This is how the German migration regime externalized the "selective filtering of mobility" (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2012, p. 192) and situated it in potential migrants' countries of origin. Mezzadra and Neilson define this externalization as an important technology for differential inclusion (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2012, p. 192). This externalization is also evident in international trends of humanitarian protection, whereby the processing of claims for humanitarian protection are to take place outside territories like the European Union and near to those conflicts people are fleeing. Those recognized as need-

<sup>3</sup> The status referred to as "exceptional leave to remain"/"toleration" (Duldung) was developed as a means of regulating the treatment of people who are not officially entitled to reside in Germany. People usually receive this status after their asylum applications have been denied. "Irrespective of the suspension of deportation, the foreigner's residence in the territory is still illegal and he or she still has the obligation to leave the federal territory" (BAMF, 2016a, p. 22). By the end of June 2017 according to the Central Register of Foreigners 159,678 people had this exceptional leave to remain, 32% of them already living more than 3 years in Germany, 17% more than 6 years (Deutscher Bundestag, 2017b, p. 38).

**Table 1.** Overview of laws concerning humanitarian reception which became effective between 2014 and 2017 (18th legislative period of German parliament) in order of entry into force.

	<b>Name of law</b>	<b>1. draft from:</b>	<b>Issued on:</b>	<b>Most parts in force since:</b>	<b>Duration 1st draft until in force</b>
1.	Act to Classify Other States and Safe Countries of Origin and on Facilitating Labour Market Access for Asylum Seekers and Foreign Nationals with Exceptional Leave to Remain	26 May 2014	31 Oct. 2014	06 Nov. 2014	24 weeks
2.	Act to Amend the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act and the Social Court Act	12 Aug. 2014	10 Dec. 2014	19 Dec. 2014	19 weeks
3.	Act to Improve the Legal Status of Asylum Seekers and Foreign Nationals with Exceptional Leave to Remain	11 Nov. 2014	23 Dec. 2014	01 Jan. 2015	8 weeks
4.	Act on the redefinition of the right to stay and the termination of residence	25 Feb. 2015	27 Jul. 2015	01 Aug. 2015	24 weeks
5.	Act on the Acceleration of Asylum Procedures (Asylum Package I)	29 Sep. 2015	20 Oct. 2015	24 Oct. 2015	4 weeks
6.	Act to improve accommodation, care and assistance for foreign children and young persons	07 Sep. 2015	28 Oct. 2015	01 Nov. 2015	8 weeks
7.	Data Sharing Improvement Act	15 Dec. 2015	02 Feb. 2016	05 Feb. 2016	8 weeks
8.	Act on the Faster Expulsion of Criminal Foreigners and Extended Reasons for Refusing Refugee Recognition to Criminal Asylum Seekers	16 Feb. 2016	11 Mar. 2016	17 Mar. 2016	5 weeks
9.	Act on the Introduction of Fast-Track Asylum Procedures (Asylum Package II)	16 Feb. 2016	11 Mar. 2016	17 Mar. 2016	5 weeks
10.	Integration Act and its accompanying Ordinance	31 May 2016	31 Jul. 2016	06 Aug. 2016	10 weeks
11.	Act to Fight Child Marriages	25 Apr. 2017	17 Jul. 2017	22 Jul. 2017	13 weeks
12.	Act to Improve the Enforcement of the Obligation to Leave the Country (Asylum Package III)	16 Mar. 2017	20 Jul. 2017	29 Jul. 2017	20 weeks

Notes: For an overview of all 18 laws concerning migration legislation, including those for EU-citizens and all resident foreigners, see Tometten (2017). For a description of the measures taken and the wider context, see BAMF (2015b, 2016d, 2017b) and Grote (2018).

ing protection are then to be resettled in European countries, Australia, Canada or the United States (Crisp, 2003). But the German case of externalization is slightly different: migration out of impoverished living conditions was rerouted by legislation out of the field of humanitarian reception into that of (unskilled) labour migration.

With the Asylum Package II in 2016, nationals of safe countries of origin were obliged to live in special reception centres for up to 6 months, while the time limit for processing asylum claims was to be shortened to one week and for appeals, to one additional week. Given the fact that asylum seekers do not receive social benefits in special reception centres as cash which would enable them to pay a lawyer and that there is no legal counselling available in the special reception centres (BAMF,

2016c, p. 4; Janke, 2016), appeals are rarely successful. It is intended that rejected applicants “voluntarily” return or are deported directly from the special reception centre in a total of three weeks’ time.

In August 2016 the Integration Act was issued, including further measures to ease and open opportunities for integration for a subgroup of refugees, asylum seekers and persons with an exceptional leave to remain. The improvements in the Integration Act opened paths especially for persons with an exceptional leave to remain, whose status could be prolonged if they start an apprenticeship. If they successfully end their vocational training and find a job, there is the possibility that they may gain a residence permit and change their status from a humanitarian to a labour migrant. However, this legislation also



made it possible to require people to take German language and society courses and accept employment possibilities provided by administrative offices, and to issue a fine of up to 30,000 EUR if incorrect, delayed or incomplete information was given in the course of their asylum procedures.

The last of this series of law issuances was the Asylum Package III, which consisted solely of restrictions and was clearly aimed at ensuring that rejected asylum seekers and criminal offenders are quickly returned to their country of origin. This law was issued in the aftermath of highly publicized attacks on New Year’s Eve 2015, when men described as “southern”, “Arab” or “North African” were accused of having sexually assaulted and robbed several women around the main station of Cologne (similar incidents were reported in other German cities as well). In this context, the media and societal discourse concerning refugees changed. Concerns were raised that it may not be possible to integrate such a high number of culturally foreign people—meaning Muslims (apa/dpa, 2016). Already the Asylum Package II reflected these changes in discourse. From then on, the practice of more or less balancing the measures supporting and restricting asylum seekers was abandoned (see Figure 1). Even the Integration Act contained more restrictive measures than supportive ones.

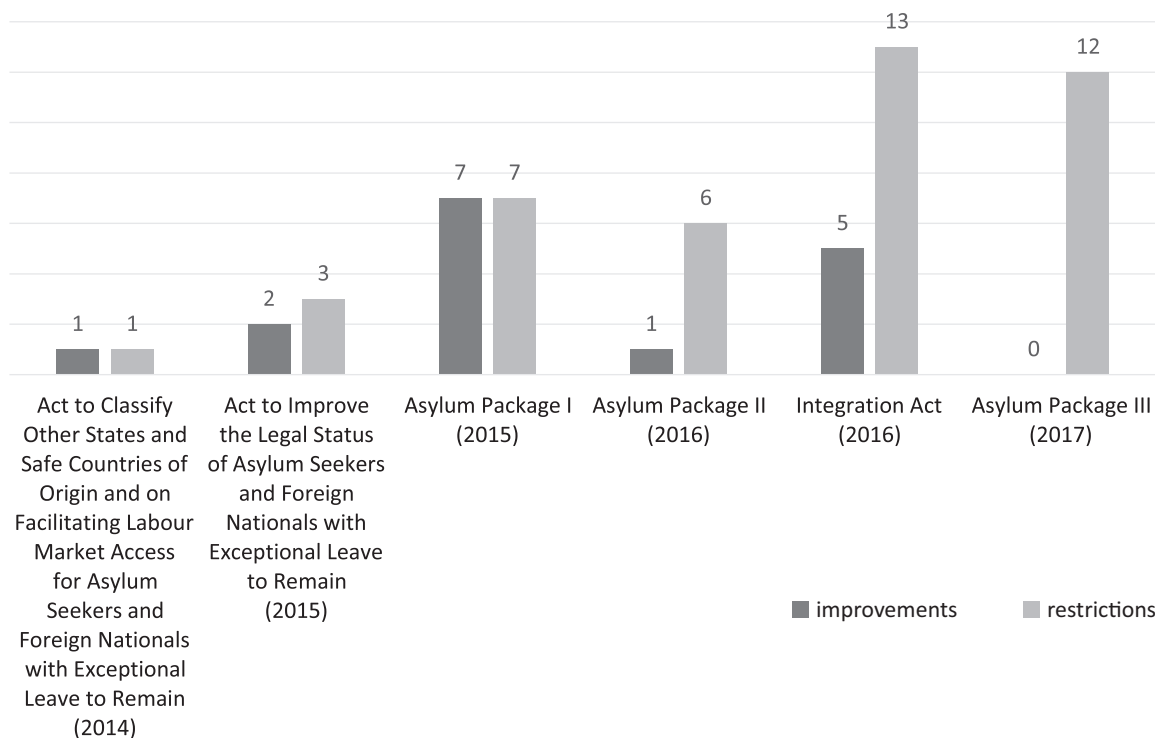
Nearly all of the above-mentioned six laws released in the 18th legislation period to define entitlements for individuals applying or who have already applied for humanitarian protection, include measures which structure the everyday life of asylum seekers, whether they were

in mid-process, approved or denied. In effect a new order was created, establishing the existence of: 1) “genuine” refugees who were expected to receive a residence permit for fast track integration, 2) “illegitimate” refugees from safe countries of origin, who were systematically excluded from all integration measures and entry into the labour market and separated into special reception centres, and 3) the rest of the applicants. Nevertheless, the most important changes were not introduced by any law, but rather through an administrative measure, a set of procedures called “integrated refugee management”, which started in 2016 with the aim of dealing with the high numbers of new asylum applications.

**3. Administrative Innovation through Integrated Refugee Management**

Parallel with the start of the “summer of migration” in 2015, arrival centres were being successfully tested in two places (BAMF, 2017b, p. 42). The result was a process model (Arbeitsstab Integriertes Flüchtlingsmanagement, 2016), accompanied by a bundle of legislative changes regarding the digitization of asylum procedure documentation in a core database associated with the existing Central Registry of Foreigners:

The list of collected data [for the Central Registry of Foreigners] was extended (fingerprints, country of origin, contact data such as address, phone numbers and e-mail addresses, information on allocation [the assigned place of residence] and information on health



**Figure 1.** Number of improvements and restrictions from the perspective of individuals applying for a humanitarian status in Germany. Notes: The concrete improvements and restrictions can be found in Table A1 in the Annex.

examinations and vaccinations). In order to facilitate the foreigners' quick integration and job placement, data on their education, vocational training and other qualifications are to be stored in the Central Register of Foreigners. (BAMF, 2017b, p. 41)

The additional data to be collected are defined by the Data Sharing Improvement Act (Datenaustauschverbesserungsgesetz), and several authorities have access to it (BAMF, 2017b, p. 41). The Integration Act also enables further entities to record information in the core database regarding applicants' attendance at their German language and society course, as well as the results of their examinations at the end of the course. This shows that the administrative changes in humanitarian reception were neatly linked to digitization, which was thought to be the key to speeding up and standardizing procedures. At the same time, the staff of the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees doubled from about 3,300 in 2014 to approximately 7,650 employees in 2016 (BAMF, 2016d, p. 49, 2017b, p. 42).

Also new branch offices of the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees have been opened; since 2016 some offices have been situated directly in the newly established arrival centres. "By end-2016 [sic], the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees had 47 local branch offices and 24 arrival centres...Whenever possible, the entire asylum procedure takes place 'under one roof' in the arrival center" (BAMF, 2017b, p. 42). All federal states have at least one arrival centre, where the "integrated refugee management" (integriertes Flüchtlingsmanagement) was administered (BAMF, 2017b, p. 42). In addition, a short-lived but influential method for categorizing asylum seekers was developed and used in 2016, but discontinued in 2017, because the numbers of new arrivals returned to the level reported in 2014.

According to this categorizing method, newly arrived refugees were sorted into four clusters: A, B, C or D (BAMF, 2017b, p. 42). Cluster A included nationalities with a high protection rate, which had to be above 50% for the former year.<sup>4</sup> Persons in cluster A were to get immediate support for their integration, their asylum applications should be processed in 48 hours and a short CV should be entered into the core database, so that the employment office in the future place of residence can prepare measures for integration concerning German language skills, vocational training and employment. Persons in cluster A should be able to leave the arrival centre very quickly.

It is important to note that the clustering method and integrated refugee management more generally are procedures of public administration which lack legislation clearly spelling out the criteria for using them. In practice, the asylum applicants which the integrated refugee management procedures placed in cluster A were from countries on the above-mentioned list issued by the Fed-

eral Office of Migration and Refugees since Asylum Package I to specify which asylum applicants were to gain admission to official German language and society courses even before a decision about their asylum application was made. On the list were Syria, Iran, Iraq, Somalia and Eritrea, but not Afghanistan, even if the protection rate in 2016 for Afghan nationals was 55.8% (BAMF, 2017a, p. 51). Following the definition of cluster A, Afghan nationals should have profited in 2017—when the protection rate of Afghans decreased to about 44% (BAMF, 2018a; Deutscher Bundestag, 2017a)—from the high protection rate of their co-nationals in the previous year, for example by being able to enter German language and society courses before awaiting a decision on their asylum application. However, this was not the case since this list was not updated.

In cluster B citizens were grouped together whose co-nationals' protection rate was under 20% in the last year. Also their applications were to be processed in 48 hours, so that they, too, may have a quick decision on whether they should leave Germany or could remain. In 2016, cluster B only included nationals from safe countries of origin (BAMF, 2017b, p. 42). Cluster C consisted of "complex cases", meaning all applicants whose co-nationals had a protection rate between 20 and 50%. In these cases, the regular decision centres of the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees have to examine the asylum claim without any time limits. This is also supposed to be true for those cases from cluster B which cannot be decided in 48 hours; these should be handed over to the regular decision centres. However, given the fact that cluster B only included citizens from safe countries of origin and no other nationalities with a protection rate lower than 20%, there were practically no cases which were re-categorized from cluster B into cluster C.

Finally, cluster D contained "Dublin-cases", which are persons whose fingerprints were found in EURODAC, the shared European database of fingerprints for asylum seekers in Europe. If a fingerprint is found in the system, that person had already been registered elsewhere in Europe and is not allowed to apply for asylum in Germany. Dublin-cases have to wait until the European country where they were registered accepts their readmission.

These four clusters were an innovation of the administrative procedures called "integrated refugee management" and were never mentioned in any of the various laws passed during this period. It is not clear to which degree the clustering contributed to reducing the average asylum procedure time from 11.3 months in 2014 (BAMF, 2015a, p. 54) to 8.7 months in 2016 (BAMF, 2017a, p. 55). In 2015 the duration was only 7.9 months (BAMF, 2016b, p. 55), but due to the high number of humanitarian migrants it was not possible to apply for asylum immediately after registration. For this reason, there was a gap between the number of registered persons and asylum applications which was not considered in the calculation

<sup>4</sup> The protection rate is the number of positive decisions (for asylum according to the German constitution, refugee status, subsidiary protection or (inter-)national bans of deportation) in relation to all decisions on asylum claims for citizens of a certain country.

of the average duration of asylum procedures (BAMF, 2016b, p. 10).

The reduction in average asylum procedure time comparing 2014 with 2016 might instead be the result of the above-mentioned rigorous increase in staff of the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees. However, quick decisions in cluster A and B were only relevant for new arrivals. Since the number of first asylum applications has dropped back to 2014 levels, these clustering methods were abandoned altogether in 2017 (BAMF, 2018b), and the average duration of asylum procedures has risen again to 10.4 months (Deutscher Bundestag, 2017a, p. 15). Although it is no longer being used, the central element of the cluster method, i.e., differentiation by citizenship (clusters A, B and C), increased the importance of one's nationality, still influencing the logic of stratification used today.

#### **4. The Evolvement of New Hierarchies, Differential Access to Resources and Requirements for Integrational Performance**

The several legislative changes between 2014 and 2017 led to a division among asylum seekers into "genuine" refugees from countries whose nationals had a high protection rate and "illegitimate" refugees from safe countries of origin. That was the first step in the development of a citizenship-structured hierarchy of people who claim a status on humanitarian grounds in Germany. The creation and maintenance of nation states is tightly connected to bureaucratic innovations like the passport, which itself shapes modern identity (Noiriell, 1994/2016). Even if the clustering method officially no longer exists, an asylum seeker's passport<sup>5</sup> still determines whether he/she will be steered toward the fast-track to integration (with more opportunities) or toward the fast-track to return (with more pressure). Decisive is whether he/she comes from one of the few countries whose nationals have a high possibility of receiving a humanitarian residence permit or if he/she is a national from one of the listed safe countries of origin, respectively. For individuals from all other countries of origin, the asylum procedures last just as long as before, and the access to integration measures is dependent on the outcome of these procedures. This hierarchical logic of how applications are processed therefore still follows the previous cluster-logic of the integrated refugee management, even if the clusters are no longer employed officially. But not only citizenship is decisive. In the beginning I also introduced performance and deviance as important factors in humanitarian reception. When clustering the restrictions and improvements created by the six considered laws, half of them can be categorized as concerning the three factors citizenship, performance and deviance (Table 2).

The second factor in establishing new hierarchies is the distinction among asylum applicants according to their performance in education, vocational training, German language and society courses and tests and in the labour market. Performance-based residence rights are most important for persons with an exceptional leave to remain, mostly rejected asylum seekers. Since 2016 the Integration Act made performance-based rights relevant for approved asylum seekers as well, in connection with the prolongation of waiting-time for a permanent residence permit from three to five years. Now, he/she (and if applicable also the family members) can only receive a permanent residence permit (Niederlassungserlaubnis) within three years of being recognized as a refugee if his/her "integration performance" is extraordinarily high, i.e., he/she masters the German language, finds a job and earns enough money within three years. Thus, integration performance—translated as German language skills and income—influences the length of time before a permanent settlement visa is granted.

But neither integration performance nor the recognition as a refugee or someone entitled to asylum, leads to a permanent residence permit if the applicant 1) has been sentenced to a crime, 2) is a member of a terrorist organization, or 3) has not fulfilled his/her obligations to cooperate with state offices. Cooperation includes, for example, carrying valid identity papers, complying with residence and mobility restrictions and quickly supplying immigration authorities with any needed information during the asylum application or appeal process. However, presenting valid ID papers is an obstacle for everyone who has left their country due to discrimination, the very criteria for which a refugee status is granted. Those leaving a country due to persecution or treatment as second-class citizens have good reasons for being afraid of contacting the diplomatic offices of their countries of origin. This is one of the daily paradoxes of refugee lives (strikingly described by the exiled author Brecht, 1961/2000).

The system of sanctions for deviating from these obligations is the third factor structuring humanitarian reception. These obligations are also relevant for persons with an exceptional leave to remain, especially those who have already lived in Germany for a long period of time. Between 2006 and 2017 different legal measures were taken which sought to grant this group performance-based residence rights. Nonetheless, only a few thousand applicants (3,503) received a residence permit due to the various regulations amended to the Residency Act during this time. It is a small number considering that in September 2017, 32,006 people with an exceptional leave to remain had already resided in Germany for 5 years or more (Deutscher Bundestag, 2017b) and could therefore have applied for a residence permit if they had fulfilled the performance criteria and all their

<sup>5</sup> Many asylum seekers have no passports or identity certificates when they enter and have problems gaining them from diplomatic establishments of their countries. But German immigration authorities demand valid passports or identity certificates, thus entrapping the concerned between national administrative logics.

**Table 2.** Legal measures categorized according to the three factors citizenship, performance and deviance.

	Citizenship	Performance	Deviance
Act to Classify Other States and Safe Countries of Origin and on Facilitating Labour Market Access for Asylum Seekers and Foreign Nationals with Exceptional Leave to Remain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia are declared safe countries of origin</li> </ul>		
Act to Improve the Legal Status of Asylum Seekers and Foreign Nationals with Exceptional Leave to Remain		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residence was restricted for asylum seekers and persons with exceptional leave to remain who receive social benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freedom of movement restrictions for more than 3 months are established for criminals and persons who are required to leave the country</li> </ul>
Asylum Package I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asylum seekers with a high probability of being accepted are entitled to join a free German language and society course while still in the asylum process if places are available</li> <li>Asylum seekers with a high probability of being accepted have access to measures supporting their entrance into the labour market according to the Third Book of the Social Code</li> <li>Unrestricted employment for nationals of Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia if the employment visa is applied for in the country of origin and if no reasons for exclusion exist (e.g., having received benefits as part of the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act 24 months prior to application)</li> <li>Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro are declared safe countries of origin</li> <li>Nationals of safe countries of origin are prohibited from employment and may be allocated to arrival centres for more than 6 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Persons with exceptional leave to remain have access to grants for studies after 15 months of lawful stay in Germany according to the Federal Training Assistance Act (BAföG)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benefits are cut if a person does not leave Germany despite a concrete date for exit, if he/she does not obtain the required ID documents or if the person is to be sent to a hot spot in another EU-country</li> </ul>

**Table 2.** (Cont.) Legal measures categorized according to the three factors citizenship, performance and deviance.

	<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Deviance</b>
Asylum Package II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fast-track asylum procedures in one week's time in special reception centres, out of which a deportation is to take place in three weeks' time (employed for nationals of Western Balkan countries)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Closure of asylum procedures if the concerned do not continue to pursue their case for example if they leave the special reception centres before they are permitted to do so</li> </ul>
Integration Act and its accompanying Ordinance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asylum seekers with a good prospect of being accepted have access to measures of vocational training and education after 15 months of residence if the measure starts before 31.12.2018</li> <li>Nationals of safe countries of origin are excluded from measures of vocational training and education and 'Refugee Integration Measures' (employment opportunities)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time spent in a German language and society course or other types of qualification are not considered periods of unemployment</li> <li>Persons with an exceptional leave to remain have a right to finish a vocational training; if they successfully complete it, they have 6 months to search for an adequate job</li> <li>Persons with an exceptional leave to remain may receive a residence permit for 2 years if they successfully finish vocational training and find adequate employment,</li> <li>One is entitled to a German language and society course if he/she has a residence permit for a year (before it had to be issued for 2 years)</li> <li>Recognized refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are subject to residence restrictions for 3 years if they are receiving social benefits</li> <li>The standard minimum time, after which people entitled to asylum and recognized refugees may receive a permanent residence visa is extended from 3 to 5 years (as an exception, permanent residence may be granted after 3 years if they reach a C1-language level in German and can support themselves financially)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One is obliged to accept the 'Refugee Integration Measures' to which one is assigned</li> <li>German language and society courses may be made obligatory</li> <li>Asylum seekers' benefits are cut to below the general calculated minimum standard of living if they fail to cooperate during the asylum procedures, if they are absent from asylum hearings or work opportunities without an excuse or if another EU-country is responsible for processing the asylum claim</li> <li>Fines may be issued for up to 30,000 EUR for wrong, incomplete or delayed information during one's asylum procedures</li> </ul>

**Table 2.** (Cont.) Legal measures categorized according to the three factors citizenship, performance and deviance.

	Citizenship	Performance	Deviance
Asylum Package III			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People awaiting their deportation may be monitored if they are considered a threat to others or internal security</li> <li>• Persons awaiting deportation who are considered a threat to others or internal security may be ordered to wear electronic tagging devices</li> <li>• One’s fatherhood may be tested if it is suspected that the recognition of fatherhood is being abused</li> <li>• One’s freedom of movement may be restricted to the district of the foreigners’ authority where one is registered if he/she is required to leave Germany, has provided false information about his/her identity or has failed to cooperate with arrangements for his/her deportation</li> <li>• People required to leave Germany may be detained up to 15 months</li> <li>• If someone is being investigated due to suspicions of a crime or regulatory offence, a decision to prolong his/her residence title may be withheld until a judgement is in force</li> </ul>

obligations to cooperate with state officials. However, these numbers indicate that a large share of them could not profit from these regulations; most of them probably did not cooperate (enough) with the administration in the course of their asylum application process or during the preparation of their deportation. Furthermore, this number will probably rise in future after the asylum applications from 2015 and 2016 are entirely processed, since Germany will not be able to deport the high number of rejected applicants very quickly. In addition, there is no way for offenders of these regulations to work toward a legal residence permit, even a performance-based one.

In consequence, a new and complex hierarchy of different entitlements to resources and residence permits is evolving. The newly-formed legislation is the basis for the

highly technocratic but also quite arbitrary means of instituting differential inclusion, multiplying and increasingly stratifying the legal statuses of subjects inhabiting the same political space, while at the same time allowing an effective policing of the borders and boundaries between these different subject positions. (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2012, p. 193)



People claiming humanitarian protection see themselves confronted with performance expectations even if they had been excluded from integration measures in the beginning which could have helped improve this performance (Schiefer, 2017, p. 60f.). “When political belonging becomes entangled with market calculations the boundaries between state and market are blurred” (Mezadra & Neilson, 2012, p. 195f). This blurring of boundaries between state and market is just one collateral effect of the lane change in humanitarian reception. Furthermore, it is difficult for applicants to understand how and why resources are available to some of the compatriots they encountered in refugee accommodations or in German language and society courses and not available to others. Neither is it evident to them why some who perform well in the labour market get a residence permit and others don’t. On the individual level, the major impact of differential inclusion is the uncertainty it produces (Schiefer, 2017, pp. 7, 23, 61, 97, 2018; Will, 2009, p. 56ff.).

Differential inclusion is Janus-faced: there are dead ends or even traps for those who cannot perform as needed or who are excluded from the performance-based granting of rights, such as nationals from safe countries of origin. At the same time, opportunities do exist for those who conform to the performance “dispositif” (Foucault, 1978). In the latter case, performing one’s integration well is framed as something that improves him/her and opens up his/her opportunities, while well-integrated refugees are also portrayed as a potential advantage for Germany, itself, where the general population is decreasing. Henceforth, humanitarian reception is split into several groups, and support for asylum seekers is a challenge because of the increasing complexity and fluidity which makes it very difficult to compare one case with another.

In addition, criticizing the current migration regime is a tricky task, since it also offers new opportunities to applicants for humanitarian status by smoothly following a neoliberal logic of a national welfare state. Even rejected asylum seekers can make it if they complete their vocational education and find an adequate job. But they have to follow the rules of cooperation in the asylum process and comply with preparations for deportation. Hardly anyone who applies for asylum or international protection can and wants to fulfil all of these requirements; therefore, a large number of rejected asylum seekers cannot take advantage of the positive opportunities. They are kept in a precarious waiting position, between a constant threat of deportation and occasional incentives for a voluntary return.

## 5. Conclusion

During the 18th legislative period from 2014 to 2017 a series of laws profoundly restructured the field of humanitarian reception, establishing a nuanced system of differential inclusion which has generated new hierar-

chies. The three main organizational axes structuring this hierarchy are citizenship, neo-liberal performance (in the labour market, educational sector and German language and society courses/tests) and strict abidance to laws and obligations. Citizens from safe countries of origin (since 2014–2015 including the Southeast European states Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia) are almost completely excluded from access to humanitarian residence permits. Nationals of countries with high protection rates, such as Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Somalia and Syria, are entitled to take part in German language and society courses and gain further support for their quick integration even before their cases have been formally decided. All remaining nationals have to wait for a decision in order to gain access to integration measures; however, they, too, can look for a job after three months as long as they are not registered already in another European State, which would then be responsible for their asylum claim. Thus, “illegitimate” refugees from the Balkans and “genuine” refugees from the countries with high protection rates are the two prominent figures rising from recent humanitarian reception policy in Germany. The majority of the diverse and complex migration for humanitarian reasons is not adequately represented.

Central to the innovations in this field, alongside the doubling of staff in the responsible Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, are new data-gathering and data-processing possibilities, including the core database as part of the Central Register of Foreigners, as well as the integrated refugee management procedures which employed a clustering method based on citizenship to speed up the processing of new asylum applications. These measures may have successfully reduced application processing times during the phase when the number of new asylum applications was high, but with the reduction in asylum applications, the clustering method has become unnecessary and been discontinued. The arrival centres have thus shifted their focus to processing old asylum applications. Nevertheless, the new logics introduced by the twelve laws and by administrative innovations concerning humanitarian reception have lasting effects.

One of these effects is that the division between market and state has become less distinct. Humanitarian reception has become more complex, which is a challenge for supporters of asylum seekers and the applicants, themselves. Additionally, asylum seekers are split by the new legislation into several status groups with different support entitlements. Last but not least, it is difficult for supporters of humanitarian reception to effectively criticize these measures, since the changes are in line in part with old demands of refugee-supporting activists as well as with neoliberal arguments for the performance-based granting of residence rights. Asylum seekers are thus deemed to be the masters of their own fate, which is not true given the structurally exclusionist restrictions most of them meet.

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## Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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## About the Author



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**Annex**
**Table A1.** Improvements and restrictions in six laws issued from 2014 until 2017 in the field of humanitarian reception.

	<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Restrictions</b>
Act to Classify Other States and Safe Countries of Origin and on Facilitating Labour Market Access for Asylum Seekers and Foreign Nationals with Exceptional Leave to Remain	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduced time period in which labour market access is prohibited for asylum seekers and foreigners with exceptional leave to remain to 3 months (from 9 or 12 months)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia are declared safe countries of origin</li> </ol>
Act to Improve the Legal Status of Asylum Seekers and Foreign Nationals with Exceptional Leave to Remain	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduced duration of freedom of movement restrictions (only movement within the district of the foreigners' office where one is registered) to a maximum of 3 months</li> <li>2. Encouraged granting benefits in cash, as long as the concerned live in accommodations outside of reception centres</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Residence was restricted for asylum seekers and persons with exceptional leave to remain who receive social benefits</li> <li>2. Freedom of movement restrictions for more than 3 months are established for criminals and persons who are required to leave the country</li> <li>3. Inhabitants of reception centres are to receive non-cash benefits as vouchers or as measures in kind if the investment is deemed justifiable</li> </ol>
Asylum Package I	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Asylum seekers with a high probability of being accepted are entitled to join a free German language and society course while still in the asylum process if places are available</li> <li>2. Asylum seekers with a high probability of being accepted have access to measures supporting their entrance into the labour market according to the Third Book of the Social Code</li> <li>3. Unrestricted employment for nationals of Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia if the employment visa is applied for in the country of origin and if no reasons for exclusion exist (e.g., having received benefits as part of the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act 24 months prior to application)</li> <li>4. Persons with exceptional leave to remain have access to grants for studies after 15 months of lawful stay in Germany according to the Federal Training Assistance Act (BAföG)</li> <li>5. Opening a bank account is to be made easier (the foreigners' authorities' replacement documents for ID-papers are to be accepted by banks)</li> <li>6. 16 and 17 years olds are considered minors in procedures according to the Asylum Act</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro are declared safe countries of origin</li> <li>2. Asylum seekers can be forced to reside for up to 6 months in arrival centres with freedom of movement restrictions and prohibition of employment</li> <li>3. Nationals of safe countries of origin are prohibited from employment and may be allocated to arrival centres for more than 6 months</li> <li>4. Benefits are cut if a person does not leave Germany despite a concrete date for exit, if he/she does not obtain the required ID documents or if the person is to be sent to a hot spot in another EU-country</li> <li>5. People will no longer be informed about their deportations in advance</li> <li>6. Unaccompanied minors may be redistributed throughout the Federal Republic</li> <li>7. Duration of exceptional leave to remain according to §60a sentence 1 (Residence Act) is reduced to 3 months (from 6 months)</li> </ol>

**Table A1.** (Cont.) Improvements and restrictions in six laws issued from 2014 until 2017 in the field of humanitarian reception.

	<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Restrictions</b>
Asylum Package I	7. Receiving a health insurance card is to be possible if the administrative district works in cooperation with health insurance companies	
Asylum Package II	1. Responsible bodies for reception centres have to ensure that employees and volunteers who have contact with minors provide an extended certificate of good conduct submitted to authorities (according to §30 (5) und §30a (1) BZRG)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Family reunification is suspended for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection</li> <li>2. Fast-track asylum procedures in one week's time in special reception centres, out of which a deportation is to take place in three weeks' time (employed for nationals of Western Balkan countries)</li> <li>3. Closure of asylum procedures if the concerned do not continue to pursue their case for example if they leave the special reception centres before they are permitted to do so</li> <li>4. Suspending deportations for health reasons is restricted to cases where a life-threatening or serious illness would worsen if the deportation were carried out</li> <li>5. Reasons for not deporting someone have to be provided by the person concerned; the foreigners' office does not have to investigate this on its own</li> <li>6. Cash benefits are reduced according to the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act by an average of 8 EUR</li> </ol>
Integration Act	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Time spent in a German language and society course or other types of qualification are not considered periods of unemployment</li> <li>2. Asylum seekers with a good prospect of being accepted have access to measures of vocational training and education after 15 months of residence if the measure starts before 31.12.2018</li> <li>3. Persons with an exceptional leave to remain have a right to finish a vocational training; if they successfully complete it, they have 6 months to search for an adequate job</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Nationals of safe countries of origin are excluded from measures of vocational training and education and 'Refugee Integration Measures' (employment opportunities)</li> <li>2. 'Refugee Integration Measures' (employment opportunities) are reimbursed with 0,80 Euro per hour (i.e., 20% less than so-called '1-Euro-Jobs', those work opportunities in Germany which are reimbursed with at least one Euro per hour)</li> <li>3. One is obliged to accept the 'Refugee Integration Measures' to which one is assigned</li> </ol>

**Table A1.** (Cont.) Improvements and restrictions in six laws issued from 2014 until 2017 in the field of humanitarian reception.

	<b>Improvements</b>	<b>Restrictions</b>
Integration Act	<p>4. Persons with an exceptional leave to remain may receive a residence permit for 2 years if they successfully finish vocational training and find adequate employment,</p> <p>5. One is entitled to a German language and society course if he/she has a residence permit for a year (before it had to be issued for 2 years)</p>	<p>4. Recognized refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are subject to residence restrictions for 3 years if they are receiving social benefits</p> <p>5. Asylum seekers' benefits are cut to below the general calculated minimum standard of living if they fail to cooperate during the asylum procedures, if they are absent from asylum hearings or work opportunities without an excuse or if another EU-country is responsible for processing the asylum claim</p> <p>6. Asylum seekers' data is to be collected and exchanged between governmental authorities and institutions providing education (such as German language and society courses) or work opportunities</p> <p>7. German language and society courses may be made obligatory</p> <p>8. When benefits are cut and the concerned sue to get the benefits back, they no longer automatically receive benefits again until the court decides; the benefits now remain cut until the court decides that they should be paid out again</p> <p>9. The standard minimum time, after which people entitled to asylum and recognized refugees may receive a permanent residence visa is extended from 3 to 5 years (as an exception, permanent residence may be granted after 3 years if they reach a C1-language level in German and can support themselves financially)</p> <p>10. Asylum seekers' private sponsors are liable for 5 years for any costs incurred, even if the respective persons are granted residence on humanitarian grounds</p> <p>11. Fines may be issued for up to 30,000 EUR for wrong, incomplete or delayed information during one's asylum procedures</p>

**Table A1.** (Cont.) Improvements and restrictions in six laws issued from 2014 until 2017 in the field of humanitarian reception.

Improvements	Restrictions
Integration Act	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. The authorities which execute one's asylum hearings may be changed, i.e., not only the Federal Office of Migration and Refugees may execute them, but also the border police and others</li> <li>13. Asylum claims cannot be admitted for people who received a refugee status in a third country or lived there safely for at least for 3 months</li> </ol>
Asylum package III	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. People awaiting their deportation may be monitored if they are considered a threat to others or internal security</li> <li>2. Persons awaiting deportation who are considered a threat to others or internal security may be ordered to wear electronic tagging devices</li> <li>3. One's fatherhood may be tested if it is suspected that the recognition of fatherhood is being abused</li> <li>4. One's freedom of movement may be restricted to the district of the foreigners' authority where one is registered if he/she is required to leave Germany, has provided false information about his/her identity or has failed to cooperate with arrangements for his/her deportation</li> <li>5. People required to leave Germany may be detained up to 15 months</li> <li>6. If someone is being investigated due to suspicions of a crime or regulatory offence, a decision to prolong his/her residence title may be withheld until a judgement is in force</li> <li>7. The travels of persons entitled to asylum and recognized refugees to their home countries are to be reported to asylum authorities to reconsider the grounds on which asylum was granted</li> <li>8. Personal data may be transferred to other authorities</li> </ol>



**Table A1.** (Cont.) Improvements and restrictions in six laws issued from 2014 until 2017 in the field of humanitarian reception.

Improvements	Restrictions
Asylum package III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Asylum seekers are obliged to show or hand over data storage devices as well as mobile telephones if no valid identification documents are available for verification of identity</li> <li>10. Data collected by the Federal Criminal Police Office may be transferred to third countries (i.e., not country of origin) to verify the identity of an asylum seeker, as long as the protection rights of the asylum seeker are respected</li> <li>11. Federal states may require asylum seekers to reside in a reception centre until an asylum decision is made, and require rejected asylum seekers to reside there until their return to their home country, but 24 months at most</li> <li>12. Minors in need of humanitarian protection may no longer first be assigned a custodian and wait until later to go through the difficult application process; the youth welfare office is now obliged to immediately submit an asylum application for them</li> </ul>

Note: Legal measures which are neither restrictive nor improving the situation of those under the legislation are not listed, as for example renaming the Asylum Procedure Act (AsylVfG) as Asylum Act (AsylG).

Article

## No Recourse to Social Work? Statutory Neglect, Social Exclusion and Undocumented Migrant Families in the UK

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### Abstract

Families in the UK with an irregular migration status are excluded from most mainstream welfare provision through the no recourse to public funds rule, and statutory children's social work services are one of the few welfare services available to undocumented migrant families. This article draws on semi-structured interviews with undocumented migrant families who are accessing children's services support to illustrate the sometimes uneasy relationship between child welfare law and immigration control. Outlining the legislative and policy context for social work with undocumented migrant families in the UK, the article argues that the exclusion of migrant families from the welfare state by government policy amounts to a form of statutory neglect which is incompatible with the global social work profession's commitment to social justice and human rights.

### Keywords

children; destitution; families; irregular migration; neglect; social work; undocumented

### Issue

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### 1. Introduction

We believe in a union not just between the nations of the United Kingdom but between all of our citizens, every one of us, whoever we are and wherever we're from. That means fighting against the burning injustice that, if you're born poor, you will die on average nine years earlier than others. (May, 2016)

The aim is to create, here in Britain, a really hostile environment for illegal immigrants. (Theresa May, cited in Hill, 2017)

Although there are no official data for the numbers of undocumented children living in the UK, the most widely accepted figure is by Sigona & Hughes (2012), who estimate 120,000 children. Undocumented migrants are not legally entitled to seek paid employment, and are subject to the no recourse to public funds (NRPF) rule, a provi-

sion in the Immigration Rules restricting some migrants from entitlement to most mainstream social security benefits, public housing and local authority homelessness assistance (UKVI, 2016b). Most recently, the 2014 and 2016 Immigration Acts have created a legislative framework for criminalising the rental of accommodation to undocumented migrants, new sanctions for illegal workers and their employers, and restrictions on undocumented migrants opening bank accounts or holding driving licenses (JCWI, 2014; UKVI, 2016a). The stated purpose of these measures is to create 'a hostile', or more recently 'compliant' environment for undocumented migrants so that they leave the UK, with the threat of destitution as an incentive (Randall, 2015).

One of the few welfare entitlements which undocumented migrant children are entitled to are 'child in need' services provided by local authorities under section 17 of the Children Act (1989), and the duty under section 11 of the Children Act (2004) to have "regard to

the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children". However, there are restrictions as to how this duty can be discharged—Schedule 3 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act (2002) restricts services to adults who are undocumented migrants, and local authorities can discharge their safeguarding duty to families who have no application for leave to remain pending with the Home Office by buying a ticket back to the parental country of origin (*Birmingham City Council v. Clue v. Shelter*, 2010). In the absence of statutory guidance for social work with undocumented migrants, families can be refused support that they are entitled to (Farmer, 2017; Price & Spencer, 2015).

Consequently, unlike social housing (where families are excluded by law), or compulsory schooling (where they are not), social work with undocumented migrant families exists in a contradictory context where immigration law and child welfare law conflict with each other. The death by starvation of Lillian Oluk and her daughter Lynne Mutumba in March 2016, while being supported by a local authority under section 17 of the Children Act (1989), illustrates the consequences of inadequate support for undocumented migrant families in the hostile environment.

### 1.1. Social Inclusion

The UK government is committed to policies of social inclusion through legislation such as the Equality Act (2010) which prevents discrimination in employment and the provision of goods and services; through measures such as the Social Mobility Index (Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission, 2016) and the Race Disparity Audit (Cabinet Office, 2017). While there is debate about the extent to which the government is meeting these obligations, there is broad agreement that the government should be committed to them. However, the treatment of undocumented migrants differs from other areas because the government is actively committed to a policy of social exclusion through the 'hostile environment' and exclusions such as the NRPF rule. This is not to deny that other policies can be exclusionary in effect, merely that NRPF is unusual in its explicit exclusionary intent, and its ability to cause destitution by removing means of support through employment or social security benefits (UKVI, 2016b).

This raises the question of how to describe and conceptualise the hostile environment for undocumented migrant children and families, particularly in the context of the ambivalent role of social work, which has been variously described as acting as 'a border guard' (Farmer, 2017) and as exercising 'an unacceptable role' in its relationship to border control (Humphries, 2004), yet remains one of the few welfare entitlements for undocumented children. The social exclusion faced by undocumented migrants as a result of government policy is often theorised in human rights terms (Cunningham & Tomlinson, 2005; Lind, 2014; Webber & Peirce, 2012),

or is analysed in terms of how governments construct migrant illegality (De Genova, 2002) through processes of everyday bordering (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss, & Cassidy, 2018). While these critiques are helpful in providing a framework for understanding the structural aspects of the exclusion families face, they don't engage with the language used at a social work practice level, and so fail to make the link between local exclusionary practices and their structural causes. A framework which utilises the language of social work practice may be a more effective way to highlight some of the contradictions between a profession which is committed to "social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities" (IFSW, 2014), and the implementation of exclusionary policies.

### 1.2. Research Aims

This research sought to explore whether undocumented migrant families have experiences resulting from exclusionary policy and legislation which would be considered as neglectful if caused by a parent or carer. In order to be suffering from statutory neglect, children's experiences would need to meet two criteria. First, that they meet the commonly defined definition of neglect, and second, that this is a result of exclusionary legislation and policies.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Sampling

Seventeen semi-structured interviews with fifteen families (including 24 children) took place between October and December 2016. The sample size corresponded to just over 9% of the 163 families with NRPF who were supported by children's services in Birmingham at the end of 2013 (Birmingham City Council, 2013). Families were identified through gatekeepers working with undocumented migrant families and were screened to ensure that they were currently undocumented or had been in the previous 12 months. 98% of eligible families took part, and all had experience of being supported by children's services under section 17 of the Children Act (1989) to prevent destitution. Table 1 illustrates some basic demographic information about participants.

A plurality of families was from West Africa, and a third from the Caribbean. Over half had been in the UK for more than ten years, and had children born in the UK, and more than two thirds had originally come to the UK on a visa and overstayed. All but one of the interviewees were living in female headed lone-parent households. It is difficult to construct a sampling frame for a 'hidden population', but although the sample is purposive, rather than random, the sample was demographically similar to other sources. Birmingham City Council estimates that the majority of those they support are single parents with one child (Birmingham City Council,

**Table 1.** Demographics of participants.

Region of Origin	Years in UK		Children in Household		Immigration Status		
011(West Africa)	7	0–5	5	1	7	Refused Asylum Seeker	2
029(Caribbean)	5	6–10	2	2	7	Visa Overstayer	11
034 (Southern Asia)	1	11–15	7	3	1	Illegal entrant	1
035 (South-eastern Asia)	1	16–20	1			Other	1
145 (Western Asia)	1						
<b>Total:</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>			<b>15</b>

2013, p. 15). Nationally, Price and Spencer (2015) estimate that 63% of supported families are visa overstayers, and 51% Jamaican and Nigerian nationals (Price & Spencer, 2015, p. 27).

Ethical approval was received from the University of Birmingham research ethics committee (University of Birmingham, 2018). All transcripts were anonymised and pseudonyms used, recognising the particular concerns with being identified that undocumented migrants face, while acknowledging that they also possess agency and capabilities and are not merely passive and vulnerable victims (Lahman, Mendoza, Rodriguez, & Schwartz, 2011). In recognition of the fact that many participants were at risk of destitution, participants were given a £5 voucher to cover the cost of a meal, and a bus pass for the day of the interview.

A limitation of the study is that families were already accessing services, so it is not known how their experiences differ from those who were not in contact with support services. A further limitation is that the sample size is small and based in one city, so the findings are not generalisable. However, a small-scale study has the advantage of being able to explore in greater detail the experiences of individual households, and to understand the perspectives of people who are subject to policies of immigration control. The results are indicative of the potential consequences of the NRPF policy in one city, however, there is transferable learning for other contexts where access to social protection is dependent on immigration status.

## 2.2. Analysis

Interviews were analysed using directive content analysis by an iterative process of coding using *a priori* themes. In order to explore whether participants were experiencing neglect resulting from discriminatory legislation and policy, the statutory definition of child neglect for England was used to generate initial themes:

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate

care-givers); ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs. (HM Government, 2015)

The category of ‘maternal substance abuse’ was not included as it was considered to be more applicable to parental, rather than statutory neglect, and the category of ‘access to medical care or treatment’ was also discarded because UK healthcare is provided through the NHS rather than at a municipal level and is subject to different legislation than children’s social services. For ease of analysis ‘unresponsiveness to a child’s basic emotional needs’ was combined with ‘failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger’. During the initial process of coding, additional data was coded into a new theme of ‘positive experiences of individual social workers’. No examples were discovered in the transcripts which fitted the theme of ‘adequate supervision’.

## 3. Findings

All remaining indicators of neglect were referred to by more than half of participants, and by far the most common references in the interviews were to lack of food, clothing and shelter (see Table 2). The themes are discussed in turn below.

### 3.1. “Failing to Provide Adequate Food, Clothing and Shelter”

All fifteen families discussed not having adequate food, clothing or shelter. This was the theme which had the greatest number of references in the transcripts, and appeared to corroborate previous research which identifies this as a concern (Dexter, Capron, & Gregg, 2016; Farmer, 2017; Jolly, 2017)

#### 3.1.1. Experiences of Approaching to Ask for Support and Being Turned Away

Five families described being refused support by children’s services after seeking help for destitution, although the reasons given varied. Two described physically arriving at the children’s services office to present as destitute, but were told that they couldn’t self-refer, and had to be referred by another agency. However, having

**Table 2.** Coding grid.

Theme	No. of Sources	No. of References
<b>1) Food, clothing and shelter</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>68</b>
Turned away from support	7	13
Inadequate levels of support	13	38
Relocation	3	5
Legal restrictions on access	8	14
<b>2) Physical, emotional harm or danger / emotional needs</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>28</b>
Consequences	3	6
Domestic Violence	2	4
Emotional Stress of having NRPF	7	9
Impact on child	4	5
<b>3) Positive Experiences</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>
Gratitude for support	7	9
Good social workers	2	2

a referral from another professional didn't always result in provision of services, or even a needs assessment:

In the beginning, when my daughter was about a year old, she wasn't gaining any weight because of lack of fund[s] to get food, and the nurse wrote a letter for me to go down to...the social service place to see if they could give me a food bank paper to get some food. I explain [it] to them but, because then my immigration paper wasn't sent in to the Home Office yet, they didn't help me at all, they sent me away without no help. You know, in [spite of] the fact of the child was underweight and all that, they didn't help me at all.

There were clear links between immigration status and lack of entitlement to services, even after concerns about malnutrition had been raised. Incidences of referrals being closed without assessment or referral to a more appropriate agency are a major protection gap and appear to be a wider issue. The serious case review into the death of Lynne Mutumba recorded that it took four referrals from two different agencies before contact was made with the family (Smith, 2018, p. 7). This lack of response when a family approaches a local authority when destitute is indicative of the statutory nature of this neglect. Another family was erroneously told that their NRPF status excluded them from local authority children's services support. In two cases support was only offered when homeless families arrived at the office with their bags packed following eviction, having previously been instructed that support couldn't be provided without an eviction notice. Another who had been illegally subletting with a friend was told to go back to stay with them:

I couldn't pay my rent and I get evicted, and even when I go to them for help, they wouldn't help me. I was home one day, no light, no electric for the week-

end. No food for the kids, and they said they can't help me.

When destitute families were referred to children's services but support wasn't provided, a process of attrition developed between referring agencies and social workers, with families repeatedly referred and refused before support was provided:

Anyway, they keep going back and forward, back and forward, and each time they tell me I go back to [name of support worker] and he always give me advice, and he always tell me 'ring and tell them this and tell them that'.

One family was referred to children's services but was refused support three times. It later emerged that support had been refused because they had mistakenly asked for Housing Act (1996) support (which the family *wasn't* entitled to because of their irregular migration status) rather than Children Act (1989) support (which the family *was* entitled to):

So, when I got there, I went to this MASH building by the highway and they said, no I'm in the wrong place, so I spoke with the receptionist. I said I'm homeless, I need a place for my daughter and myself, he said no, that they can't do that. Then I called [name of agency] again, he said 'no, go back to the receptionist and say to her you're here and you need help under section 17, Children's Act'. When I went back and I said that to her, she now said 'ok, sit down, I will call you someone', so she call one of the social worker[s]. So I spoke with that person on the phone and she said, ok, fine she will come and she ask me a few things, she ask me to wait.

This refusal of support on the technicality of the words used to ask for help illustrates the process of gatekeep-



ing according to immigration status, and that consideration of entitlements precedes assessment of need (NRPF Network, 2017; Price & Spencer, 2015).

### 3.1.2. Level of Support too Low

Although one parent said that the amount of financial support from children's services was adequate, most found that the amount of money they received was too low to provide for their family:

Yeah, the people who put me here, they gave me, 150 every two weeks, which runs out anyway, it runs out. It happens every time, every time. Every time. I've run out of the 150 now, but it's written that if you run out of your money, there is nothing they can do for you.

This suggests that the amount of money provided is based on a pre-existing calculation of the minimum subsistence support, rather than assessed need (Smith, 2018), despite statutory guidance that assessments should be child-centred, and based on a child's needs and views (HM Government, 2015). The most frequently raised concern was that the amount of financial support given was too low to be able to eat a balanced diet. Nine interviewees didn't always have enough to eat, and four described missing meals or cutting down on food so their child could eat. One mother insisted that there was always food to eat, but had very low expectations of what counted as adequate food:

Nah nah nah, I've always got food in my house. My Nan always said, 'if you've got sugar and water, you've got in the house to drink!'

Four families found that repeating basic meals was a means of ensuring that money lasted, but found children's services to be irresponsive to the reality of running out of money:

You really have to eat the same meals for almost a week. yeah, because I have to explain to her [the daughter] that this is what I've got, and this is what I'm gonna offer [her], there's nothing else I can do because I've called and called the children's service, I've called the social worker and I've said to him, 'please do something'.

The lack of entitlement to other benefits such as free school meals exacerbated the difficulties of not having enough money:

I find it very hard, I've given my youngest packed lunch now, and the eldest in secondary school, she's not having any school dinners coz I can't afford it....They have given her the school lunch that you have to pay for, but then sometimes she just gets what's left, she eat yesterday. She said, you know, I'll have to start

paying for it, [and] I say I can't afford it, so I'll have to write a letter to the school to say that I'm on the no recourse to public funds team, so therefore I can't afford the school dinners so any help that they can provide for me with that.

Others found that they didn't have enough money for adequate clothing, which was especially difficult for growing children, or during cold weather. Another mother spoke about the sacrifices she made to ensure her child was provided for:

It's very very, very tough with me. I have to chop off my hair because I can't be making my hair and there is no point spending that kind of money when I've got hair. I literally look like this for my son to be happy, instead of me to buy essentials for making hair, I buy pairs of shoes so that he looks better, you know, so it's really, really tough, it is very tough honestly, I've run out of money right now, my 150 is finished because I paid for trip on Monday for his school, I have to go with him to a place, you know, I cannot say he shouldn't go, that means I'm depriving him of a childhood, that means I have to pay that money, £25 from 150, you can imagine.

Some were living in inadequate accommodation. One mother described a rodent infestation due to a number of holes where rats entered. She complained to children's services, but the problem remained. She maintained that the stress of this was a contributing factor to the depression she had been diagnosed with. Another described her son having nowhere to play and lived in cramped conditions where the bed was too small, so she gave him her bed and slept on the floor. Facilities in the houses were also sometimes inadequate for the number of families accommodated in the building:

We all don't have washing machines in our rooms. Yeah, we are nineteen [people], and we have just one washing machine, and nineteen with kids, that's all together. I literally wash clothes [at] twelve midnight, when everybody's sleeping, and I finish [at] three am and I have to take my child to school in the morning, eight am, it's really crazy.

### 3.1.3. Relocation

Others expressed concern about frequent moves between different temporary accommodation. As well as making it difficult to access schooling, this impacted section 17 entitlements because to be eligible, families had to prove they were habitually resident in the area:

So, I went to...children's services, and they said, no, they can't accommodate us because I've moved to Birmingham. I said I'm not living in Birmingham, someone is just giving us help. I'm just squatting. They

said no because now it's been up to six months I've moved...to Birmingham. I said, 'my daughter, she still come to school for that 6 months in [midlands borough]'. They said no, because I've moved....We don't live in [midlands borough] anymore.

Two families had been relocated to Birmingham from London, a 150-mile trip from where they were previously living. It is increasingly common for local authorities in London to rehouse people in areas of cheaper housing, but this has a particularly negative effect on migrants in the absence of employment opportunities and public funds who are reliant on support networks, a point noted by the Serious Case Review of the death of Lynne Mutumba (Smith, 2018). The extent of the isolation that this caused became apparent in one mother's account of her arrival in the West Midlands from London:

We had to move away. We didn't even know where. I couldn't say no, if I had the choice I wouldn't because we were not prepared. We didn't plan it...and when we got here, it was unfortunate. There was no electricity, there was no curtain, there was no bedding, there was nothing, we slept in the cold, we got no heat, and we could not cook. There was nothing, and we came in the night, you know, so children shouldn't live like that, nobody should live like that. The social services arrange, and they just gave me the address and said, you know, 'go to this place, and there will be somebody waiting there for you', and it was on a Friday. So, when we got here, it was really late, even if I wanted to go back to London, I wouldn't have been able to, and he [the landlord] said to me, 'if you don't like it you can go back to where you are coming from', because obviously he thought 'yeah, she's desperate'.

### 3.1.4. Positive Experiences

Not all experiences were negative. Seven families were positive about the support they were receiving from children's services, or named a specific social worker as particularly helpful. Positive experiences were by no means universal, and one family who had expressed satisfaction during the interview subsequently disclosed after the tape had been switched off that they were not happy with their social worker, and that he was frequently rude and aggressive to them. However, the majority didn't express negative opinions about social workers, and when life was a struggle did not blame individual practitioners, seeing it as a symptom of wider societal issues:

Some will say, 'oh, it's hard'. Come on, we live in a hard society. But you yourself have to make yourself not in that situation. You get where I'm coming from?

Other families had a nuanced view of the complexities that social workers were negotiating, thinking the best of their intentions, even when support was lacking:

I don't know, it's difficult, but they are trying, I wouldn't say they are not trying, it's a hard job for them as well, they are really trying, I might not be the only person who put a complaint on his table, it might be up to ten, twenty, and he's got to fix everybody. For me, he's trying his best, because he's only human....But, it's alright, it's fine.

### 3.1.5. Legal Restrictions on Access

When families were refused help, they commonly identified the cause as legislation or policy, rather than failings of children's services. The NRPF rule was mentioned by name by five families as a cause of difficulty:

It's very difficult not giving no recourse to public fund to single mums, most especially because how do they expect them to cope, it's a very difficult situation, you know. If we don't look after these kids, they will also take away the kids from us, that we are irresponsible, we can't look after the kids, but how can we look after kids when we don't have the resources to work?

Another government policy that was identified was the restriction on the right to work, which four families referred to and was a particular source of frustration:

[We] do an application to remain and they refuse it. My wife, with me, and I've got one daughter, she's four years now. And they refused me and instructed me not to work. I'm a hard worker. And now it's like they tied my hands not to work.

## 3.2. *Physical and Emotional Harm or Danger/Basic Emotional Needs*

### 3.2.1. Consequences of NRPF

Some cases of physical or emotional harm that families faced were directly related to their destitution and social exclusion. One father described how his wife had a miscarriage following the stress of becoming homeless, and depression and suicidal ideation was mentioned by more than one family:

Sometimes you just don't know what to do, where to go, who to turn to. I mean, I know a lot of people in the same situation like myself think of even committing suicide cos they just don't want, I mean you think of going back home, but when you're stuck with the kids and all of that it's a very hard decision to make, so you try to you know, find a way to survive here.

Another mother spoke frankly about how her daughter was conceived through a transactional sexual relationship, which she entered into in order to survive because she wasn't eligible to work or claim benefits:

Yeah, you had to, so for instance I had the boy first, then I end up having a little girl because I got involved with somebody just to make two ends meet really, you know what I mean, and really and truly you don't...you didn't want to do that, but then you find yourself doing things.

### 3.2.2. Domestic Violence

The interplay between domestic violence and immigration control is well documented (Anitha, 2008), and two participants were survivors of domestic violence. One talked in detail about how she didn't seek help because of her immigration status:

I don't want to talk about that stuff because it's [a] very hard part of my life, but we end up like separated, and...I did not know before I could get help in this country. Coz when I got the spouse visa the Home Office made it like, 'you depend off this man. If he left you, all you have to do is go back to your country. There's nothing that we could do for you'. They gave me no recourse to public funds. So, I was saying to myself, I have to just stay in the house and just be patient. But it happened one night that I couldn't stay there because he was getting crazy...so I called the Police and they explained me [that] even [if] you don't have recourse to public funds, you can't stay in a marriage where you're suffering. You should go and ask advice, which is what I did.

However, when the mother approached children's services, rather than support her and the child under section 17, they contacted the father to ask if he could take the child, despite a court order preventing access:

I explain to them my husband doesn't have any contact with me because of police action which doesn't give him access, not talk to me, anything. We went to court because he wanted [to] see his child, and the court established that I am having the care of the child but he could see him every two weeks in a contact centre, but they say they have to speak to him. Apparently, that's what they ask him. And they did ask that to me too. In the assessment they say, 'right we're doing that', and I explain to them why he couldn't visit us, so this was...this is like something that, really, this is the hardest thing that I have experienced in this country because she is just a child. How people can go to this extent, it's because of the financial help you [are] asking...they trying to separate me from my daughter. It's even worse than what happened to me with the Home Office.

### 3.2.3. Emotional Stress

Seven families talked about the emotional stress that they faced, waiting to hear from the Home Office or due

to the lack of support they were receiving from children's services. One described feeling anxious if she saw a car parked outside her house, thinking that "they're watching me or, you know, somebody's gonna come and get me". This contributed to the depression for which she had been briefly hospitalised. The fear of being sent back to countries in which participants had not lived for many years in some cases, or where the children had never even been was a constant fear. However, parents felt they had to show resilience because of fears over the impact on the children:

It's difficult, honestly it is. I'm not happy with the situation at all, but I just have to be strong because of him [her son], because if I fall sick and have some mental issues, I'm gonna lose him, so I just have to. Sometimes I'm like, oh, take it easy and be strong for him, he needs you.

### 3.2.4. Impact on Child

Families described children as being unhappy and isolated, sometimes staying indoors all day, with few friends because of being moved away from previous support networks, and more than one expressed a feeling that welfare professionals cared more about people's immigration status than child welfare:

I'm really shocked and disappointed about the service and how they deal with people there....I think that what must be most important for them is, like, the safeness of my child and its happiness, and they are not taking account of them. Is this...they [are] thinking about that people coming in this country all the time. They make them serve [sic] in this situation without asking why are they in this situation? They just think, like, I'm from abroad, I'm from Africa. I came here, and now [I am] overstaying. They don't care about my child and the fact that she's my child, she has to be in my responsibility.

Other parents noticed changes in behaviour in their children which bore similarities to symptoms of neglect (Hildyard & Wolfe, 2002):

Yeah, she is, really, I could tell she's really angry. Sometimes she's moody and, you know, my son will say, 'what, you moody again? What's going on?' Sometimes she will be like, 'nothing', and sometimes she'll say, 'oh, I miss my friends', or 'I wanna go back to London', or 'why can't we go out', you know, which is something...children of that age would love to do. Or she wants her friends to visit her, that's what she used to do. You know, so now she really can't have that, so yeah, she is upset.

## 4. Analysis

### 4.1. Statutory Neglect

Most current definitions of neglect focus on individual aspects, rather than collective failures, and it is common to restrict the definition to relate to actions by a parent or carer (HM Government, 2015; US Department of Health and Human Services, 2010, p. 6). However, concepts of neglect are contested, and evolve over time and in different contexts (Corby, Shemmings, & Wilkins, 2012). Erikson and Egeland (2002) acknowledge societal neglect when there is a failure to provide support so parents can meet children's needs, and the World Health Organisation's report of the *Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention*, while focusing on the immediate family and care givers, does acknowledge that: "maltreatment can occur because of wider societal systems, organisations and processes" (WHO, 1999). This point is taken up by the *World Report on Violence and Health* (Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, & Lozano, 2002, p. 13), and Sethi et al. (2013) apply this ecological perspective on neglect to a European context, including structural factors such as law and policy in their analysis of neglect. The concept of 'statutory neglect' builds on this acknowledgment of the wider societal factors which contribute to neglect, describing a situation where neglect is a direct consequence of government policy or legislation.

#### 4.1.1. Experiences which are Akin to Neglect

The intention is not to provide a detailed diagnosis or assessment for the children and families who took part in the study, but to illustrate situations which are indicative of the child welfare implications of 'hostile environment' exclusionary policies. All families who took part in the interviews mentioned at least one factor which corresponded with the definition of neglect. However, 'neglect like' factors weren't evenly distributed across all themes. English, Thompson, Graham and Briggs (2005) note that some forms of neglect have a more significant impact on child development than others. Poor home safety, cleanliness and lack of shelter result in impaired language and other developmental problems in children more than other forms of neglect. Worryingly, concerns about a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter were the most commonly reported, being mentioned by all participants. Concerns about the suitability of the accommodation that was provided were frequently mentioned, but even more common were concerns about diet—nearly two thirds of families reported that they didn't have enough resources for a balanced diet. Hobbs and Wynne (2002) identify hunger and diet issues as one of the significant indicators of child neglect, and Horwath (2007, p. 31) identifies nutritional neglect as an area where societal factors have an impact.

#### 4.1.2. Link with Government Policy

When discussing the reasons for their situation, families consistently talked about the effect of government policy, 'NRPF' was frequently mentioned in connection with the inability to access decent housing or to have enough resources to maintain a balanced diet, as was the lack of a right to paid employment. Similarly, when being denied support, families were often told by social workers that the reason was because of the family's immigration status. An acknowledgment of the structural constraints of immigration law and policy was therefore explicitly acknowledged by both families and social workers. Notably, although families reported neglectful treatment, when blame was articulated, it wasn't towards individual social workers, or even children's services as a corporate body, but towards "the government" or the "Home Office".

#### 4.1.3. International Context

This article has focused on the UK, in a specifically English urban context, but the processes of governmental exclusion of undocumented migrants from welfare services, and gatekeeping by public officials is a common theme in literature from both Europe and North America, most commonly in relation to healthcare access (Cuadra, 2012; Woodward, Howard, & Wolffers, 2014), and Ruiz-Casares, Rousseau, Derluyn, Watters and Crepeau (2010) highlight the gap between international legal frameworks on the right to health, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and restrictions on access to healthcare in the US, Canada and Europe.

Tervonen and Enache (2017) identify a similar process of everyday bordering experienced by Roma migrants in Helsinki, where the Finnish central government's refusal to respond to the welfare needs of Roma families is described as a "policy of no policy", a situation which bears marked similarities to the concept of statutory neglect, and where government at a local level has been left to respond with a policy of gatekeeping and ambivalence.

In an inversion of the UK and Finnish situations, Furman, Ackerman, Loya, Jones and Egi (2012) describe the US context where in the absence of laws at a federal level, states such as Alabama have passed restrictive laws which criminalise paid employment for undocumented migrants, presenting ethical dilemmas for social workers when working with undocumented migrants, a concern that is also picked up by Jonsson (2014) in a Swedish context.

## 5. Conclusion

This article has explored on a micro level of one British city some of the experiences of undocumented migrant families accessing social work services in the UK, identifying that children and families exhibit the commonly understood signs of neglect, and that these are a conse-

quence of the government's 'hostile environment'. The concept of statutory neglect has applicability beyond the UK, however, both in government neglect of the welfare needs of undocumented migrants in other countries of the global north, but more broadly to any situation where a state refuses to legislate for the welfare of a particular group of children.

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### Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

## ‘Damn It, I Am a Miserable Eastern European in the Eyes of the Administrator’: EU Migrants’ Experiences with (Transnational) Social Security

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### Abstract

The European Union has given itself unique worldwide regulations so that EU citizens can port their social rights transnationally in case of migration. Yet this political and legal statement becomes flawed once a sociological perspective is adopted to look into the actual experiences of migrants. TRANSWEL (2015–2018), an ongoing international research project—applying a mixed-method approach to compare four country-pairs (Bulgaria-Germany, Estonia-Sweden, Hungary-Austria, Poland-UK)—has shown that mobile EU citizens are confronted with exclusion and discrimination and that their belonging is put into question. Based on qualitative interviews with migrants, we argue that welfare institutions in the ‘old’ EU member states (partially) exclude and potentially discriminate against mobile EU citizens. Exclusion and discrimination are mainly based on two types of experiences: First, the difficulty to navigate through a complex system of (transnational) regulations and administrative structures, and second, the burden to prove that one falls into the competency of the member state in question. The article points out that the EU—commonly referred to as the global best-practice example in terms of the portability of social rights—reveals its flaws and limitations once the actual experiences of migrants are scrutinized in this multilevel system of governance.

### Keywords

European Union; migration; qualitative interviews; social security; transnationalism

### Issue

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### 1. Introduction

Managing social security in the event of migration and international mobility is becoming a key concern in the global discussion surrounding migration (Avato, Koettl, & Sabates-Wheeler, 2010; Sabates-Wheeler, Koettl, & Avato, 2011; Sabates-Wheeler & Koettl, 2010). In this debate, social researchers and legal scholars together agree that the EU has come up with a unique transnational regulatory system that allows intra-EU migrants to port their social rights from one member state to another under certain conditions. These conditions have been subject to fierce political and scholarly debates (Ehata & Seeleib-

Kaiser, 2017; Favell, 2016; Kymlicka, 2015). The legal framework fostering social security for EU citizens itself is a complex issue which is not only based on regulations EC 883/2004 and EC 987/2009, but also changing over time with different court rulings on the issue (Blauberger & Schmidt, 2014; Carmel, Cerami, & Papadopoulos, 2011; Heindlmaier & Blauberger, 2017).

Regarding transnational social protection from such a legal angle, the EU is clearly the best-practice example world-wide when it comes to securing the social rights of migrants who are mobile in a number of countries (Dobbs & Levitt, 2017; Faist, 2017; Faist, Bilecen, Barglowski, & Sienkiewicz, 2015; Levitt, Viterna, Mueller,

& Lloyd, 2017). Yet what has been less thoroughly focused on until very recently is whether the political goal of EU citizens' non-discrimination is actually a social reality represented by the experiences of those citizens themselves. In order to follow up on this research interest, an international team within the TRANSWEL project examined the social rights of mobile citizens in policy and practice by applying a mixed-method approach. The focus was in four areas, namely health insurance, unemployment benefits, retirement benefits, and family-related benefits.

## 2. Methodology

In the following, we present our comparative analyses based on the last phase of the TRANSWEL project, a Grounded Theory study that investigated how mobile EU citizens experience, organise, and manage their welfare transnationally. In total, 81 problem-centred qualitative interviews (Scheibelhofer, 2008; Witzel & Reiter, 2012) with migrants from four different 'new' EU member states living and/or working in four different 'old' member states were carried out. Additionally, we conducted 22 interviews with their significant others—family or close friends—in the respective country of origin. The TRANSWEL project covered four country-pairs: Bulgaria-Germany (lead: Anna Amelina), Estonia-Sweden (lead: Ann Runfors), Hungary-Austria (lead: Elisabeth Scheibelhofer), and Poland-UK (lead: Emma Carmel). Country-pairs were studied due to prior findings regarding the importance of differences within welfare state regimes in terms of migration (Faist, 2017). With the last rounds of EU enlargements, migration from so-called 'new' member states to 'old' ones was deemed to be a research focus of particular importance with respect to transnational social protection. The 'old' countries of immigration were selected in order to contrast countries with strict labour market restrictions for EU migrants (Austria and Germany) and less restrictive countries in this regard (UK and Sweden) because we expected to find ensuing differences in the cross-border social security experiences of mobile EU citizens. On the other hand, the selection of 'new' countries of emigration aimed to compare sending countries with differing migration histories to the respective immigration countries (long-term: Hungary-Austria and Poland-UK/ short-term: Bulgaria-Germany and Estonia-Sweden). The reason for this was the assumption that migration history influences the organisational structures of diasporic communities which in turn play an important role in the provision of relevant information concerning the access to social security rights.

Concerning the selection of interview partners, a multitude of sampling strategies was employed within a circular research methodology based on constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2006). First, the findings of the previous phases of the project—an interpretative policy analysis and a discourse analysis—informed our theoretical sensitivity (Glaser, 1978) as well as the

theoretical sampling itself (Strauss, 1987). We aimed at keeping our sample as heterogeneous as possible in terms of employment status (regular/irregular, temporary/permanent), education level, age, gender, and family status. Yet, theoretical sampling was fuelled across the country pairs through regular discussions of ongoing analytical work, especially regarding the coding work done within the country-pair teams. When recruiting interview partners, we also relied on snowball-strategies, but first approached individuals through a series of channels such as migrant organisations, social networks, internet platforms, and acquaintances. We first interviewed random individuals from the 'new' member states who were investigated with a very general interview guideline in order to see when and how they addressed the topic of (transnational) social security. Subsequently, we focused solely on migrants with portability experiences who were of working age and stayed at least five nights in a certain city of the 'old' member state. The length of the interviews ranged from 45 minutes to three hours. More than three-quarters of the interviews were carried out in the migrants' first language by the junior researchers of this project. Team formation was actually done, *inter alia*, because of researchers being native speakers in at least one of the four sending countries' languages. While the country team-specific fieldwork and analyses were carried out by the respective country teams, the Austrian-Hungarian team (lead: Elisabeth Scheibelhofer) was responsible for establishing common methodological grounds as well as the comparative analysis. However, in contrast to usual practices in international research collaborations of this kind, the comparative work did not only commence after the country pairs provided their internal reports but was an integral part of a continuous and highly communicative (also online) research process (Scheibelhofer, Holzinger & Regös, *in press*). The exchange on significant (preliminary) findings during empirical fieldwork led to intensive discussions across and within the national research teams and fuelled further theoretical sampling as well as the understanding and the perception of the qualitative work partly presented below.

Following a Grounded Theory approach, the comparative work allowed to gain a better understanding of the experiences as well as the meaning-making processes involved when accessing (transnational) social security rights without applying pre-formed or pre-theoretically developed categories. It served to reconstruct patterns in the experiences that we had not expected to find initially (e.g., the importance of transnational health care in the UK), but which emerged from the empirical data and were related to the relevant literature in a final step of the analysis. It became apparent that despite the differences in welfare systems, divergent political debates, and cultural norms, migrants had in certain instances astonishingly similar experiences across our four bi-national case studies. Yet, the differences comparing the four country pairs are also part of the analyses car-

ried out and presented elsewhere (Scheibelhofer et al., in press). In the following, we will elaborate on how mobile EU citizens cope with two major obstacles they face when trying to access their social rights (transnationally). As we will show, complex and incompatible welfare regulations, as well as exclusion based on transnational lifestyles, lead to experiences of discrimination.

### **3. Dealing with Complex and Transnationally Incompatible Regulations: Creative Welfare Learning as a Necessity**

Gaining relevant insights and knowledge proved to be the dominant recurrent issue in all interviews. We concur with previous research on EU migrant citizens and welfare state access in that people usually arrive with little to no knowledge about the given countries' welfare systems (Ehata & Seeleib-Kaiser, 2017). Policy analyses of the European and national regulations on access to and the portability of social security rights have shown that access is highly conditional and depends on the mobile EU citizens' form of mobility and labour force status (Carmel, Sojka, & Papiez, 2016). Through qualitative interviews, we collected numerous narratives that demonstrated how tedious it is to make one's way through the labyrinths of transnational social security (Scheibelhofer et al., in press), even for those migrants who spent considerable time and effort acquiring adequate information. However, language issues and difficulty in acquiring information are not the only aspects preventing migrants from sufficiently understanding regulations.

In the course of our fieldwork, we regularly came across migrants experiencing that the welfare institutions of the two EU countries involved had difficulties providing accurate information needed to further process their applications. For the interviewees this resulted in considerable paperwork and travelling (also internationally) to different institutions. While some migrants decided to waive their rights when faced with substantial difficulties, others persevered. The latter however often reported losing at least a part of their social benefits due to incompatible national regulations. Although EU regulations provide that EU citizens should not lose welfare rights in the case that they are mobile, our findings indicate that in practice, and in many instances, national welfare regulations and administrative procedures at different scales within the EU are found to be incompatible. The interviewed migrants expressed feelings of being left alone with the regulatory complexities and transnational inconsistencies (Heindlmaier & Blauburger, 2017). Our interview partners also claimed to be misinformed by institutions and sometimes questioned the officials' expertise concerning intricate EU regulations and their transpositions into national policies (Blauburger & Schmidt, 2014). While further research is needed regarding the positions of street-level bureaucrats—as Lipsky (1980) named front-line workers in public services—in the highly complex decision-making processes (some lit-

erature hints at the changing work conditions, e.g., Penz, Sauer, Gaitsch, Hofbauer, & Glinsner, 2017), we established that legally false information greatly impacted the interviewees' access to social benefits.

Lidia, a 29-year-old woman wanting to pursue her university education while working in Germany, was discouraged at her Bulgarian labour office to transfer her unemployment benefits to Germany. As Lidia understood, the official claimed that drawing Bulgarian unemployment benefits when residing in Germany would be illegal. However, this information is legally wrong. While the recipients of unemployment benefit are usually to stay in the last country of employment, EU regulations allow for the possibility to export unemployment benefits under certain circumstances, i.e., to seek work in another EU country while receiving unemployment benefits for up to six months from the country where one became unemployed (European Council [EC 883/2004], 2004, article 64). Although our interview partner did not fully trust this (indeed legally false) information that she had received from the official, she did not pursue her doubts any further and thus could not realise her right to export unemployment benefits. While Lidia decided to let go, we found other examples of migrants in all four country-pairs who learned to deal with administrations and over time became skilled in accessing their (transnational) social rights. In our interpretive analysis, we thus coined the expression of 'welfare learning' in order to describe the different narratives of how information is gathered after arrival. However, learning the ropes of the systems sometimes also proved to happen too late. An exemplary case was Natalja, an Estonian senior consultant in the finance sector who worked and became unemployed in Sweden. In order to be eligible for earning-based unemployment benefits, employees in Sweden need to register separately for a union membership for at least one year. This may be a problem, especially for migrants who come from a system in which unemployment insurance is provided automatically with employment, which they would initially assume would work similarly in Sweden. This was the case for Natalja who found out about this necessary requirement too late:

At once, I went to Arbetsförmedlingen for information regarding unemployment benefits....When I moved, no one at my first job told me that you have to register separately at Arbetsförmedlingen, A-kassa, to pay, etc. I'll become eligible in June and I know that if I lose my job, then they'll pay me at least 80% of my salary. The time I just moved here, no one told me about that, and I was left 'high and dry' when I lost my job. I've learned through my own bitter experience.

Not knowing the national regulations, Natalja was unable to receive the income-based unemployment benefit when she lost her job the first time. It was only after this 'bitter experience' of being excluded from social rights that she immediately signed up for unemploy-



ment insurance once she took up another position. Yet moving from a post-communist welfare state to a welfare system that can be classified as liberal, social democratic or conservative corporatist, though we agree with Carmel and Papadopoulos (2016) that these categorisations only partially reflect the diversities among welfare states, it can also be accompanied by positive learning experiences. For instance, some interview partners discovered social benefits in their migration country which do not exist (at least at the same level) in their countries of origin. For instance, Cezary, a 35-year-old subcontract worker living with his family in UK, extolled the welcomed surprise of straightforward access to cheaper or even gratuitous medication for people with low income or chronic diseases:

There is a great thing in England, which I like. This does not exist in Poland. It is a white card from NHS [National Health Service]. Actually if you have one benefit, then you could have more benefits. If you have one, then you have them all.

As such, learning the ropes of the system was also a positive experience. However, it proved not to suffice in some situations migrants had to handle (transnationally) in order to access social security. They found themselves forced to come up with their own highly creative solutions to barriers that seemed insurmountable. Réka, a 29-year-old university graduate from Hungary, provided an example of how to creatively deal with institutions in such transnational settings. At the time of the interview, she was working in a media company in Vienna. She told us about the difficulties she had encountered in detail, acting according to the regulations in Hungary and Austria during the period of her relocating to Austria. Hungarian administration demands to be notified within 15 days if health insurance is established abroad and the Hungarian insurance has to be cancelled within the same period. In practice, however, this proved to be very difficult, as none of the three involved authorities (which always pointed to one another in terms of final competence) would accept her cancellation form. Thus, Réka came up with a creative solution:

So, they were directing me back and forth. Nobody wanted to assume the responsibility that it was part of his or her competences....I decided that I was not going to waste my time any longer since I already had the form that I had to fill out. So, I sent it attached with an explanation letter that I wanted to renounce my health insurance. I basically asked the authorities to communicate amongst each other because I had sent this form to all of them, so they knew that it was everything I could have done [laughs].

Réka used her social networks, including befriended lawyers she consulted, and discovered an EU form (E106) intended for frontier workers to certify their entitlement

to health care services in the country of residence. She came up with the idea to use this form for her own ends (as described above in her own words), which proved to be a highly sophisticated and successful strategy.

While Réka tried to exit a specific welfare institution, Tiit, a 47-year-old truck driver from Estonia, faced a powerful threshold when attempting to enter the Swedish welfare system. In Sweden, a permanent personal identification number (PIN) is required when accessing most social benefits. Yet, PINs are only issued in case applicants can provide evidence of permanent work and housing. As receiving an apartment lease depends on holding a work contract and vice versa, migrants usually have to come up with creative strategies to receive PINs—with one exception, i.e., if they are already hired by a Swedish firm prior to their arrival in Sweden. Tiit, being aware of this tricky situation, asked fellow workers and found out that by being self-employed, he could procure the necessary work documentation in order to successfully apply for a PIN. Thus, he proceeded with his endeavour:

I had this clever idea. I went to the office; I do not remember which office it was where they also register enterprises. Something related to migration. I went there and said that I am a foreigner and want to start my own company. I do not want to work here...but I did not get further from there, one person told me one thing, another a totally different thing, I do not remember anymore.

While Tiit was not successful with his creative coping strategy, another interview partner disclosed that his father who, still living in Estonia, was able to set up his own company in Sweden and consequently received the Swedish PIN. We could observe in our empirical data that such coping strategies are shared by means of diverse channels—be it through circles of co-ethnics, off- and on-line, through the help of co-workers and new acquaintances, or through NGOs and (paid-for) lawyers. Generally, social networks constitute an important source of information and also prove to be important regarding informal help that is provided (transnationally) from family, friends, acquaintances, and colleagues on a day-to-day basis. Especially co-ethnic help through websites and associations turned out to be relevant in terms of ‘learning the ropes’ of the welfare system. Comparing the country pairs, this was least evident in Sweden—which might be due to the comparatively small Estonian diasporic community with a rather brief migratory history in this country.

The aim of this section was to illustrate the difficulties for individual migrants emanating from what they perceive as complex and often incompatible transnational welfare regulations. During coding, we created the term of welfare learning in order to describe that migrants do not only have to learn the ropes of the new welfare system (often by themselves) but also need to acquire and employ (creative) coping strategies to gain access to (transnational) social rights.

#### 4. Transnational Lifestyles Colliding with National Container Policies

The European project has been referred to as a peace project. It has also been perceived as the best-practice laboratory of current post-national welfare states' futures, relying on the principle of non-discrimination by nationality (Favell, 2016). Mobile Europeans have been discussed as those who promote the European project in terms of establishing Europeanness (Recchi, 2015).

Over the past decades, transnationally oriented migration research has established that migration is rarely a one-time, one-way process, as had previously been assumed. The ways in which these conceptions are based on a social scientific understanding per se of nation-states has been broadly debated since the early 2000s (Amelina, Nergiz, Faist, & Glick Schiller, 2012; Scheibelhofer, 2010; Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002). However, while debates around methodological nationalism have arrived at the core of migration scholarship (although we are by no means 'done' with the issues raised), EU regulations and national as well as regional laws still fail to sufficiently take the varieties of transnational lifestyles into account. This has far-reaching consequences that came to the fore while doing interviews with EU mobile citizens. Having family members in a 'new' EU member state and travelling back and forth on a regular basis was not uncommon in our sample. One might assume that such citizens are those 'true Europeans' the EU could build upon for its future in order to overcome the particularistic interests of its member states. Yet, far from that, our empirical work rather suggests that current regulations, based on the definition of one competent member state, are problematic in the context of economic asymmetries between the countries as they disadvantage certain types of commuters. As we observed, national welfare institutions in the economically better-positioned receiving countries often acted according to what may be described as national interests. They functioned as rather severe gatekeepers and prevented migrants from accessing social benefits by rejecting the competence for their case. In all four investigated country-pairs, we met migrants who reported difficulties that resulted from the necessity to define one member state which is competent for the provision of welfare benefits. This mostly occurred by identifying one 'centre of interests' (meaning the country where a person has the closest personal and/or economic relationships) echoed by various national residency tests that were introduced in the four receiving countries studied (Carmel et al., 2016; Regös, Holzinger, & Scheibelhofer, in press; Scheibelhofer et al., in press). In the following, we will focus on several ideal-typical instances that illustrate the tensions between the transnational lifestyles adopted by EU migrants and policies targeting national closure in terms of welfare access. As already stated, we found such cases in all four country-pairs, yet their importance was most obvious in the Austria-Hungary country-

pair that we came to characterise, also in terms of everyday life realities, as a greater border region (Regös et al., in press). As travelling back and forth is part of everyday life practices and very common in this region, many interview partners experienced difficulties, especially when accessing unemployment benefits because they were often categorised as 'frontier workers' by the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS). According to the European Regulation EC 883/2004 (European Council, 2004), article 1(f), a frontier worker is an individual working in a member state and who resides in another member state to which he or she returns at least once a week. The determination of residence is based on the establishment of the 'centre of interests' of the person concerned which in turn is defined by inter alia having one's family members in such a place, the main housing facility, business interests and/or leisure time activities (European Council [EC 987/2009], 2009, article 11). While the country of employment is generally responsible for the payment of unemployment benefit, it is the country of residence (where the 'centre of interests' is located by authorities) in the case of frontier workers. For our interview partners, being categorised as a 'frontier worker' entailed falling under the jurisdiction of Hungary and consequently losing entitlement to the Austrian unemployment benefit, which is nearly four times higher (own calculations based on OECD, 2010) than its Hungarian counterpart (see also Regös et al., in press). As we observed during our fieldwork between May 2015 and October 2017, Hungarians found their cases under increasing scrutiny when applying for unemployment benefit and had to defend themselves from the general suspicion of having their 'centre of interests' in Hungary (thus being 'frontier workers' in Austria). Most notably, a standardised form to prove the competency of the AMS was introduced. It is described in detail in the following narration of Szabolcs, a 27-year-old Hungarian university graduate who shared the following experience with the local AMS office in Vienna:

They gave me a document about how often I travel to Hungary, whether I have a Hungarian car, ahm, how many days I spend here, whether I have an apartment in Hungary, who of my relatives live in Hungary, and I, in this situation, I felt that nobody ever asked me these questions. And this was the first moment when I felt that, damn it, I am a miserable Eastern European in the eyes of the administrator.

Although not mentioned explicitly in the form, the contained questions are in line with the criteria mentioned in the European social security coordination regulations (European Council [EC 987/2009], 2009, article 11; see also Carmel et al., 2016) in order to identify the 'centre of interests'—and thus the competent member state to procure welfare services. The introduction of this questionnaire was not announced on websites or otherwise and thus resulted in a feeling of arbitrariness and per-

ceived discrimination. It was not the first time that Szabolcs applied for unemployment benefits, but this time, he understood that he was confronted with the aforementioned questionnaire only because of his Hungarian nationality. In the above passage, he thus expressed his feeling of being discriminated against (an aspect discussed in detail below) and labelled as a “miserable Eastern European” in this situation with an official.

The problems attached to defining the competent member state by establishing one’s ‘centre of interests’ are manifold. EU citizens are interrogated and feel they are put to the test if they rightfully claim their interests as foreigners, as others. Moreover, transnational lifestyles are by now common and many interview partners indeed travel regularly to their countries of origin. Migrants may have apartments or places where they live in two EU member states or they may have close family members whom they try to see as often as their jobs in the ‘old’ member states permit. Thus, the very concept of having ‘one centre of interests’ only is problematic as not all indicators constructed by authorities and political decision-makers may point to a single location in one member state only. This is especially true for individuals involved in transnational family arrangements. In our sample, we had such cases, one of them being Raivo, a 47-year-old Estonian migrant. He was employed as a construction worker in Sweden while his wife and two teenage children were living in Estonia. Applying for a PIN, he encountered difficulties with the Swedish administration due to his transnational living conditions:

They had a problem there that my family is in Estonia, children are in Estonia. One child was younger than 18 by then. And that was it. And then they started telling me in connection with the marriage that, Jesus Christ, how can it be that your wife is there and you are here.

Transnational family arrangements are part of today’s world, as has been widely shown in migration research (Baldassar & Merla, 2014; Bryceson, 2002). While regionally separated household compositions are not constructed as socially problematic (e.g., in terms of commuting on a daily or weekly basis within one nation-state), crossing borders when doing so becomes an issue once an individual falls sick or is unemployed. In these instances, equal treatment within the EU ends at those EU internal borders that are said to become less important. Also, labour market structures and common economic practices in specific sectors contribute to problems of exclusion based on transnational lifestyles. In Austria for example, it is common that construction workers (a sector with high employment rates of Hungarians) are laid off in winter during low season and receive unemployment benefits for the months in question. For native Austrians whose families reside in another Austrian region, this practice does not lead to any problematisation of benefit reception. Yet if Hungarians travel the same amount of time and kilometres to be with their families,

thereby crossing national borders, this results in a loss of the greater part of their unemployment benefits because recipients of the Austrian unemployment benefit see their payments suspended while staying abroad. This again reflects an instance of discrimination that transnational mobile Europeans face accessing social security—which in turn highlights the tension between a great variety of transnational lifestyles and national policies.

As we intended to show in this section, our interviewees experienced mechanisms of exclusion within welfare regulations that are rooted in sedentary normative assumptions and a container-like conceptualisation of who should be covered by national social security. Along with the feeling of being left alone with complex and seemingly incompatible welfare regulations (covered in the previous section), these tensions between transnational lifestyles and national policies lead to experiences of discriminations for mobile EU citizens which we will address in the following section.

## 5. Experiencing and Coping with Discrimination

Szabolcs’s experiences and his understanding of those experiences were already touched upon above. Being ascribed what he sensed as the demeaning status of an ‘Eastern European’ was “humiliating” for him, as he explicitly stated. We analytically defined discrimination in two ways. Either interviewees would personally perceive themselves as discriminated against—as exemplified in Szabolcs’s case—or we as researchers would interpret interactions, omissions or narrations as instances of discrimination (Verwiebe, Seewann, Wolf, & Hacıoglu, 2016; Weiß, 2002). Applying for unemployment benefits or for a PIN proved to be pivotal points of decision-making in which migrants faced discriminatory practices and/or perceived their treatment as discriminatory. In the case of Raivo, living in a transnational family was an obstacle when applying for a Swedish PIN. Going through the application process, Raivo understood that his contribution to the Swedish state was not appreciated, in turn leading him to compare his performance as a contributing citizen to other groups of ‘newcomers’. Raivo reflected upon the reasons for being denied a PIN:

I have no idea what they were thinking and why they did so. I was angered by this. If there would have been an institution to write to....All kinds of people come to Sweden and get all their documents immediately. They do not even work, they only live off state support. They get apartments, they get allowance to support themselves. Whatever. We [Estonians] have been slaves to the Swedish state, in a direct sense built up the state and I was not asking for much.

Experiences of discrimination are linked to self-identification with an ethnic group, such as Estonians in the case of Raivo. In the other country-pairs, we also encountered migrants in whose narrations we identi-

fied similar combinations of experiencing discrimination when trying to access social welfare and boundary-making of an ethnic/national group (Wimmer, 2007). Cezary, whose case we alluded to above, had received the advice of co-ethnics not to speak Polish at the job centre, as doing so would possibly cause immediate rejection of his claim. He also suggested that based on the 'Polishness' of given individuals, officials would provide different services than to 'natives': "Polish people are treated worse. When I was at the job centre, friends told me that I should be quiet and not speak Polish, because we would not receive benefits if they hear that we are Polish".

How, and if at all, the migrants chose to deal with welfare institutions greatly depended on their take on social benefits and the role of the state attributed in this respect. In all four country-pairs, we mainly met migrants who presented themselves as hard-working individuals whose goal was to maintain themselves as well as they could in a self-sustaining way and to contribute to society. We created the code of 'the good migrant' in order to capture this moment. In our analyses, this code served to refer to the persisting incidents in the interviews in which the migrants presented themselves as gainful and law-abiding, and not requesting social benefits. Repeatedly, the interview partners across the four country-pairs stressed their difference by bringing up other ethnicised groups, such as 'the gypsies' in the German-Bulgarian context or 'the refugees' in the Austrian as well as the Swedish part of the study. We concur with Cederberg (2014) that migrant self-positioning is to be analysed in the light of the ongoing public discourses as they might be closely interrelated. Based on our fieldwork, we add that the image of 'the good migrant' may thus also be connected to experiences of discrimination.

This reasoning brings us back to the arguments made at the beginning of this article. Confusing and unclear regulations play a major role in mobile EU citizens' actual limitations of access to social benefits. This complexity, as well as the tensions emanating from the contradictions between European regulations, national policies, and transnational lifestyles, leads to experiences of discrimination and perceived 'otherness'. For the sake of clarity, the above analysis was divided into three sections focusing on one of these aspects. In practice, however, we see that these instances are often interlinked with one another when it comes to the question of accessing social security as an EU migrant.

## 6. Conclusions

While the EU has certainly established globally unique regulations as to governing social security for its citizens within the EU territory, individuals' experiences with accessing (transnational) social security showed a more nuanced picture. In the four country-pairs, the migrants' experiences and interpretations thereof astonishingly converged at many critical points of their narratives. The

difficulty to procure adequate information and to navigate successfully through the labyrinths of social security systems recurred in most of the 81 interviews after the individuals had tried to access social security in the areas of family benefits, unemployment, pension, or health. In addition, we found that experiences of discrimination were common for the interview partners and that those who were involved in transnational migration often found themselves excluded from social benefits once they were in need of social protection. Based on our results, and due to various circumstances discussed above, we conclude that mobile EU nationals have lower chances of being treated as equals if they attempt to access social security in a given EU member state. More precisely, our results also show the extent of unequal access for citizens from the 'new' member states who move to the so-called 'old' member states. We can thus clearly see a momentum of colliding political interests working on different scales. While EU regulations tend to protect EU citizens from discrimination—attempting to ensure their inclusion also in terms of social security when being mobile—we see that the national and regional transpositions of these EU regulations (and court rulings) into national frameworks tend to exclude EU mobile citizens. One major obstacle for intra-EU migrants when navigating the labyrinths of transnational social security is its high complexity and the difficulties of welfare learning together with an emphasis on individual responsibility which must be seen embedded in the new European social project which endorses the active participation of citizens (Soysal, 2012). In her contribution, Soysal explains how such entanglement ultimately leads to and reinforces social stratification within the EU. As we have seen in our research, member states increasingly put in place administrative barriers that are based on EU regulations. The latter ones were initially meant to assist the inter-state decision-making of welfare institutions in establishing which member state would be responsible for delivering social services (Carmel et al., 2016). Social exclusion is clearly administered differently in the four EU receiving countries in our study (e.g., via the PIN system in Sweden), as welfare systems and the histories thereof differ. Nevertheless, through our Grounded Theory study we reconstructed experiences of social exclusion among EU citizens from the 'new' member states in all four country-pairs that shared some characteristics in peculiar ways as described above. What transnational regulations at all discussed scales have in common is that they put one single centre of interests as given. This is the point of reference that creates social exclusion for those who live in transnational family constellations or who constantly commute between two member states. Living and working during the week in an 'old' EU member state does not necessarily suffice to construct one's own centre of interests in that very place. Social commitments, such as being an active member in an association or having one's immediate family members in the same nation-state, were crucial to the EU migrants we



interviewed in terms of access to social benefits. Thus, there is a clandestine gap between the political rhetoric of a united Europe without inner borders, based on free movement and the equality of all its citizens, and those who act upon these premises and move to another EU member state.

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### Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

## Becoming Citizen: Spatial and Expressive Acts when Strangers Move In

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### Abstract

This article examines the conditions and expressions of how refugees in Denmark become citizens. Through visual and collaborative ethnographic fieldwork, which took place during 2017, the case study follows the everyday life of an Eritrean community living in a former retirement home in the town of Hørsholm. The article investigates how becoming citizen can be understood as mediated, spatial and expressive negotiations between the refugees and the local society. We look at the conditions of becoming citizen through the local framing of the Eritrean community—understood as political, social, cultural and material framing conditions. We draw on Engin Isin’s concept of performative citizenship (Isin, 2017), and we suggest how everyday life and becoming potentially hold the capacity to re-formulate and add to the understanding of citizenship. We suggest that becoming citizen is not merely about obtaining Danish citizenship and civic rights nor tantamount with settling down. On the contrary, the analysis shows that becoming citizen is a process of expressed and performed desires connected to global becomings beyond the sedentary citizenship, and therefore holds capacity for transforming and diversifying the notion of citizenship.

### Keywords

becoming; citizenship; cultural encounters; globalisation; performative citizenship

### Issue

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### 1. Introduction

In an upper-class residential area in Hørsholm, north of Copenhagen in Denmark, a group of Eritrean refugees was housed in an out of use retirement home after obtaining temporary asylum in Denmark in 2016. Recognised by the local citizens of Hørsholm as the ‘refugees of the retirement home’, the Eritrean community made their life on the threshold of society and citizenship. Exploring the material and social conditions associated with processes of becoming citizen, we address how the Eritrean community is organised from a sedentary narration of the local society, and how they simultaneously re-enact the conditions and contribute new practiced and performed ways of becoming citizen.

As noted by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: “History is always written from the sedentary point and in the name of unitary State apparatus, at least a possible one, even when the topic is nomads” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 23). Parallel to the nomadic thought in *A Thousand Plateaus*, Engin Isin recently defined citizenship from the perspective of the mobile and nomadic, regarding “mobile peoples as a norm rather than an exception” (Isin, 2018, p. 115). He argues that we must look into how mobile peoples constitute themselves as political subjects “not in bounded territories but through transversal figurations” (Isin, 2018, p. 121). In this article, we will reorient the perspective from looking into the fixed and settled forms and territories of the state, and instead follow the transversal configura-

tions and the nomadic expressions defining mobile peoples. Following Isin, Hamann and Yurdakul (2018) argue that “migrants and refugees contest and transform dominant notions of the nation-state, state control, national sovereignty, citizenship, and participation” (Hamann & Yurdakul, 2018, p. 110). Informed by this insight, the analysis of this article is twofold. On one hand, we ask how the forms of rights-based citizenship, offered by the state and in this case the municipality of Hørsholm, condition the becoming citizen. On the other hand, we ask how the expressive enactments carried out in everyday life by the Eritrean community perform other ways of becoming citizen. In this context, we see the local conditions and the performed expressions not as contradictory oppositions, but rather as processes of constant de-territorialisations and re-territorialisations. In the following section, we argue that processes of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation are part of an increasingly mobile world and form an analytical framework suitable for bringing forth the expressive citizenship of mobile peoples.

## 2. The Global Movements of De- and Re-Territorialisation

In mobility research, globalisation has come to mean a new mobilities paradigm, in which mobility is the overall defining notion (Cresswell, 2006; Sheller & Urry, 2006). In the mobilities paradigm, global travellers as asylum seekers, international students, terrorists, holiday-makers, businesspeople, sports stars, refugees and backpackers all share the same global experience of mobilities, being constantly on the move. Mobility gives rise to global everyday encounters that contest social norms and identities bound to the nation state and its politics. In a mobility paradigm, the definitions and understanding of migrants’ citizenship largely deal with a shift from the rights associated with the nation state to globalised expressions. It has been argued in several disciplines how globalisation de-territorialises the nation state, its politics, symbols and social identities (Appadurai, 1997, 2006; Papastergiadis, 2000; Tomlinson, 1999). However, globalisation does not entail an arbitrary circulation; instead movements are channelled and regulated through national and transnational interests and networks (Lash & Urry, 1994). In a similar vein, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) see how the narrative of nation state has been formed from a sedentary point of view by exclusion or organisation of the nomadic. The fundamental contradiction, which have formed the societal constitution, is thus the nomadic movement versus the settled life (Diken & Laustsen, 2003). Here, movement has created our territories, and transcendence has created the borders and the law (Bell, 2010; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Diken & Laustsen, 2003). In this sense, globalisation and its diverse forms of mobilities can be understood as a constant and mutual exchange between de-territorialisations and re-territorialisations.

Also, the exchanges between de-territorialisations and re-territorialisations allow us to say that the local is constantly created through the process of everyday implementation of global elements—and vice versa. Components from different environments are detached from their initial surroundings and given associations as they re-territorialise in new forms. In these complex processes, places and cultural identity are dissolved, but are at the same time re-defined in re-territorialisations (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Reestorff, 2017).

Globalisation changes national identities and places, but also enables fluid relationships in between nation state and an increasingly global mobility. Globalisation and its mobilities become “the subject of negotiations in which the relationship between the nation state, cultural identity and geography might be reconfigured or re-territorialised” (Reestorff, 2017, p. 11). Therefore, globalisation and associated processes of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation represent a dynamic framework that enables us to grasp citizenship as a process of becoming. Following Isin and recent citizenship studies (Isin, 2012, 2017), we argue that the stability and identity of citizenship is contested; therefore, citizenship can be regarded from mobile and nomad perspectives of migrant and mobile peoples as well as from those of more settled populations (Isin, 2018). This enables viewing performed forms of citizenship as holding the potential to redefine and transform formal citizenship defined by nation states. If the world is increasingly defined by mobility, we must approach citizenship, not merely through juridical rights, but as embodied, practiced and performed acts of what it means to be a citizen. (Appadurai & Holston, 1996; Isin, 2012, 2017; Isin & Turner, 2002). In this sense, citizenship is not a formal right that you acquire; rather it is a process of becoming, involving a variety of cultural, social and spatial expressions.

Moreover, the definition of a migrant can be redefined in terms of mobilities. As Isin suggests, to see “mobile peoples as a norm rather than an exception and as political subjects rather than subject peoples” (Isin, 2018, p. 115). The migrant is no longer a figure defined by belonging to a national territory, but rather by the mobility and ability to perform forms of citizenships (Isin, 2017). In contrast to citizenship as a legal institution, which governs who may and may not *act* as a subject of rights in the nation state, Isin’s notion of ‘performative citizenship’ welcomes five overlapping senses of how citizenship is negotiated and practiced (Isin, 2017). Whereas Isin’s first definitions of performative citizenships engage with the political and social struggles over who may and may not act as a subject of rights, we are particularly interested in his fourth and fifth definitions, looking into how “people enact citizenship by exercising, claiming, and performing rights and duties, and...when people enact citizenship they creatively transform its meanings and functions” (Isin, 2017, p. 501). In this sense, we see the Eritrean community not merely as refugees, but as ‘mobile peoples’, “who have become objects of government” (Isin,

2018, p. 116), but practice their own forms of expressive 'becomings'. As mobile peoples in the sense of nomads, they have the capacity to de-territorialise local identities and places.

Our interest in this article is to depict and unfold the expressive and performed modes of becoming citizen. Seeking to bring forth the complex production of subjectivity related to mobile peoples, we look into how the community inhabits and negotiates the local conditions in Hørsholm. For instance, Holston notes how "residents come to understand their basic needs in terms of their inhabiting the city, suffering it, building their daily lives in it, and making its cityscape, history, and politics" (Holston, 2011, p. 337). In this context, citizenship is understood as spatial re-territorialisations, relating to how residents claim the right to the city. Whereas we do not directly address the refugees' right to the city as a right in public space, we seek to understand the everyday practices of, for instance, inhabiting the local environment and making everyday cultural, spatial and embodied expressions. The acts of inhabiting are often complex and heterogeneous. Roger Bromley argues that the post-migrant is a figure of bricolage, which practices cultural belonging, but without anchorage in an original culture: "They may start out from a 'minority' position, from the margins, but develop within new fields of reference to a point of being part of, for example, British culture" (Bromley, 2017, p. 37). The notion of becoming citizen is closely related to practices and acts that are not discursive utterances, but must be understood as a form of local body politics. According to George Kandyliis:

Immigrants in Athens invent and perform ways to participate in the people as the body politics at the local level. To wonder about that is of course to consider citizenship as a process of repetitive becoming through acts rather than as merely a condition of being and/or as a given status. (Kandyliis, 2017, p. 469)

Investigating performative acts and embodied politics challenges the discursive hierarchy in social research. In the following, we outline how we have employed visual and collaborative methodologies in an effort to capture the embodied and performative expressions.

### **3. Materialising Acts of Citizenship: A Visual and Collaborative Methodology**

The following case study draws on visual and collaborative ethnographic methods through a project that took place in the former retirement home from February to September 2017. Whereas recent studies look into how citizenship is spatially and culturally performed in public life with the city as stage (Kandyliis, 2017; Lelandais, 2013), we primarily look into the private spheres and the urban back-stages of everyday life. The Eritrean community consists of a diverse group of mixed ages, genders and backgrounds. They were all given a 5-year permit

of residence in Denmark and had begun formal integration programs entailing language classes, internships, educations and job programs. The visual material was supplemented by ethnographic participatory observations, and document analysis looking into the local newspaper's coverage of the temporary housing of refugees. The ethnographic approach had a spatial and embodied dimension as it was carried out as collaborative filmmaking organised at a filmmaking office. It was established in the former retirement home with consent from the Eritrean community. The purpose of situating the filmmaking office among the residents was to share and co-create the visual material, and to be part of everyday situations. Our agreement with the community was a common wish to establish a platform of sharing cultures and connecting to society, meaning to co-create a film that could represent the Eritrean community and allow research on cultural encounters and temporary refugee housing in Denmark. Making the film allowed us to look into how spatial practices and expressions were enacted on a daily basis, and how these practices met the framing conditions of the municipality of Hørsholm. In the analysis, we also draw on ethnographic participatory observation conducted with a Syrian community living in vicinity of the former retirement home.

Specifically, our methods draw on visual and sensory ethnography (Pink, 2011, 2009), and are informed by recent social art practices, where for instance film production and ethnographic methods are increasingly applied (Bishop, 2012; Kester, 2011). The visual ethnographic approach consisted of both observing visual and sensory actions and practices, but also collaborating in the production of new representation through filmmaking (Pink, 2011). The quotes and field notes presented in this article are part of the visual ethnographic field research, where filmmaking can be seen as a bricolage of scientific methods that engage everyday day practices increasingly acted out through various use of media. The empirical material consists of observations, informal conversations, situations and interactions in the home of the Eritrean community.

As argued by Deleuze and Guattari (1987, pp. 280–281): "Movement has an essential relation to the imperceptible; it is by nature imperceptible. Perception can grasp movement only as the displacement of a moving body or the development of a form". Taking into consideration the difficulty in representing movement and the becoming citizen as acts, we do not see the empirical material as documentation. Rather, filmmaking can be understood as part of the mediated and performing acts of the Eritrean community. The quotes, field notes and media examples are productions of an ethnography that "rather than a method for the collection of data...is a process of creating and representing knowledge (about society, culture and individuals) that is based on ethnographers' own experiences" (Pink, 2011, pp. 21–39). With the filmmaking office, we established a collaborative space and mutual relations over time. The community

became more engaged in the filmmaking, and we as researchers became more engaged with the everyday life of the community. Furthermore, the filmmaking spurred common discussions about experiences and sensitivities, as residents from the community recorded parts of the film. Likewise, the material and its possible meanings were discussed during the process. The final film product (21 minutes) is a poetic description of the life as it unfolds in the community, followed by a voiceover in Tigrinya. The editing of scenes and the application of the voiceover was carried out with recurrent discussions in—and screenings with—the community. The film was shown at the local library in order to welcome further elaborations on how citizenship is performed and practiced in the local society of Hørsholm.

#### 4. Mediatized Framing Conditions

As noted by Isin (2018), all acts are acts performed under a description. “If new descriptions come into being, new possibilities for action come into being as a consequence” (Hacking, 2002, p. 108; Isin, 2017). In this sense, the act of naming a people is an act of “making up a people” (Isin, 2018, p. 118). When people act, they interact with descriptions, and this creates a looping effect where descriptions acquire performative force.

If we look at the description of the refugee, we see that a refugee is defined as someone being forced to leave his or her country in order to escape war, persecution or disasters. In this definition, the refugee emerges essentially as a figure of escape. We consider this framing inadequate as it loops people in a singular trajectory of moving away from something. In the movement away from their country, they become defined as stateless people or a people without a geography. The mobile peoples have always been described and understood from a sedentary point of view (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Diken & Laustsen, 2003; Isin, 2018). Being disconnected from a geography or a territory, these people similarly lose their spatial constitution and engagement with their own history and belonging. Following Isin, we might say that they become ‘a people of escape’ or ‘a people without a state’, differentiated from ‘the people’, like a part that is disconnected from the whole (Isin, 2018).

We suggest, concurrent to Isin, that mobile peoples are the norm rather than the exception, and that movement of ‘people’ is never a one-way process (Isin, 2018, pp. 115–116), such as leaving one state and entering another. Instead, mobile peoples can be understood in terms of processes of becoming, involving complex and heterogeneous forms of expressions, for instance enactments of local cultures merged with global media culture and symbols. As argued by Bromley (2017), one of the issues when analysing expressions of post-migration, is the notion of “the presumed commonality, or identity, between always existing national subjects, a fundamental aspect of subjectivity at the level of the symbolic, the cultural, the unconscious” (Bromley, 2017, p. 38).

In this light, we wish to challenge the simplified definition of the refugee as a figure of escape—a commonality constructed from the viewpoint of a national subject. This commonality tends to lead to our understanding of and relation to the refugee as a one-dimensional figure of escape and fear, therefore deprived of his or her desire to connect with and enter a certain territory and community. In this context, the discursive naming of mobile peoples plays a major part in creating imaginaries and in how to control movement. An obvious example can be found in the Danish media discourse. In reporting on the refugee situation in 2015–2016, the notions of the ‘refugee stream’ (*flygtningestrømmen*), and the ‘refugee crisis’ were repeated images used to frame mobile peoples. Similar to Reestorff (2017) and Stage (2011), we see how media play an important role as being representative of the nation state. “News media simply promote an understanding of a cultural clash and the media themselves as defenders of the ‘Danes’” (Reestorff, 2017, p. 235). In the framing, the Danish media submits metaphors of the refugee as a faceless stream of otherness; a natural force or endless disaster. These metaphors of the refugee seem to resonate in the everyday perceptions of mobile peoples. Following Deleuze and Guattari and their understanding of ‘refrains’ (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Guattari, 2000), we can argue that the mediated and politically framed discourses of the refugee are central to the way territories operate and take form. When discourses are repeated, they constitute a refrain. They become a collection of imagery that repeatedly defines and gives identity to a place, a group and a culture. For instance, the repetition of the metaphor of the refugee stream serves to illustrate a threat to the national border. In this way, we argue that national conditions, such as the media discourses, are a condition of framing mobile peoples (Isin, 2018), but in a similar vein, media and mediatization also have the potential to de-territorialise and re-territorialise national identity as it smoothly travels beyond national borders and territories (Reestorff, 2017).

In the following sections, we look into local framing conditions and how the Eritrean community practices becoming citizen through expressive negotiations of existing refrains and local conditions. These performative acts have a connection to citizenship as well as a potential to transform it. We look into: 1) local framing conditions, 2) spatio-temporal and embodied practices, and 3) becoming, media and youth.

#### 5. Local Framing Conditions

Belonging can be seen as personal, intimate feelings of being ‘at home’ in a place, but also as a discursive resource, which constructs, claims, justifies, or resists forms of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion (Antonich, 2010). This section attempts to identify various local spatial and expressive conditions in Hørsholm, thus defining a local sense of expression that constitutes a be-



longing, which additionally frames the Eritrean community as otherness (see Figures 1 to 3).

The local spatial conditions cover the various socio-material and economic infrastructures existing in the local area. In the following, spatial conditions and expressions are understood as for instance the urban materiality, the housing structure and urban infrastructure, the aesthetic and sensory environment such as smells and sounds, local media, types of consumption, urban development projects and local policies. These elements play a part in the relation between the Eritrean community and local society by defining and categorising otherness through belonging to certain spatial conditions. One determining factor is the socio-economic status of Hørsholm and the housing typology. As noted by a local citizen in relation to the Eritrean community:

But let's face it, they will never be able to live here. People saved up all their lives to buy a house here. Hørsholm is the last step of the ladder, the last place to settle down and get a nice place to live.

From the quote, we understand how spatial conditions play an important role in how Eritrean community is received. In other words, this example shows that to navigate in a local society, you need to be able to perform certain spatial codes such as owning a house. Spatial expressiveness exists not only in the material surroundings, but also in cultural codes and consumption, thus framing processes of social becoming.

As illustrated in the quote above, the local citizens understand the neighbourhood through the expression of a socio-economic hierarchy, where belonging is the same as belonging to a specific exclusivity. The quote underlines that Eritrean community need to adapt to this identity, and at the same time accept that they will never become a real part of it. Likewise, the aforementioned nation state discourse of refugees as figures of escape becomes embedded in the local framing. As a citizen explains in the Hørsholm newspaper: "It almost seems like they are hiding from an airplane [krøbet i flyverskjul]. Like they are hiding from us" (Hørsholm Lokalavis, 2016). Here the quietness and invisibility, which could be ar-



**Figure 1.** Former retirement home as seen from the street. May 2017.



**Figure 2.** Passing a neighbouring house. May 2017.



**Figure 3.** Public hearing at the former retirement home. May 2015, (Source: Hørsholm Lokalavis, 2015).

gued is a part of the urban typography of private plots, is perceived as a product of persecution, fear and escape; a logic that captures the movement of the refugee in one dimension away from society.

The urban planning process of housing new Eritrean residents in the former retirement home was accompanied by a public hearing and debate for local citizens. The purpose was to inform local citizens of the two years of refugee housing, and to consider the opinions of the neighbourhood. The public involvement marked one of the first encounters of difference in the neighbourhood, but on the foundation of an anticipated difference. The public hearing can be regarded as an example of grey urbanism, in which certain populations are allowed full participation whereas others are left out. In this sense, citizenship is made through an unequal distribution of access and services, based on social class or ethnicity (Yiftachel, 2006). Following Bromley this can be seen as a cogent reality where cultural difference becomes part of rationalising segregation (Bromley, 2017). As such, home belongings that draw lines of separations between cultures.

There is no hedge on the boundary from our house to Hannebjerg [the former retirement home]. We decided to put up a lath fence. We will request the municipality board offer sound judgment in this situation for example by delivering the laths....This would mean that we as citizens wouldn't feel observed, and that our family will still be able to sunbath or the like, without taking the different cultural background of the refugee into consideration. (Letter from resident for the public hearing process, Hørsholm Municipality, 2015)

At that time, no housing solution had been established in the rather homogenous neighbourhood, and the new

spatial diversity is thus represented as felt and sensed abstraction that will have an effect on local life. Several spatial expressions were brought up and discussed, such as the future possibility of sunbathing in the gardens, prospects of rising burglary, fears of decreasing property value and general safety concerns. These expressions define the local by defining how difference can be understood. As in the quote above, we understand that the place of belongingness, the feeling of being at home is, through its symbolics of comfort, security, familiarity and emotional attachment (Hooks, 2009), being acted out in the forums of formal citizenship, and expresses and frames the possible form of differentiated citizenship. This is an example of how planning is connected to the need to belong to certain expressions of value and identity of place. It can be considered a form of "boundary maintenance", which separates 'us' from 'them' (Crowley, 1999), in which feelings of belongings connect with the politics of belonging (Antonsich, 2010). Decision-making is spun by spatial expressions of how a place is felt and lived. Imagination and expressivity thus act as re-territorialisations, which reinstate the local territory and set up certain relations to the refugee.

The expressions are projected onto the possible vision of the other, and a categorisation of the stranger happens accordingly. Instead of a citizen debate that could possibly demystify strangers or enable new encounters, the local debate about refugee housing instead turned into the debate of local identity.

It can be argued that these examples are not only expressions that separate the locals from the others and thus create forms of belonging between certain groups of people. Additionally, the spatial qualities themselves express belonging. The framing of otherness can be seen as an expression written in the spatial and material organisation. As Justin Trudeau notes: "Landscapes be-



come spatially bounded scenes that visually communicate what belongs and what does not...landscapes are, in part, constructed through a territorialised politics of belonging” (Trudeau, 2006, p. 421). As a visual means of communication landscape thus conveys meanings of inclusion/exclusion. It (re)produces a certain order of things and ideas of cultural unity (Trudeau, 2006).

The former retirement home is the first home in Denmark for the Eritrean community. A physical structure in which they meet local society. In the visual and material sense, it can seem rather paradoxical that they are provided a home in a space originally designed to accommodate a withdrawal from society. When we compare the material expression of the former retirement home to the surrounding residential area, the residents are simply differentiated from the neighbourhood. In the yard of the retirement home bricks have been removed from the pavement as if the structure is in the midst of be-

ing dismantled. It is visually evident that the place is in between different temporal events and societal transformations. These elements become part of a visual communication of belonging, which points towards various concepts of time; former place of retirement, temporary housing, paused, partially out of use and to be redeveloped. These temporal conditions are seen in the beginning decay of the structure, as for example in the plants overtaking the building in its unused parts. Many of the surrounding houses have gates to keep people outside. The retirement home is sunken into the land, designed to keep the former residents inside and contributing to expressions about (in)visibility of difference as a form of citizenship practice (see Figures 4 to 6). A citizen explains in the local newspaper:

We just moved here, and we have neither experienced anything good or bad with the refugees, and



**Figure 4.** Plants slowly overtaking one of the unused areas belonging to the retirement home. June 2017.



**Figure 5.** Bricks have been collected and stacked in the yard. March 2017.



**Figure 6.** A surveyor measures the plot to prepare for the new construction project. March 2017.

that is after all good in itself. Many people move here to be able to be oneself. Therefore, we don't have any need to interfere too much.

In a neighbourhood of mostly large family-housing units, this quote lets us understand the local spatial conditions of minimal contact with others, in this case, as a search to prolong feelings of tranquillity and peace at home. It is better not to interfere. In fact, not experiencing the other is a quality of the place and a part of the spatial expression that makes people want to live there. Belonging is here connected to a spatial condition of not interfering, which again establishes a non-relation between differences. In this sense, citizenship among the local Hørsholm citizens is practiced as privacy and distance. The urban backdrop, consisting of various houses, becomes the environment onto which this form of citizenship is projected and practiced in everyday life. With this in mind, we see how spatial conditions, and in particular spatial expressions of private space, become a condition for how to act as a citizen. We will shift the perspective from the local neighbourhood framings of otherness and turn towards the perspective of the Eritrean community, which via continuous spatial expressions establishes acts of citizenship between the Eritrean community and society.

### 6. Spatio-Temporal Expressions and Everyday Life

In the following, we discuss the spatial and embodied expressions of becoming citizen. This entails how spatio-temporal expressions of the Eritrean community set up negotiations of belonging and citizenship in relation to society.

As expressed in the public hearing, local planning and the neighbourhood saw the former retirement home as a temporary space, and a space defined in terms of a linearity with a beginning and an end. The timespan of the temporary refugee housing has been publicly known

and debated. However, the Eritrean community experiences it as a lived heterogeneous time. When speaking about how long they could live there, the answer was "we don't know" until a few weeks before the relocation to new temporary housing in Hørsholm. Then, the answer changed to "we have to move out soon, but we don't know exactly where or when". Temporality as an experience can be described, through this example, as a series of unknown sequences and unknown functionalities, or shifting sequences without clearly defined beginnings and ends. For the Eritrean community, temporality functions by producing a series of unknowingness. This becomes a condition in the process of becoming citizen and expressing oneself in society, but it also becomes a point of departure for acting out new temporal and spatial expressions. These processes of unknowingness are thus negotiated through various individual and collective acts that instate other spatial expressions of lived experience and practice of time. As Aoileann Ní Mhurchú argues, citizenship is acted out by living through homogenous temporal and spatial boundaries, of past and present, us and them, by fragmenting, overlapping and creating new synergies (Ní Mhurchú, 2014). Citizenship is thus a "form of subjectivity which can also manifest as a cluster of time-space coordinates constantly changing within and across what is normally conceptualised as the absolute space and horizontal time of sovereign political community" (Ní Mhurchú, 2014, p. 216). We saw these forms of subjectivity in various forms of cultural and embodied expressions.

One example is a young resident, who works as a cleaner in the afternoons when the school is emptied of its primary societal function. This action is in itself ambivalent and as he explained, he would "rather be studying in the school, than working there", but the void of the societal function is transformed as a place of acting out and practicing forms of citizenship. By a repeated embodied routine, the place is slowly becoming part of his own expression and contribution to society. He pre-



paces the place for its primary function and is thus not detached from it. Through the materiality of the place, he connects to the daily rhythms and relates to the social sphere. As he explains “If the students don’t hang up the chairs, I won’t pass with the mop”. His duties are thus performed by the means of relating to the practice of the place, and the time sequence is the time of preparation of the societal function, rather than closing time.

Another example of expressive forms of subjectivity is Sunday mass. The Eritrean Sunday masses took place at various different churches in the capital of Copenhagen. They were a repeating topic of conversation every week, and the community organised events and celebrations collectively. The masses and celebrations took place at various Danish churches, when Danish church communities were not using them. These designated ‘odd times’ were by the community transformed into spatio-temporal productions embedded with new cultural expressions.

A reframing of the local environment was also found. In February, when the first snow had fallen, the residents gathered outside in the garden to pose, take pictures and share this event online. This act produced a new representation of the place, reimagined as part of a longer travel, a series of experiences and new spatial belongings. Moreover, the community organised new ritual spaces. For instance, they collectively organised a wedding celebration inviting local citizens and Eritrean communities from different parts of Denmark and abroad. The former retirement home was collectively transformed by bodily acts such as dance, song, dining and rituals, and by visual material means through film, photography, decorations and dresses, which enacted the place as a celebration of new beginnings and diverse connectivity (see Figures 7 to 12).

Situations, movements and practices are thus continuously unfolded and reach beyond the former retirement home, escaping local framing conditions and homogenous time. The spatio-temporal conditions trans-



**Figure 7.** A young resident of the former retirement home works as a cleaner at a nearby school. School lets out as he begins his work. April 2017.



**Figure 8.** Easter celebration at Blågård Church in Copenhagen. The priest reads aloud from a smartphone. April 2017.



**Figure 9.** The Eritrean community in Hannebjerg hosted a wedding. During the evening, it was evident how closely connected the various Eritrean communities in Denmark and abroad are, as people came from far away. The evening was full of festivities and the home transformed with long tables, a podium for the married couple, a stage for music, flags, balloons and flowers. Rituals were performed throughout the evening. One of the final performances was the dance of the groom, where the surrounding participants attached 100 and 200 DKK bills to his forehead. May 2017.



**Figure 10.** Wedding. Guests sitting in the garden. May 2017.



**Figure 11.** There would often be power outages in the kitchen, which disabled the stove. The residents would use the stove in the laundry room when the power outages occurred. April 2017.





**Figure 12.** It was the first Danish winter for many of the residents of Hannebjerg. In early February, the first snow came, and the residents went outside to take pictures in the white scenery to share with their friends and families in Eritrea. February 2017.

form into acts that reimagine place and function. Beginnings and synergies are acted out as way of relating to society by assembling diverse temporal and spatial expressions.

In this sense, these acts can be seen as active transformations of the landscape, which create new assemblages of belonging cutting across boundaries, thus disintegrating and reformulating spatial and temporal conditions. What is essential is that spatio-temporal expressions, which in a sedentary sense are connected to pause, out-of-use, odd time and temporality, are continuously re-enacted and transformed by the Eritrean community as spaces of cultural belonging and production. This signifies citizenship as a creative act that finds places, utilises the unused and establishes possibilities in the margins and pockets of the society.

This example iterates the discussion about belonging in the intimate spheres of the home as a place of broader social negotiations, claiming belonging and justifying it (Antonsich, 2010). Just as the previously observed local

framing of mobile peoples can be seen through the perspective of belonging to an expression of place, the Eritrean community also acts through home decorations that express connectedness and cultural bricolage rather than disconnectedness and material decay. The home-making thus becomes a way of transforming material conditions into a connectivity to society. Each resident has his own small single room. A common way of furnishing the rooms is to have several sofas. This is a way of opening up the privacy to social flow and hospitality. In one room a post-it note on the wall states: “Read the newspaper out loud, find someone to practice Danish (native), just speak”. It engages citizenship as a means of social relation, practice and exchange. Religious Eritrean posters hanging next to Danish flags and football medals as well as decorations covering the hoist on the ceiling are simple acts of combining, erasing and transforming the material conditions into multiple connotations of mixing culture, identity and place as ways to actively engage and transform society (see Figures 13 to 17).



**Figure 13.** Poster of the Virgin Mary, Danish flags and football medals. April 2017.



Figure 14. Decorations covering the hoist on the ceiling. April 2017.

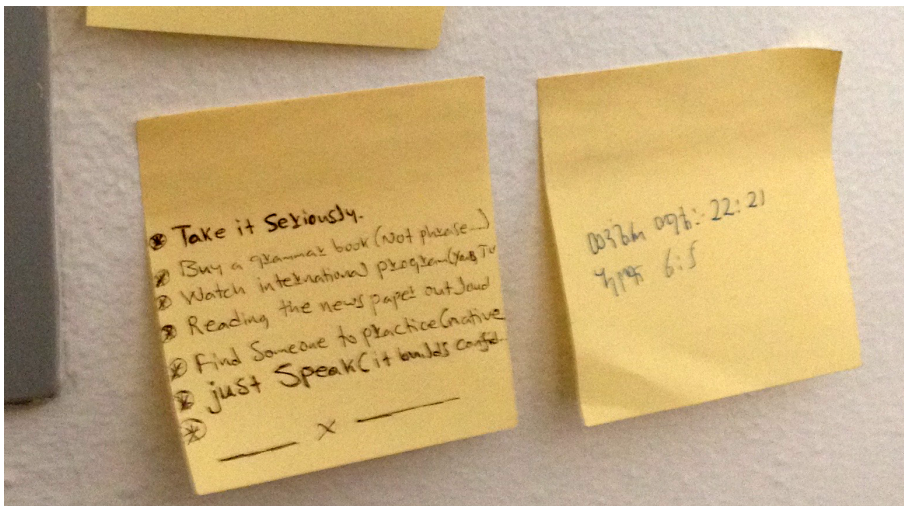


Figure 15. Post-it notes in Yohannes' room. Some of the text reads: "Which International programs?" "Read the newspaper out loud." "Find someone to practice Danish (Native)" "Just speak." April 2017.



Figure 16. Kistane in her room, preparing Eritrean coffee on a mobile stove. April 2017.





**Figure 17.** Saleh in his room. Even though the rooms are very small, most were furnished with a bed, a couch and chairs. The rooms are thus accommodated to host many guests. May 2016.

### 7. Becoming, Media and Youth

In this section, we analyse how becoming citizen, approached through acts of media culture, desire and youth, transforms the conditions and possibilities of citizenship as it is connected to becoming global (see Figures 18 to 24).

As mentioned previously, we understand mobile peoples as figures of bricolage that practice cultural belonging without anchorage in national culture, but rather bringing together various expressions from global culture. When we look to the Eritrean community and their expressions of belonging, they are formed between places, timespans, cultures and identities. Becoming cit-

izen is neither a one-way process nor a movement from one place to another. Rather, it is related to the process of stretching in-between, continuously connecting to and disconnecting from former and new environments, cultures, gestures, images and expressions. In this context, we consider becoming citizen as a performative act that goes beyond national subjectivity and sedentary citizenship as it enables a more fluent global belonging. In this process of becoming citizen, we thus identify a capacity to creatively transform the meaning and function of citizenship (Isin, 2017). An example could be our conversation with a Syrian woman, Aisha, who previously lived in the former retirement home, as she explained her desire for Danish citizenship: “In the future, if we get the



**Figure 18.** Ermiras wearing a t-shirt of the Danish national football jersey signed by all the players. May 2017.



**Figure 19.** Shirak wearing his new blue contact lenses. March 2017.



**Figure 20.** Shirak watches videos about integration, broadcast by the Danish national TV station, DR. In the videos, politicians and citizens explain their opinions on what they think is good integration. March 2017.

Danish citizenship, we can visit Palestine again. Maybe we will die, maybe we will return to Syria, we don't know what will happen in the future".

In this quote, Aisha characterizes citizenship not as something tantamount to settling down, but rather as a gateway to enhance her mobility and engage and confront new potential belongings. Following Antonsich, we could argue that Aisha is expressing a non-belonging, which is usually "associated with a desire of longing and a yearning for the 'lost' place, which might feed a 'myth of return'" (Antonsich, 2010, p. 17). Furthermore, this desire of longing or yearning for a lost place might not just be seen as a territorial lack or a loss but could also be seen as a productive desire and a re-territorialisation. According to Isin, we can understand it as a production of subjectivity, and a rights-claim, where "people enact

citizenship by exercising, claiming and performing rights and duties" (Isin, 2017, p. 501). Aisha shares a desire of citizenship, which is not connected to the lack of feeling Danish, Palestinian or Syrian. It is rather the desire of continuous de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation; a stretching life in-between the territorialised spaces of various nation states.

In a formal sense, becoming a Danish citizen can be perceived as something static and safe, leading towards settling down. In this case, however, it is tantamount with continuously exercising new right claims to move and belong in between what Ní Mhurchú calls the "categories of migration and citizenship" (Ní Mhurchú, 2016, p. 159). In other words, Aisha can be seen as performing citizenship by not only exercising her right as a citizen, but also "claiming rights and duties yet to come as





**Figure 21.** Mhretab's pictures from Eritrea and Sudan of his family, friends and girlfriends. March 2017.



**Figure 22.** Screenshot from the music video “Ladies in stock”, with the text: “Ten girls, ten girls on my Snapchat,” in Danish. Released in 2016 on Jimilian’s third studio album *Me and Myself* (Jamilian, 2016). May 2017.

a result of social struggles”—which Isin defines as “the right to claim rights” (Isin, 2017, p. 506). Becoming citizen and performing citizenship is in this sense not movement towards a singular and original nationality, rather it is a potential to becoming Syrian or Palestinian. In a similar sense, Danish citizenship is both the connection to and disconnection from a Danish identity, belonging and territory.

This ambiguity of becoming is an essential point for understanding its performative dimensions and possibilities. Citizenship is not enclosed in itself but emerges as a relation to other becomings. For instance, for the residents who recently finished educations, the idea of becoming citizen is connected to finding a job in Denmark. For others, such as those who just got married or had a child, becoming citizen would be connected to having a family reunification. One example is Gareth, who argues: “If I am not able to get my wife and child here, then there is no reason for me to stay. How should I make a life here without my family?”

Another heterogeneous act of becoming citizen is performed by the young men between seventeen and twenty-four. They have all spent years of their adolescence on the move; escaping from the regime in Eritrea, living in camps in Ethiopia, Sudan and Libya, crossing the Mediterranean Sea and travelling through Europe before arriving to Danish asylum camps. Under these circumstances, they experienced a turbulent childhood, in which they have been connected to and disconnected from various places, people, cultures and languages. This process entails complexities in terms of belonging. As Ní Mhurchú argues, the intergenerational migrant youth can be viewed as negotiating home and belonging in various affiliations towards often-contradictory cultural, linguistic and geographic identifications, which disrupts the opposition between roots and routes, or movement and attachment (Ní Mhurchú, 2016). On their journey from the different camps and homes in Northern Africa and later in Europe, they have been exposed to several languages, cultures, people and places. A condition of their



**Figure 23.** Shirak is making a scene for the film where he search for a branch to create a slingshot. When he lived in Asmara, he used to hunt pigeons with his homemade slingshot. He would sneak up close to them, and hurl a stone at their wings and thus catch them. He would bring them back and sell them at the market. In this way, he would earn money to spend in the evening at an internet cafe with his friends. March 2017.



**Figure 24.** After celebrating Good Friday, the whole community went to get a snack at McDonald's. John poses with Ronald McDonald, while his sister Habtom is on the phone with their family. April 2017.

time on the move has been that they have been curbing with their youth. What could be understood as a repressed childhood, unfolds here instead as the desire and production of the early manhood. Thus, the desire to become citizen is in this sense connected to becoming young. In this case, becoming young is not to be understood in a linear timeline before manhood, rather it is the process of realising potentialities in a mobile life. The boys of the community do not escape or lack their childhood, but they desire it through 'germinal influxes of intensity' (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 164). In this context, we identify a vitalist production of youth rather than the lack of it (Ljungstrøm, 2000).

Another example of how becoming citizen is connected to the vitalism of becoming young is seen in the residents' connectivity to Danish popular culture.

There are a lot of ladies here, but there is always room for more. You know exactly where I am, I swear I got ladies in stock. (Jamilian, 2016)

The younger residents listen to Danish pop music. A popular artist is Jimilian, a twenty two-year-old Albanian-Danish pop singer. One of his hits, *Ladies in Stock* (Damer på lager), is often played in the residence, as a popular refrain among the young residents. The music video is produced as a Snapchat story, collected from Jimilian's fans, and the lyrics of the song are presented as Snapchat text. The lyrics are easily accessible and carry a strong desire for fame, intoxication, wealth and sensual drive.

The Snapchat concept is relatable and effective because it forms a nomadic bricolage of vital moments that smoothens territories and portray a fluent and global



community as an elite of mobility. In this way, we can see that the young residents approach citizenship by connecting to a desire for youth and popular culture, but also as a connection to a virtual and fluent community (see Figure 26).

Following Caitriona Ní Laoire, Carpena-Mendez, Tyrrell and White (2011) in their study of African and Latin American youth migrants living in Ireland, we can argue that music is likewise connected to the way the youth become citizens through enactments of a global belonging. As Ní Mhurchú argues: “What became important for such youth was developing belonging via globalised culture, including through music (such as rap) and languages...among like-minded peers in response to experiences of marginalisation and isolation” (Ní Mhurchú, 2016, p. 160).

This adaptation of popular music differentiates from a general application of citizenship and Danish culture because it is accessible virtually, as well as faster to understand, consume and distribute. The video becomes a culturally performed expression for the community both to re-territorialise Danish culture and to re-distribute it beyond its borders. It illustrates that connecting to Denmark is enacted with awareness of its possible connections to a global community.

What might not be accessible social citizenship on a spatial, local or national level could connect to a virtual mobility in the global community. The mobile peoples become citizen through expressions practiced beyond the institutional system of the nation state and local society. Thus, the conditions of becoming citizen are reformulated according to the many-sided movement of the Eritrean community as an essential mobile people. This allows new means of becoming citizen, for example through virtual platforms, in which becoming citizen is a connection to an imaginary and fictive community beyond the local and national expression. As a further comment and a distribution to the ongoing writings on post-migration, performative citizenship and becoming citizen, we can add that citizenship is not only performed across social groups and polities (Isin, 2017). It is likewise a performative bricolage with an inherent awareness and a desire towards the global community. It holds the potential to transform, de-territorialise and re-territorialise citizenship as defined by the national state.

## 8. Conclusion

Our article has contributed empirical examples of what Isin frames as performative citizenship—with a special interest in the embodied, spatial and socio-cultural expressions. In this article, we have examined the conditions and expressions of how refugees in Denmark become citizens. We have argued that becoming citizen is a condition that appears through spatial and expressive negotiations between the local society and the Eritrean community. We have described how the refugee is framed through national media as a figure of escape,

and we have argued how this discourse is repeated and localised in the city of Hørsholm, shaping spatial conditions of citizenship. The spatial conditions of how a place is felt and lived reinstate the logic and values in local territory. For instance, we have seen how the urban backdrop is an environment where sedentary forms of citizenship are projected and practiced. Furthermore, we have explored everyday spatio-temporal expressions as a form of transforming citizenship by performative acts. Mobile peoples can be seen as becoming citizens throughout manifold expressions and bricolages. We have pointed out how the local spatio-temporal conditions are transformed into acts that reimagine places and functions; where beginnings and synergies are acted out by assembling diverse temporal and spatial expressions. Likewise, homemaking and every day rituals can be seen as acts that erase, combine and transform belonging; they are, as well, acts expressing connectedness and cultural bricolage. Becoming citizen is thus not a one-way process or movement from one place to another. Rather it relates to the process of stretching in-between, continuously connecting to and disconnecting from former and new environments, cultures, gestures, images and expressions. With this in mind, citizenship can be seen as a performative act that goes beyond national subjectivity and sedentary citizenship. Performative citizenship allows multiple fluent and global belongings. As unfolded in the last part of the analysis, this is often practiced with an awareness and a desire towards the global community, with the potential to transform and de-territorialise the nation state, its culture and territorial boundaries.

## Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

## Passing the Test? From Immigrant to Citizen in a Multicultural Country

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### Abstract

Almost all Western countries have recently implemented restrictive changes to their citizenship law and engaged in heated debates about what it takes to become “one of us”. This article examines the naturalization process in Canada, a country that derives almost two thirds of its population growth from immigration, and where citizenship uptake is currently in decline. Drawing on interviews with recently naturalized Canadians, I argue that the current naturalization regime fails to deliver on the promise to put “Canadians by choice” at par with “Canadians by birth”. Specifically, the naturalization process constructs social and cultural boundaries at two levels: the new citizens interviewed for this study felt that the naturalization process differentiated them along the lines of class and education more than it discriminated on ethnocultural or racial grounds. A first boundary is thus created between those who have the skills to easily “pass the test” and those who do not. This finding speaks to the strength and appeal of Canada’s multicultural middle-class nation-building project. Nevertheless, the interviewees also highlighted that the naturalization process artificially constructed (some) immigrants as culturally different and inferior. A second boundary is thus constructed to differentiate between “real Canadians” and others. While not representative, the findings of this study suggest that the Canadian state produces differentiated citizenship at the very moment it aims to inculcate loyalty and belonging.

### Keywords

Canada; citizenship; immigration; integration; interviews; migration; multiculturalism; nation-building; naturalization; qualitative research

### Issue

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### 1. Introduction

In early 2014, Zunera Ishaq, a Pakistani national, Sunni Muslim, and permanent resident of Canada was barred from naturalization because she refused to remove her full-face veil (niqab) in public while taking the oath of citizenship. Ishaq was one of the casualties of Stephen Harper’s Conservative government’s (2006–2015) concerted efforts to “raise and strengthen” the value of Canadian citizenship through a number of administrative and legal measures pertaining to its acquisition, loss, and definition. Under the new mantra, since December 2011, citizenship certificates were to be awarded only to those who would swear allegiance with their faces uncovered in public during the official ceremony. Denouncing the practice of wearing a niqab as “contrary to our

own values” (Maccharles, 2015), the Conservative government rejected the possibility for Muslim women to obtain Canadian citizenship by forcing them to unveil themselves for the purposes of security and identity verification in private in front of other women.

Although a federal court struck down the ban on niqabs during citizenship ceremonies and the newly elected Liberal government of Justin Trudeau closed the file in late 2015, the episode demonstrates a development that has become widespread among Western states. So-called “civic integration” policies combine increased emphasis on selection and control of immigrants with measures that insist on their integration before (and as a condition of) citizenship acquisition (Joppke, 2017). Stemming from the Dutch noun *inburgering*, whose literal English translation would be citizenization or natu-

ralization, civic integration involves conscious, concerted policy and programming that “condition, incentivize, and shape through socialization immigrants into ‘citizens’” (Borevi, Jensen, & Mouritsen, 2017, p. 1).

During the first years of the 21st century, the paradigm of civic integration spread through Europe, finally reaching the United States, Australia and Canada (Joppke, 2013). In these countries, high naturalization rates—such as those sported by Canada—are no longer interpreted as a self-evident indicator of successful integration. On the contrary, immigrants, especially those from non-Western countries, are increasingly suspected of being unwilling to learn the national language, take up work, and adopt “Western values”. They are also said to naturalize “for the wrong reasons”, ranging from the abuse of social welfare systems to the use of Western passports for terrorism-related travel. As a consequence, under the paradigm of civic integration, citizenship is increasingly seen as something that needs to be “earned” (Kostakopoulou, 2011).

This article examines the aforementioned policy changes by analyzing the naturalization process—and the nation-building project at its core—from the viewpoint of newly minted citizens in Canada. Granting permanent residence to a substantial number of immigrants (roughly 1% of its population per year) in an ethnically diverse and normatively multicultural country, the Canadian state has—or should have—a strong interest in allowing the naturalization process to create feelings of accomplishment, loyalty and belonging within those undergoing it. As mentioned above, Canada recently revised its naturalization procedures in order to protect the integrity and meaningfulness of the naturalization process. While these changes have been studied at the level of policy, discourse, and programming, the perspective of those undergoing the process is rarely heard.

This article contributes to a small but growing body of literature that studies the impact of policy changes under the civic integration paradigm from the views of immigrants and naturalized citizens. It asks the following questions: How welcoming or repelling do new Canadians perceive (different steps of) the naturalization process? How do they relate to the factual and symbolic boundaries at stake in naturalization? My research shows that Canada’s current edition of the bureaucratically administered naturalization process fails to create a sense of unity and belonging within those undergoing the process. On the contrary, the new Canadians interviewed in this study expressed concerns over the social and cultural boundaries that they saw as being exacerbated by the naturalization process.

This article is structured as follows: I will first situate my study within the relevant literature and theory. I offer some information on the Canadian context and the empirical research that my argument draws upon. In the main part of the article, I report on new citizens’ experiences with the bureaucratic requirements of the naturalization process in Canada. I also discuss the boundaries

that emerge from these requirements. I conclude by summarizing my argument.

## 2. What is Naturalization?

Goodman (2014, pp. 2, 229–230) argues that civic integration policies are an iteration of nation-building, which under the condition of ethnic diversity, supplements national identity’s emphasis on ethnic sameness by means of a state identity’s accentuation of civic togetherness. According to her, states are both “defining new parameters of [collective] belonging under the banner of liberalism”, and reinvesting in their formal relationship with the individual, which, in the case of naturalization, is based, at least in principle, on achieved (acquired skill and values) rather than ascribed (ethnic origin) criteria. Goodman’s position bridges two diametrically opposed perspectives dominating the literature. One of them claims that citizenship policies have gradually become more liberal (Joppke, 2010), while the other points towards their increasing culturalization (Duyvendak, Geschiere, & Tonkens, 2016; Orgad, 2016) targeting Muslims in particular (Adamson, Triadafilopoulos, & Zolberg, 2011).

The means of inculcating this new collective (national/state) identity in newcomers have been studied extensively and controversially. Löwenheim and Gazit (2009, pp. 158–159), most prominently, identify citizenship tests as disciplining, responsabilizing and civilizing tools of state power, which coerce citizenship candidates “to behave in certain ways and conform to certain norms through the threat of punishment”. Similarly, Van Oers (2014, pp. 269–272) finds that tests tend to produce frustration and alienation within well-integrated, highly skilled immigrants. By contrast, those struggling to climb up the social ladder within the host society find it harder linguistically and cognitively to assimilate study materials and to perform in the test itself. Other elements of the naturalization process have received more positive evaluations. This is particularly the case for mandatory language courses (Boyd & Cao, 2009; Extra, Spotti, & Van Avermaet, 2009) and knowledge requirements, which are seen as fulfilling “an educative or empowering function” by helping immigrants to transition or “journey” towards citizenship acquisition and socio-economic integration (Kiwan, 2008, p. 71).

Whether citizenship study guides (and their corresponding tests) are interpreted as liberal or assimilationist (Michalowski, 2011) seems to vary from country to country, the examined editions, as well as the perspective adopted by the researcher. In international comparisons, citizenship uptake in Canada tends to be evaluated positively, e.g., with respect to high naturalization rates (Bloemraad, 2006), citizenship ceremonies embracing diversity (Byrne, 2014), successful immigrant integration and feelings of belonging (Aptekar, 2014; Bloemraad, 2006), as well as the role of the test within the naturalization process (Paquet, 2012). Comparing the 2009 edition of the Canadian citizenship study guide (produced

by Harper's Conservative government) to prior editions (in place under Liberal governments), Chapnick (2011) does not find much of a conservative or illiberal shift. Others, by contrast, find the new guide culturally "integrationist" (Blake, 2013), "renationalizing" (Winter & Sauvageau, 2015), and downplaying existing racism, as well as accusing some newcomers of being culturally and socially backward (Gulliver, 2018).

This article will complement these findings by exposing the view of those having undergone the naturalization process. It adopts an approach that theorizes the process of naturalization as a form of social closure, which involves the drawing (and potential crossing) of symbolic lines—boundaries—between insiders and outsiders.

In principle, the act of naturalization is a rite of passage that lawfully transforms foreigners into full citizens. Naturalization policy is thus the ultimate institutional expression of national boundaries, with citizenship uptake implying a presumably final step of boundary crossing. Defined sociologically, however, citizenship implies more than legal citizenship status. It also involves a set of rights and duties, which can be enjoyed in practice, various forms of participation in a political community, and identity-based membership or "belonging". We may say that belonging describes the symbolic boundaries of citizenship.

This is the level where, for Fassin and Mazouz (2009), the institutionalized ritual of naturalization produces an arbitrary boundary between "citizens by birth" and (naturalized) "citizens by choice". It does so by constructing a dual difference: first, between immigrants who "pass the test" (literally and figuratively) and those who do not; second, between those who are citizens "naturally" by birth<sup>1</sup> and those who need to be naturalized. According to these authors, the arbitrary symbolic boundaries even between those who "pass the test" and those born into their citizenship are never fully overcome by the ritual. These symbolic boundaries may then turn into social ones, producing identifiable patterns of segregation (Lamont & Molnár, 2002), and affecting participation, as well as de facto enjoyment of rights even when an individual's formal citizenship status remains intact. As such, the state seems to produce differentiated citizenship at the very moment and by the very means that it designed to create "civic integration". The title of this article has thus a twofold meaning: not only immigrants have to pass the test; the state as the citizenship granting institution does so too.

### 3. Naturalization in Canada

Since 2005, Canada welcomes roughly 250,000 immigrants (i.e., newcomers with permanent resident status)

per year. Until very recently, these individuals have been viewed as "citizens in waiting". Newcomers—coming overwhelmingly from countries of the Global South—are welcomed into an explicitly multicultural country (since 1971), which gives them the sense that their original cultures and languages are valuable contributions to the Canadian way of life. The combination of relatively easy naturalization, multiculturalism, and dual citizenship has been a Canadian trademark for over forty years (Bloemraad, 2006).

Between 2006 and 2015, the Conservative government of Stephen Harper implemented a number of administrative measures, policies, and laws aiming at strengthening the value of Canadian citizenship by making it harder to get and easier to lose (Winter, 2014, 2015). Naturalization requirements were tightened, now insisting on physical presence in the country, the submission of tax reports, additional language tests, and a declaration of the will to reside in Canada. A much more comprehensive citizenship study guide was launched, and the citizenship test rendered more difficult. While policies were softened under the Trudeau Liberals (since 2015), many of the previously implemented "integrity measures" (such as physical presence in the country and the submission of language certificates as part of the citizenship application) have remained untouched (Griffith, 2017). The development of a new citizenship study guide is being debated, but at the point of writing the 2011 edition (Canada, 2011) still advises citizenship candidates against the importation of "barbaric cultural practices" and (ethnic) conflicts from their home countries.

Overall, to be eligible to apply for Canadian citizenship, immigrants must have a permanent resident status, must have legally resided, and have been physically present in the country for three of the previous five years. They must be at least 18 years of age, display an adequate ability in English or French (new documentation/testing is required since November 2012), and have no criminal convictions in the past three years. Undergoing a formal citizenship test, they must understand the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and demonstrate some knowledge of Canadian history, values and institutions. They are also required to take a citizenship oath. Dual citizenship is allowed, thus only immigrants from countries that do not recognize dual citizenship will lose home country citizenship.

While Canada has still one of the highest naturalization rates in the world, the overall rate<sup>2</sup> fell from 85.6% in 2011 to 82.7% in 2016 (Griffith, 2018). Griffith alerts us to the fact that the best predictor of citizenship test pass rates is education. In addition, there is a greater decline in naturalization for immigrants from Asia—for South Asians (mostly Indians and Sri Lankans) mostly for those with lower levels of education, and for East

<sup>1</sup> Citizenship by birth refers to both *jus sanguinis*—citizenship by birth to parents who are members of the polity at stake—and *jus soli*—citizenship by birth on the polity's soil.

<sup>2</sup> The term naturalization rate stipulates how many citizenship certificates are awarded in relation to foreign-born individuals in Canada who are eligible to apply.



Asians (mostly Chinese) across all levels of education (Griffith, 2018, p. 5). Furthermore, naturalization among immigrants in the family class (such as spouses—often women, parents and grandparents) has been declining since 1996.

Alerted by this trend, which accelerated in recent years, a small research team and I conducted interviews with new citizens residing in the Ottawa-Gatineau region (Ontario and Quebec). The analysis in this article is based on 35 one-hour interviews (12 in French and 23 in English) conducted in 2013. Participants were recruited by means of a call for participation through the Institute for Canadian Citizenship and by members of the research team attending citizenship ceremonies in Ottawa with the permission of the Ministry of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (then Citizenship and Immigration Canada). These individuals were part of an immigration cohort that was subjected to a particularly rigorous Canadian-knowledge and language test (in place 2010–2013). Coding was done inductively for all four administrative steps: the application package/process, the citizenship study guide, the test, and the ceremony.

Three caveats are noteworthy. First, while the findings are not representative, they allow us to better understand—from the perspective of those undergoing the process—whether the current naturalization requirements fulfill the promise of putting “Canadians by choice” at par with “Canadians by birth”, as stipulated by Canada’s citizenship legislation (Winter & Madulea, 2018). Second, despite the team’s best efforts, highly educated individuals are overrepresented in the sample. While this category corresponds to the type of people that make up the vast majority of (point-system selected) immigrants in Canada, it also means that perspectives from citizenship candidates who are marginalized in Canadian society (i.e. some of those who came as refugees or through family class sponsorships and who, on average, have lower income, less education and lower literacy skills) are potentially missing. The analysis proposed below accounts for this potential bias. Third, in the following analysis, emphasis is placed on the part of the naturalization trajectory that involves dealing with administrative requirements. Defined sociologically, naturalization also involves social, emotional, and symbolic processes over time.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, studying these other dimensions is beyond the scope of this article.

#### 4. New Citizens’ Perspectives on “Passing the Test”

Drawing upon the interviews conducted by my research team and myself, I will first report on our interviewees’ experiences with naturalization requirements in Canada. I will then discuss how the interviewees evaluated these experiences. This discussion will highlight social and so-

cioeconomic divisions between those who easily pass the citizenship test, and those who struggle with meeting the requirements for naturalization. Finally, probing for divisions between “Canadians by choice” and “Canadians by birth” will show that cultural biases embedded in the naturalization process draw symbolic boundaries between “real Canadians” and others.

##### 4.1. Experiences with Naturalization Requirements

Taken together, there are four steps to the naturalization process in Canada. Immigrants must first submit an application package, then study a sixty-page citizenship guide, take a multiple-choice test, and finally attend a citizenship ceremony. Generally speaking, putting together the application package was considered “a nightmare” (CC12, CC35)<sup>4</sup> by more than half of the interviewees. Some found the application forms “unclear” (CC32), and some had difficulties obtaining the requested documents from their original countries of citizenship/residence. Almost all complained about the lengthy application process (about 18 months from sending in the application package to the citizenship ceremony). This meant missed job opportunities and loss of revenue for some of the most highly educated interviewees. Others, mostly women and some men from non-Western countries felt unable to travel “back home” where they still had family obligations. They were either unable or uncomfortable travelling on their original travel documents.

Several individuals mentioned that the citizenship fees were quite steep (CAD 100 per person until early 2014; at the time of writing, costs are CAD 530 per person). It was pointed out that costs not only involve naturalization fees, but also travel costs, the need to take vacation from work in order to attend appointments, as well as fees related to photocopies, translations, the certification of documents, etc. Several interviewees also complained about a hostile, anonymous process—where you can never speak to an agent—and about power hierarchies experienced particularly by those less fluent in English.

Experiences related to the citizenship study guide were much more ambiguous. While some enjoyed reading the document, others were appalled (as I will explain in more detail below). The most striking and most frequent observations were the density of information, the high level of English/French necessary to understand the content, as well as the mismatch between the study guide and the citizenship test: “There are things on the test that weren’t in the guide, and lots in the guide that’s not on the test” (CC07).

Taking the citizenship was seen as “stressful” (CC05) by some, because the stakes were high and they felt that

<sup>3</sup> Naturalization is a process involving the “(im)migration project”, the experiences in the receiving society before citizenship acquisition (Bloemraad, 2006), the dealings with civil servants, administrative procedures and the act of naturalization (Fortier, 2017), and the experiences in the receiving society past citizenship acquisition, as naturalization is “also a contract that ties two parties together by a promise”, and it is only when this promise is kept that the act of naturalization becomes effective (Fassin & Mazouz, 2009, p. 61).

<sup>4</sup> Interviews with citizenship candidates are identified by CC, followed by the number of the interview (e.g. CC12).

their citizenship was on the line (CC14). However, only a few claimed that the test's level of difficulty was entirely unreasonable. Much more often, interviewees doubted that the questions asked had any relevance for what is needed in practicing Canadian citizenship: "[The test is] factual and what we need to test is cultural, and how do you test 'cultural'?" (CC13). "[People] study for the exam, then four months later, they'll forget about it. It seems like a hoop you're making people jump through for the sake of....It seems illogical to me rather than essentially serving a purpose" (CC17).

For most of our interviewees, the citizenship ceremony was the most enjoyable part of their administrative naturalization trajectory. Many felt that, by now, they had "passed the test"; they were relieved about this, and eager to celebrate with friends and family. Most were moved by the experience of ethnic diversity at the ceremony, which also tended to be highlighted by the citizenship judge who was welcoming them into the multicultural "Canadian family".

#### 4.1.1. Interviewees' Own Evaluation

The notion of equality, suggested by the concept of "family", however, was not the dominant experience by our interviewees during most of the naturalization process. More than half of our interviewees expressed concern over the fact that the application process may have been easy for them but not for others. They felt that the citizenship test "can probably cause difficulties for some people...; if you come here as a skilled worker versus a refugee" (CC12), and especially "if you have somebody where [sic] English is not a prior language. It comes to these minute differences in phrasing, it's kind of cheap" (CC17).

Indeed, many of the highly educated individuals we interviewed found a way to deal with the factual hurdles involved in the naturalization process. For example, frustrated with the slow progress of her application, one citizenship candidate from the United Kingdom explained: "I would put privacy applications in for myself; so, I would put in requests for access to information on myself to get my file" (CC09). Using this government service (mostly used by journalists and researchers) requires confidence, ingenuity, and a high level of familiarity with the Canadian bureaucracy. Another interviewee, originally from the Netherlands, explained how he managed to meet the residence requirement: "I started a sheet keeping track of when I was away with and without my spouse....I kept detailed information [even before the actual citizenship application]" (CC19). While the naturalization process thus does generate some feelings of alienation among better-educated citizenship candidates (e.g., long wait times, meaninglessness), as Löwenheim and Gazit (2009) maintain, due to their education and professional experiences, these individuals already possessed—or quickly acquired—the bureaucratic mindset that is necessary to successfully overcome factual hurdles.

Furthermore, they were fully aware of being part of a nation-building project stressing professional skills, education, and the creation of a "performance-based" Canadian citizenry:

I think [the test is] good. I think probably only for myself because I'm literate. I can read, I can study. I took a lot of exams in China so I'm good at it. I'm thinking that if there are some people who are not very literate that they [may] have difficulty in learning or reading and [if] they don't understand English at all or French at all whether they'll have problems. (CC18)

Similarly, a former international student from Columbia explains:

The test itself wasn't difficult for me, but I'm someone who's been in academia for a really long time so I'm used to taking tests. I'm wondering how hard the test is for people who don't have the time to study and haven't passed tests in a really long time. It must not be very easy. (CC24)

In both quotes, the interviewees express strong confidence in their skills and high level of education. The aforementioned interview with a new Canadian citizen from China demonstrates this quite clearly. As our interviewee put it: "I knew for sure I will get it [Canadian citizenship] because I'm qualified, right?" (CC18). Notably, both quotes also stem from individuals who self-identify as members of "visible minority" groups. Indeed, in our study, class-based differences between citizenship candidates were identified as being more prevalent than cultural or "racial" boundaries between citizenship candidates and "Canadians by birth". Only very few of the interviewees expressed concerns over racism or the existence of a glass ceiling within Canadian society. Rather, rightly or wrongly, for many of the highly skilled new Canadians, regardless of their cultural, racial or ethnic background, naturalization felt like crossing a blurred boundary: it catapulted them right into the Canadian multicultural middle-class.

#### 4.2. "Canadians by Choice" or "Canadians by Birth": The Cultural Biases

On the one hand, our study suggests that those who possess the skillset to overcome the factual hurdles of the naturalization process are confident that potential symbolic boundaries are either not existent or can be overcome in the long run. This view is facilitated by Canada's multiculturalism, which captures the ethos of the civil rights revolution and, increasingly, market liberalization (Kymlicka, 2013). On the other hand, not all of our interviewees were able or willing to "laugh off" naturalization requirements that they considered to be ethnocentric and culturally condescending. Roughly a quarter of our interviewees stated feeling uneasy about the citizenship

study guide, the “Canadian values” that it uncritically portrays as “real”, and the social divisions within Canadian society that it glances over. The following quote exemplifies this discomfort most vigorously with respect to the “Canadian value” of gender equality: “I was intensely offended by some of [the citizenship guide] where there’d be like ‘Canadians don’t abuse women’. A) That’s not true. B) Who the hell do you think you’re writing for, a bunch of simpletons?” (CC32). It is telling that this quote is not from a Muslim, a group that is widely seen as being the target of this kind of rhetoric (Winter & Previsic, 2017). Rather, it stems from a Christian who came from Bulgaria to Canada as a spouse. According to her:

The cultural biases [in the guide] were strong. It treated potential citizens as simultaneously unable to understand basic concepts like ‘We don’t hurt women’. It didn’t say we don’t hurt women. It said women are full part of our society, blah blah blah....But they put it down in a vaguely condescending way. (CC32)

The cultural biases towards new Canadians from certain countries and religions were also detected in the citizenship ceremony. About one third of the interviewees commented on the fact that officers were checking lip movements during the sermon. Many brushed it off as “really dumb” (CC12), but others called it “disturbing” (CC32). While none of our interviewees was wearing a full-face veil and hence did not suffer the same fate as Zunera Ishaq, many felt the same scrutiny while reciting the oath of citizenship. Tellingly, in our sample, only individuals who did not self-identify as Muslim or “visible minority” commented on lip checking at the ceremony. We may thus only guess how difficult this experience is for those who feel directly targeted by this practice.

Overall, the promise of blurred boundaries and full citizenship based on (economic) merit that some of our professionally successful interviewees said they experienced (especially when comparing their own fate to that of the less educated) seems to be somewhat cast in doubt by these observations. While the Canadian naturalization process seems to come close to overcoming the symbolic boundaries between those who pass the test easily—namely highly skilled and highly educated individuals independently of their ethnocultural background—and “Canadians by birth”, it also seems to be incapable of eliminating these boundaries fully. On the contrary, some elements of the naturalization process actively produce differentiated citizenship both within the group of newcomers undergoing naturalization, as well as between new Canadians of certain ethnocultural backgrounds on the one hand, and, on the other, “old stock” Canadians, as the former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper notoriously called them (Edwards, 2015).

## 5. Conclusions

In this article, I examined new citizens’ experiences with the bureaucratic requirements of the naturalization process in Canada. Being a self-proclaimed nation of immigrants, Canada’s citizenship law has long been designed to put “Canadians by choice” on par with “Canadians by birth”. The state therefore has—or should have—a strong interest in designing and implementing a naturalization process that allows permanent residents to join the Canadian citizenry as equal members, and that eliminates the creation or perpetuation of ascribed (symbolic) differences between insiders and outsiders. This interest is—or should be—reinforced by the fact that Canada, like other Western states, has recently redesigned its naturalization requirements as part of a concerted state effort to create a new form of “civic togetherness” (Goodman, 2014).

Drawing on interviews with recently naturalized Canadians, I argued that the current naturalization regime fails to fully deliver on these promises. My research complements studies that find Canada’s new citizenship regime integrationist (Blake, 2013), renationalizing (Winter & Sauvageau, 2015), and discriminating (Gulliver, 2018). While the Canadian naturalization regime does, to a certain extent, redefine collective belonging based “on achieved (acquired skill and values) rather than ascribed (e.g., ethnic origin) criteria”, as claimed by Goodman’s thesis (Goodman, 2014, pp. 2, 229–230), the individuals interviewed in this study did not experience the naturalization process as unifying or creating “togetherness”. On the contrary, they were acutely aware of—and raised concerns about—the social and cultural boundaries constructed by the naturalization process—and this at two levels. First, the strong emphasis on professional skills, language competences, and education in the naturalization process reproduces the kind of economic selection that is already prevalent in Canada’s immigration regime, the point system. New citizens felt that they were differentiated (again) along the lines of class and education. If their impressions are valid, even in Canada the naturalization process creates a boundary between those who (easily) “pass the test” and those who do not (Fassin & Mazouz, 2009). Given that naturalization correlates with higher income (Griffith, 2018; Pendakur & Bevelander, 2014), this design of the naturalization requirements produces not equal but differentiated citizenship. “Failed” or “delayed” citizens with low education levels are here at the bottom of society, while those able to market their skills—and Canadian citizenship—move to the top. Second, the fact that the new citizens we interviewed found class/education differences between citizenship candidates to matter more than differences based on ethnic/national background (either between citizenship candidates or between the latter and Canadian society) points to the strength and appeal of Canada’s multicultural nation-building project. This is an important finding that should not be neglected.

Nevertheless, the promise of full citizenship is marred when citizenship candidates feel treated in culturally condescending ways. Some of our interviewees reacted sharply to a citizenship study guide that lays blame for social conflict upon (some) immigrants' presumed cultural backwardness. Some also felt disaffected by the intense scrutiny of lip movement while performing the oath of citizenship. In such instances, naturalization does indeed not put (naturalized) "citizens by choice" on par with "citizens by birth". On the contrary, as Fassin and Mazouz (2009) point out, citizenship candidates—having lived for years in the country paying taxes and without having a criminal record—find themselves confronted by an institutionalized ritual that artificially constructs them as "different". The state produces differentiated citizenship at the very moment it claims to inculcate "civic togetherness".

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### Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

## Fixed Narratives and Entangled Categorizations: Educational Problematizations in Times of Politicized and Stratified Migration

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### Abstract

Western European migration and citizenship regimes have undergone profound transformations over the past decades. The massive politicization and stratification of migration are key features of these dynamics. Focusing on the case of Germany, this article investigates how these developments affect logics of educational practice. It is argued that teachers, faced with increasingly complex and uncertain situations, systematically draw on categories that combine political and educational logics. These “entangled categories” do hardly allow to unravel the complex configurations currently at stake at the intersection of migration and education. A secondary analysis of TIMSS-2015 data is performed to substantiate the article’s core hypothesis: these forms of categorization have crystallized into patterns of educational problematization that couple perceptions of educational challenges, professional self-images, and didactic approaches. These fixed narratives disproportionately affect migrant children from underprivileged social backgrounds. They hence have important implications both for our understanding of educational inequalities in times of politicized and stratified migration and for furthering professional reflexivity.

### Keywords

differentiated citizenship; educational classification; educational problematization; migration regimes; politicization of migration; TIMSS-2015

### Issue

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### 1. Introduction

Migration is among the most salient political issues of our time. Especially in Western Europe, the politicization of migration (Hammar, 2007) has gone hand in hand with the stratification of civic, political, and social rights (Amelina, Horvath, & Meeus, 2016; Engbersen, Leerkes, Scholten, & Snel, 2017). Citizenship regimes and orders of belonging have become differentiated along lines such as profession, qualification, ethnic belonging, region of origin, language skills, or even age. It seems natural to ask how the field of education is affected by these processes. After all, education systems are among the first societal institutions that need to react to changing social and political structures. More importantly, educational practices matter; they are crucial for the distributions of life opportunities as well as for the formation of political and cultural identities.

Against this background, this article discusses how forms of educational classification and problematization are affected by current political dynamics. Focusing on the case of Germany, it develops and substantiates the hypothesis that fixed patterns of educational problematization have emerged. These narratives are linked to categories that are best described as entangled: while deeply marked by political and public discourses, their everyday usage by teachers is anchored in the structures of educational practice. These potentially detrimental forms of categorization and problematization disproportionately affect migrant students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

The presented findings promise to further our understanding of how educational inequalities are reproduced in times of politicized and stratified migration, without presupposing ill intentions by teachers or any other oversimplified linkage of politics and education.

Section 2 presents the theoretical framework that motivates and informs the analysis and discusses relevant developments of Western European migration regimes. Linking these discussions to findings from qualitative interview studies, the concepts of entangled categorization and fixed narratives are introduced. Sections 3 and 4 present the methodological foundations of and findings from a secondary analysis of TIMSS 2015 data. Multiple Correspondence Analysis is used to explore how perceptions of educational challenges, professional self-images, and didactic strategies are related to each other as well as to students' background variables. The presented findings have important implications for professional reflexivity and for our understanding of educational inequalities.

## 2. The Politics of Migration, Educational Classification, and the Emergence of Fixed Narratives

### 2.1. Linking Migration, Politics, and Education

Studies based on large scale assessments such as PISA have painted a detailed picture of educational disadvantages of migrant and minority children (Borgna, 2017; Dronkers, van der Velden, & Dunne, 2012; Gracia, Vázquez-Quesada, & van de Werfhorst, 2016; Volante, Klinger, & Bilgili, 2018). Existing analyses have, however, paid little attention to the relevance of migration and citizenship regimes for these inequalities. Among the few exceptions are Hochschild and Cropper (2010) who offer a comparative exploration of links between immigration and schooling regimes, Entorf and Minoiu (2005) who analyze the effect of immigration regimes on educational attainment and van der Werfhorst and Heath (2018) who investigate correlations between selectivity of immigration regimes and educational disadvantages. These studies illustrate how complex the interplay between migrant biographies, educational institutions, and migration and citizenship regimes is. Our overall picture of these relations is still sketchy and the mechanisms that link political and educational dynamics remain unclear.

Scholars in the fields of critical pedagogy and multicultural education likewise discuss the interplay of migration, inequalities, politics, and education, but from a somewhat different perspective. Relating empirical studies to normative theory, they call for raising awareness of the social and political embedding of educational practice in order to further equality and empowerment (Agirdag, Merry, & van Houtte, 2016; Alismail, 2016; Kolano, Dávila, Lachance, & Coffey, 2013). Formations of "race" and ethnicity stand center stage in these research contexts. That also holds true for the German speaking world where social sciences are otherwise very hesitant to refer to notions of "race" or racism. Against this background, scholars from the field of critical and anti-racist pedagogy have made an important impact by investigating processes of ethnicized subjectification, by criticizing essentialist understandings, and by pointing out

how deeply educational practices are embedded in post-colonial orders of domination and inequality (Broden & Mecheril, 2010; Mecheril, 2018; Terkessidis, 2016; Wischmann, 2018). These studies clarify the political character and underpinnings of educational practices and discourses. The political itself, however, is treated in rather general and abstract terms. The present article is motivated by the conviction that a more concrete understanding of the links between politics and education is helpful for critically engaging with how teachers make sense of the everyday challenges they are facing.

This article builds on and adds to these existing studies in two ways. It first aims to further our understanding of a key mechanism for the reproduction and transformation of educational inequalities. Second, it wants to contribute to debates in multicultural education and anti-racist pedagogy by adding an empirically grounded hypothesis concerning the concrete ways in which historically situated political dynamics become effective in everyday educational practice. The main implication of the discussion is that in addition to prepare "teachers for classrooms that reflect *racially, culturally, and linguistically* diverse student populations" (Kolano et al., 2013, p. 42, emphasis added), there is also an increasing need to raise awareness of legal, political, and social stratification—and for the categories that are used to capture these complexities in a highly politicized context. In other words, the article takes the challenge seriously to identify the educational implications of the "growing significance of racial and ethnic representation in post-World War II western society" (Wotherspoon & Jungbluth, 1995, p. 4) and, on this basis, to reconsider the role of the political in pedagogical everyday life.

### 2.2. Politicization, Boundary Making, and Stratification: Core Aspects of Current Political Dynamics

With these objectives in view, three related political developments deserve attention. The first is the massive politicization of migration over the past decades (Hammar, 2007; van der Brug, D'Amato, Ruedin, & Berkhout, 2015). Of course, migration has been a contested issue and the matter of intense public debate before; after all, it touches on fundamental tensions inherent to the political form of the liberal nation-state (Hollifield, 2004). But the degree, the quality, and the social significance of the current politicization of migration must be considered exceptional, especially in the European context. From the early 1990s onwards, migration has been among the core issues of almost every political election in European representative democracies (Lefkofridi & Horvath, 2012). This political salience is coupled to the rise of new right-wing parties, a development that has affected party systems to the East and to the West of the former Iron Curtain (Muis & Immerzeel, 2017). This exceptional politicization can be traced back to post-World War II labour migration systems, but massively gained momentum following the end of the Cold War (Horvath,

2014a). It since seems to have stabilized due to an interplay of geopolitical, economic, social, and cultural developments (Amelina et al., 2016). Mirroring the contradictory social processes underlying them, current debates on migration and citizenship are further marked by divergent (even if related) forms of problematization: on the one hand, migration is heavily securitized and discussed as threat to national identity, public order, and social security (Huysmans, 2000); on the other hand, it is framed as a necessity of our globalized and cosmopolitan age, a factor rationally to be included in political-economic cost-benefit calculations (Horvath, 2014b).

This ambivalent and tension-filled politicization is, second, linked to the (re-)making of boundaries, borders, and orders of belonging (Wimmer, 2013). Hard and physical consequences of militarized re-bordering processes at the “edges” of Europe (De Genova, 2017; Walters, 2016) go hand in hand with the differentiation of orders of belonging and identity “in the middle” of European political spaces and discourses (Balibar, 2009; Pries, 2013; Ryan, 2018). Against this background, new forms of social classification have emerged. These classifications less than ever take the form of clear-cut and well-defined taxonomies. Rather they amount to vague and ambiguous notions such as “migration background” or the “(Arab) refugee” (Horvath, 2017, 2018).

Third, the two discursive processes of politicization and boundary making have been paralleled by a considerable stratification of civic, political, and social rights. Well-secured social, mobility, and settlement rights for some stand in sharp contrast to the enforced temporariness and the deprivation of fundamental rights for others (Balibar, 2009; Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013). This stratification of migration and citizenship is part of ongoing political-economic transformation processes that simultaneously entail increasing transnational flows of goods, capital, and manpower and the immobilization of substantial parts of the world population (De Giorgi, 2010). From a diachronic angle, the stratification of migration and citizenship also mirrors the overlap of migration systems that have emerged at different points in time, including the post-guestwork formation of new ethnic minorities, intra-EU labour force mobility, international student mobility, corporate migration, and recent refugee movements (Engbersen et al., 2017; Horvath, Amelina, & Peters, 2017).

### *2.3. Entangled Classifications and Fixed Narratives: How Political Dynamics Influence Educational Logics*

How are logics of educational practice affected by these developments? This section re-reads findings from qualitative interview studies (Horvath, 2017, 2018, In Press) in the light of the discussed political developments.<sup>1</sup> The argument is presented in the condensed form of conjec-

tures that introduce the concepts of entangled classification and fixed narratives and prepare the ground for the statistical analysis in Section 4.

The neo-pragmatist heuristics that guide the following discussion draw on the “sociology of conventions” and strands of science and technology studies (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Diaz-Bone, 2011). Teachers are conceived of as competent actors faced with the permanent need to define and handle uncertain situations in a professional (generalizable and justifiable) manner (Derouet, 1992; Imdorf, 2011; Leemann, 2014). In order to do so, they rely on different forms of conventionalized cognitive resources, including orders of justification and, crucial for this article, systems of social classification (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1983). These cognitive resources may be read as elements of a “knowledge infrastructure” (Bowker & Star, 1999): they are *made* in the sense of being the historical product of earlier social agency, they are always *embedded* in wider institutions and structures, they have a certain reach and scope across fields of practice, and they provide ready-made forms and formats that can be used for different purposes. Categories that are part of this kind of societal knowledge infrastructure will often be akin to what Rosch (1983) has famously characterized as “prototype classification”: categories that are only implicitly and vaguely defined and combine heterogeneous elements with varying priorities (to illustrate the idea, Rosch has for example shown how some pieces of furniture are perceived as more typical for the category of furniture than others, just as some breeds of dogs are granted a higher degree of “dog-ness” than others).

A first and important implication of this framework is that we cannot presuppose any simple translation of political dynamics into educational logics. Teachers are seen as being first and foremost oriented towards following professional standards and demands (Derouet, 1992). In line with this assumption, there are no indications in the interviews that teachers consciously apply different logics of evaluation to migrant or minority students than to native pupils. Neither is there a one-to-one reproduction of public discourses. For example, when teachers speak of “integration”, they overwhelmingly use the term to describe group constellations and dynamics, in sharp contrast to currently dominant political notions of integration that emphasize matters of identity and belonging (Korteweg, 2017).

Based on the presented heuristics, it seems nonetheless reasonable to assume that political developments leave their traces in the educational field. First, migration and citizenship regimes might influence the actual situations teachers need to define and handle. Second, they may affect the set of cognitive resources that teachers rely on. On this basis, three interrelated conjectures can be derived:

<sup>1</sup> For methodological details and findings of these studies see Horvath (2017, 2018; In Press). The first of the studies investigated educational patterns of classification. In extensive interviews, preschool and primary school teachers were asked to characterize their institution, their class, and each of their pupils. The second study explored how teachers explain educational inequalities and the categories they mobilize to do so.

The first conjecture is that the stratification and politicization of migration have made educational situations more uncertain. Migration biographies and statuses have become increasingly diverse. In the 1980s, the rough distinction of native and foreign citizenship sufficed in German speaking countries to delimit and denote “guest-worker children” as “problematic” part of the student population. Nowadays, social backgrounds and migration statuses are far less strongly coupled. This diversification of migration-related statuses is obvious in teachers’ characterizations of their students. Children from families with a migration biography are to be found among students described as economically privileged and those seen as disadvantaged, students with well-educated and career-oriented parents as well as those whose parents are perceived as equipped with little cultural capital, among groups of problematic and of complacent students. The integration of migration aspects into pedagogic strategies is hence even less straightforward than during the post-guestwork period. The politicization of migration adds to the resulting uncertainty by rendering migration issues more sensitive. Many interviewed teachers seem aware of the normative tensions involved. For instance, they hesitate to mention migration-related aspects at all, or ask for re-assurance from the interviewer whether “that belongs here”. A pattern emerges that seems incoherent on first inspection. In some cases, migration aspects are, if at all, mentioned in a casual and implicit manner, with no mention of any pedagogical relevance; a student’s father might “originally be from Japan”, another student may “speak French at home”, but little seems to follow from these observations. In other cases, mentions of a migration background take the form of outright diagnoses that figure prominently in pedagogic problem definitions.

The second conjecture is that teachers draw on “entangled categories” that carry the marks of politicized boundary making in order to define and handle these increasingly uncertain situations. In order to cope with ambiguous and charged situations, teachers tend to rely on categories such as “migration background” that follow the logic of prototype classification. The politicization of migration forms the basis on which this kind of classification becomes feasible: it provides the knowledge infrastructure that makes “migration background” available as a common-sense category that seems self-evidently relevant and acceptable. The category’s educational semantics diverge from legal and statistical definitions and systematically confound three meaning dimensions (Horvath, 2017): socio-economic status, ethnic belonging, and actually migration-related aspects (such as traumatizing experiences). “Migration background”, in other words, is an example for a form of category that figures prominently in teachers’ accounts and that can best be described as “entangled”: these categories are clearly informed by extra-pedagogic discourses, but their usage by teachers is anchored in the demands and structures of educational practice (Horvath, 2018).

Perhaps paradoxically, the very vagueness of these “entangled categories” may help dealing with increasing insecurity—among others by providing discursive short-hands that may structure overarching narratives of educational problematization.

A third conjecture is that, around these entangled categories, fixed narratives have emerged that relate educational problem understandings, professional self-concepts, and everyday pedagogic strategies. A neo-pragmatist perspective suggests investigating how categories and classifications are used for defining and handling situations. “Entangled categories” are not necessarily problematic—but become consequential when used for the definition and handling of situations. In the interviews, how strongly teachers emphasize the entangled category of “migration background” is clearly correlated with the degree and form of problematization. While pervasive in cases presented as challenging, they hardly ever play a relevant role in narratives of educational success. Fixed narratives seem to have emerged on this basis. A prominent example is the narrative of “Brennpunktschule” (literally “school in a social focal point”): a brief remark that “90 percent of students have a migration background” suffices in the eyes of the teachers to evoke this narrative that systematically combines perceptions of challenges, assessments of students (and parents), and strategies that seem feasible and acceptable to deal with the situation. The notion of “migration background” functions as a kind of shortcut for this narrative, with potentially far-reaching consequences. For example, based on this overarching narrative, teachers routinely refer to presumably difficult family backgrounds as explanations for educational problems—thereby simultaneously defining the problem as beyond their own pedagogical control.

To sum up, teachers draw on a wider societal knowledge infrastructure that is marked by the politicization of migration, thus introducing entangled categories into their narratives of educational problematization. These narratives aim at defining and handling educational situations that have become more complex and uncertain following the stratification of migration. Although the narratives themselves may well correspond to professional logics, they are presumably problematic because they mirror relations of dominance and inequality. They might have important consequences because they affect how situations and pupils are defined as problematic and inform the concrete pedagogic and didactic strategies that seem feasible and acceptable for dealing with them. But do these qualitative findings translate into regularities on a larger scale? If so, should we assume that these patterns are systematically related to students’ social backgrounds?

### 3. Methodological Remarks

Section 4 provides a first quantitative answer to these questions on the basis of a secondary analysis of TIMSS



2015 data. The Trends in Mathematics and Science Study is an international large scale assessment study that is carried out by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) every four years. Its main objective is to monitor mathematical and science competences of school students in comparative perspective. These competence assessments are complemented by comprehensive contextual data collections for students, parents, teachers, and schools. The following analysis focuses on Germany, but brief references are made to other Western European countries as well as to Canada and Australia. The aim is to explore patterns in teachers' problematizations and how they are linked to students' social and migration backgrounds. To this end, variables from the teacher survey were linked to information from student and home questionnaires. The German dataset comprises data on 307 teachers and 3,948 pupils.

Multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) is used to construe an educational "problematization space" using these data (Le Roux & Rouanet, 2010; Mundt & Horvath, In Press). MCA is a statistical procedure that works with categorical data and is therefore particularly apt for social science applications (Greenacre & Blasius, 2006). It is an exploratory statistical technique that aims at identifying complex relations in data and displaying them geometrically. The analytical aim is not to quantify isolated effects of predefined independent variables on a dependent variable, but rather to explore relations between (categories of) variables and individuals in their complexity and multiplicity.

The interpretation of MCA findings usually concentrates on the graphical result. In a nutshell, MCA represents similarities between cases or correlations between variables topologically in a map: the more similar cases and the stronger correlated categories of variables, the closer to each other they are displayed. To talk of educational "spaces of problematization" or "knowledge spaces" in MCA contexts thus simply means that aspects of teachers' overall problematizations that tend to co-occur are displayed close to each other. The axes of an MCA map are considered to mirror underlying structures. The interpretation therefore entails two related steps. (1) The axes are interpreted by looking at how categories of variables are distributed along them. The relative importance of an axis is expressed numerically as its share of "total inertia" (basically the proportion of total variation explained by the axis). (2) Points are interpreted by looking at their positions relative to each other. Some points can be more important for the overall solution than others—these points have a high "weight" and a stronger influence on the overall shape of the map. Variables that are used to define the MCA space are referred to as "active variables". The projection of "passive variables" (which do not affect the shape of the space) into a given map allows to relate the identified patterns to other factors.

A caveat is in order. TIMSS data are produced on the basis of conceptual frameworks that are quite different

from the one of this article. The TIMSS teacher survey covers a range of significant indicators for teachers' problem perceptions but does not include items that can be interpreted as measuring underlying logics of classification. Conclusions from patterns of problematization to "entangled categories" are therefore made by adding migration background as a passive variable. Further, the set of available migration-related variables is restricted. The father's country of birth is used as an indicator in the following—this only allows a rough approximation of the population of students "with a migration background". Overall, the data and findings are nonetheless meaningful and suggestive for the exploratory ends of this article.

#### 4. A Firmly Fixed Pattern?

In the following, data from TIMSS 2015 on teachers' perceptions of their school and their students, on their professional self-images, and on their didactic strategies are used to construe a "space of educational problematization". The included items are listed in Table 1. The leading question is whether "problematic problematizations" as they have been postulated in Section 2.3 can be identified on a larger scale. In a second step, student background variables are projected into this space of problematization to give a first indication of how the observed patterns may be linked to underlying categories and to explore how teachers' "knowledge spaces" are related to students' social spaces. The country of birth and the educational qualification of students' fathers are used in this article, but other variables (parents' employment status, overall social structure of the school etc.) lead to similar results. Third, the combined findings are discussed in the light of the considerations presented in Section 2.

Figure 1 shows the MCA map for the selected items. A surprisingly clear pattern arises that is in line with the diagnosis of fixed narratives. From left to right, teachers' perceptions and assessments become increasingly negative for all investigated aspects: students' behaviour and capabilities, parents' support, and the school's socio-spatial context are positively evaluated on the left-hand side and seen negatively on the right-hand side. Teachers' didactic strategies follow the same pattern. On the right-hand side of the map, teachers report that they seldom encourage classroom discussions or provide students with challenging tasks, in sharp contrast to teaching habits on the other side of the map. The same pattern, finally, is obvious for how teachers' emotionally relate to their professional role and for their job satisfaction: the further to the right, the less satisfied and enthusiastic teachers are, and the less they find their work full of meaning and purpose. There is no systematic pattern on the y-axis, suggesting a one-dimensional solution. 21.5% of total inertia is explained, which indicates a normal to good representation of overall variety.

Taking a more detailed look at single points and their interrelations, the homologies to the narratives of

**Table 1.** Items used for MCA.

Item	Univariate distribution			
<i>How would you characterize each of the following within your school?</i>	<i>Very high</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>(Very) Low</i>
— Parental expectations for student achievement	4.4%	24.4%	49.6%	21.5%
— Parental support for student achievement	11.4%	54.0%	31.6%	2.9%
— Students' ability to reach school's academic goals	2.2%	18.5%	59.8%	19.5%
<i>Thinking about your current school, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.</i>	<i>Agree a lot</i>	<i>Agree a little</i>	<i>Disagree a little</i>	<i>Disagree a lot</i>
— This school is located in a safe neighborhood	61.3%	29.2%	7.3%	2.2%
— The students behave in an orderly manner	21.2%	63.4%	13.6%	1.8%
— The students are respectful of the teachers	21.6%	65.9%	12.1%	0.4%
<i>How often do you feel the following way about being a teacher?</i>	<i>Very often</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>(Almost) never</i>
— I am content with my profession as a teacher	43.8%	50.7%	5.1%	0.4%
— I find my work full of meaning and purpose	61.8%	36.0%	1.8%	0.4%
— I am enthusiastic about my job	44.7%	42.5%	12.1%	0.7%
<i>How often do you do the following in teaching this class?</i>	<i>(Almost) every lesson</i>	<i>About half the lessons</i>	<i>Some lessons</i>	<i>Never</i>
— Relate the lesson to students' daily lives	47.1%	39.0%	14.0%	0.0%
— Complete challenging exercises that require to go beyond the instruction	7.6%	28.7%	60.4%	3.3%
— Encourage classroom discussions among students	19.0%	39.1%	40.5%	1.5%
— Ask students to decide their own problem solving procedures	26.6%	49.6%	23.7%	0.0%
<i>In your view, to what extent do the following limit how you teach this class?</i>	<i>Not at all</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>A lot</i>	
— Students lacking prerequisite knowledge or skills	10.7%	63.1%	26.2%	
— Disruptive students	20.6%	58.5%	21.1%	
— Uninterested students	26.9%	65.1%	8.0%	

Notes: Item phrasings in this table are taken from the English reference questionnaires (which was translated and adapted for each participating country); N = 307; rounding errors possible.

migration-related problematics found in the qualitative studies becomes even stronger. The upper right-hand side of the map seems to be an ideal-typical representation of the narrative of “Brennpunktschule” (see Section 2.3). The map, however, also indicates that there is room for pedagogical manoeuvre. Pronounced perceptions of problems—and this seems very important—on this side of the map are not as strongly correlated with didactic strategies and professional self-images as on the left-hand side (as indicated by the relative distance of the respective points). Sharing a perception of social problems does not mean that teachers deal with these problems the same way.

The projection of passive variables shows that problematization patterns are related to migration issues, but at the same time to issues of social class. Children with foreign-born fathers are over-represented in contexts that teachers perceive as problematic and under-represented in those considered more beneficial. The

same holds true for parents' educational background. Statistically speaking, migrant students (especially those from disadvantaged social backgrounds) are situated in different learning spaces than “native” students. Figure 2 shows the projection of students into teachers' knowledge space. The concentration ellipses (which delimit “typical” cases from points considered outliers) clearly diverge for students with foreign-born fathers.

The correlation of problematization patterns with migration-related backgrounds is most likely underestimated in the statistical results due to the insufficient measurement of migrant and minority status in TIMSS data. A systematic comparison of teachers' assessments of parental attitudes, support etc. with the answering patterns of parents themselves is beyond the scope of this article—but the hypothesis that derives from what has been said so far is that teachers' knowledge spaces tend to homogenize social spaces that are actually becoming increasingly differentiated and variegated. The



**Figure 1.** “Educational space of problematization” and background variables. Notes: 21,5% of total inertia explained; more influential variables coloured darker. Passive variables: blue: father born in Germany (yes/no), red: father’s educational level. Categories of some items merged to increase readability and balance skewed distributions. Active Variables taken from teacher questionnaire (N = 307), passive variables taken from the home questionnaire (N = 3,948).



**Figure 2.** Projections of students into teachers' problematization space. Notes: Points can represent two or several students if these students have the same values on all variables used to construe the MCA space. Red points represent students with foreign-born fathers, cyan points those with fathers born in Germany.

described discursive formation hence threatens to stabilize ethnicized forms of status reproduction in and through schooling systems.

This conjecture needs to be further differentiated. Qualitative findings suggest that the observed narratives are organized around “entangled categories” which help to stabilize them. Not every child with a “migration background” according to legal or statistical definitions is equally likely to be also perceived and labelled as such. The entangled educational category of migration background articulates elements of politicized boundary making with problem definitions of educational practice and therefore systematically conflates socio-economic, ethnicity-related, and migration issues (Horvath, 2017). The concomitant problematization disproportionately affects migrant students from less privileged social backgrounds and accordingly threatens to aggravate inequalities that are already inherent to current stratified migration and citizenship regimes.

MCA maps for other Western European countries lead to similar conclusions, even if the patterns are most pronounced for Germany. In Western Europe, relatively fixed educational narratives seem to have crystallized. Analyses for countries from other world regions yield results that differ in relevant regards. These differences partly mirror variation in migration and citizenship regimes. For example, the space of problematization for Canada becomes two-dimensional, with didactic strate-

gies being detached from an otherwise similar first axis; migration and citizenship status seem far less important, in turn there is a stronger association with parents' educational background. For Australia, a similar knowledge space is even reversely linked to migration and citizenship status, in line with the country's highly selective immigration policies: students from migrant families are (slightly) over-represented on the left side of the map, native students on the right.

## 5. Conclusion

This article has discussed the hypothesis that the politicization and stratification of migration and citizenship have given rise to patterns of educational problematization that threaten to aggravate already existing educational disadvantages. Entangled categories that combine pedagogic and political logics presumably play an important mediating and stabilizing role for these fixed narratives. Although focused on the example of Germany, it can be assumed that this diagnosis holds for other Western European countries. After all, the political and social dynamics have been similar across the new European context. First statistical analyses of TIMSS 2015 data seem to warrant this conjecture.

The presented findings offer a starting point to explain the subtle ways in which educational inequalities are reproduced in and through pedagogic practice with-



out presupposing any automatic process, an unreflecting transfer of political discourses, or even ill intentions by teachers. The mobilization of entangled categories and the fixing of problem narratives is understandable in so far as they allow to deal with the excessive demands and tensions inherent to educational situations. As argued by critical pedagogy and multicultural education, the logical demand and most important remedy is to raise reflexivity and awareness. Extending the scope of professional reflexivity to the political processes discussed in this article may make this critical engagement more effective and sustainable.

The demand for reflexivity extends to the social sciences. Social scientists should be aware of and reflect upon their own role in establishing and fixing societal problematizations and categorizations that might develop unforeseen consequences in various other fields of social practice.

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The author declares no conflict of interests.

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Article

## Political Integration in Practice: Explaining a Time-Dependent Increase in Political Knowledge among Immigrants in Sweden

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### Abstract

Scholarly findings suggest that immigrants in Western countries, in general, participate less in politics and show lower levels of political efficacy than native-born citizens. Research is scarce, however, when it comes to immigrants' knowledge about politics and public affairs in their new home country, and what happens with this knowledge over the years. This article focuses on immigrants in Sweden, a country known for ambitious multicultural policies, but where immigrants also face disadvantages in areas such as labor and housing markets. Utilizing particularly suitable survey data we find that immigrants, in general, know less about Swedish politics than natives, but also that this difference disappears with time. Exploring the influence of time of residence on political knowledge, the article shows that the positive effect of time in Sweden among immigrants remains after controlling for an extensive set of background factors. Moreover, the article examines this political learning effect through the lens of an Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) model. The findings suggest that the development of an actual ability to learn about Swedish politics—via education in Sweden, and by improved Swedish language skills—is an especially important explanation for the increase in political knowledge.

### Keywords

ability; education; immigrants; language skills; motivation; opportunity; political information; political knowledge; Sweden; time-related differences

### Issue

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### 1. Introduction

A number of studies have found that immigrants in Western Europe tend to be less active in politics and tend to believe that they have less political influence than native citizens (Adman & Strömblad, 2017; Fennema & Tillie, 2001; González-Ferrer, 2011). Moreover, this applies especially to immigrants from non-Western countries. When it comes to political knowledge, however, research is scarce. This is unfortunate, since politically well-informed members of society are important in at least two ways: an individual who knows a great deal about the political system and various kinds of political issues, is obviously better equipped to promote her/his self-

interest when participating politically; and well-informed citizens also promote democracy at large, such as contributing to decisions that are better for society in general. Considering that immigrants are currently a substantial part of the population in many Western countries, their political knowledge is important both from an individual and a societal perspective.

The existing empirical research consists primarily of case studies. The findings, mainly based on the US, indicate that recently arrived immigrants and ethnic minorities, in general, have limited knowledge about the political system and political issues in their new country (e.g., Caidi, Allard, & Quirke, 2010). As for immigrants in Western countries in general, however, less is



known. Moreover, few studies have looked at whether immigrants continue to be less informed, or if they, after some time, tend to report knowledge more on par with the rest of the population. If so, what explains such a development? Does a possible positive development have to do with increased abilities to understand politics in the new country due to education and improved language skills; or is the motivation to learn the decisive factor; or rather increased opportunities, because of overtime increased access to social networks where politics is discussed? The article aims at answering these questions. The set of possible explanations stem from an Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) model suggested by Luskin (1990) with the aim of being a general model for explaining differences in political knowledge between different groups (cf. Rasmussen, 2016). Limited political knowledge among immigrants should be particularly disturbing if it is caused by a lack of abilities rather than a lack of motivation, i.e., not because they won't but because they can't (cf. Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995).

This study concerns immigrants in Sweden, a country with a reputation of being an immigration-friendly welfare state and also a well-functioning democracy (cf. Eger, 2010). With a tradition of ambitious multicultural policies, Sweden is ranked first among 31 developed countries in a comparison of integration policies and migrants' opportunities to participate in society using the Migrant Integration Policy Index (Migration Policy Group, 2015). Already in the 1970s, immigrants who were not Swedish citizens were granted the right to vote in local elections (see, e.g., Bevelander & Spång, 2017). Moreover, the government has, for many decades, provided ethnic organizations with financial resources and often expressed high hopes on the ability of these associations to contribute to political integration (see, e.g., Adman & Strömblad, 2017; Myrberg, Strömblad, & Bengtsson, 2017). At the same time, however, immigrants seem to be disadvantaged in Swedish society in several ways, for instance in terms of their position in the labor and housing markets and in associational life (OECD, 2012; Strömblad & Adman, 2010; cf. Koopmans, 2010). In light of this arguably unique combination of favorable opportunities and poor outcomes for immigrants, we argue that Sweden constitutes an interesting critical case for further examination of immigrant's political knowledge and how it develops over time living in this country. Rare survey data will be analyzed based on a sample of immigrants in Sweden and containing an extensive set of relevant items (presented in detail below).

The remainder of the article begins with a discussion of previous research. Then, the data and the measurements being used are presented, followed by the analyses section. In the final part, the conclusions are discussed.

## 2. Previous Research and Our Approach

Here, political knowledge is conventionally defined as the “range of factual information about politics that is

stored in long-term memory” (Carpini & Keeter, 1996). It concerns objectively verifiable cognitions, which are retained over time and available for future use. Moreover, a certain “range of knowledge” is concerned, normally areas such as how the political system is structured and works, who the main political actors are and what they do, and political issues of different kinds.

As pointed out above, in general, research is scarce when it comes to political knowledge among immigrants. It is true that in the American case, lower knowledge levels are well-documented among ethnic minorities compared with native-born citizens (see, e.g., Caidi et al., 2010). However, for immigrants in a Western European context, we have only found case studies of various ethnic groups and, hence, it is difficult to draw conclusions about general knowledge levels (Black, 1987; Hakim, 2006; Savolainen, 2008; see also, Caidi et al., 2010). The findings from these seem to be fairly consistent, however. It is evident that recently arrived immigrants, in general, have limited knowledge about the political system and political issues in their new country. Several potential barriers have been pointed out which may prevent relevant learning to take place, e.g., not knowing the language well enough, social isolation, information overload, difficulties identifying reliable sources, and no spare time/energy when trying to establish a life in a new country. Less is known about what happens over time in the new country, at least when it comes to wider country-based studies.

Judging from findings concerning other political attitudes—such as political efficacy, political and social trust as well as political participation—we may expect immigrants' knowledge about politics and public affairs to increase and, over time, eventually reach the average level of natives (see, e.g., Adman & Strömblad, 2017, 2015; Dinesen & Hooghe, 2010; Fennema & Tillie, 2001; González-Ferrer, 2011; De Vroome, Hooghe, & Marien, 2013). Still, this must be investigated, as we have found no studies on the topic, neither on Sweden nor on any other country.

In Sweden as well as in other Western countries, items on political knowledge are seldom included in extensive surveys, and samples focusing primarily on immigrants are very rare. Unsurprisingly then, we merely found a short passage in a report from the late 1990s, indicating lower political knowledge levels among immigrants than among Swedish born individuals (Petersson, Hermansson, Micheletti, Teorell, & Westholm, 1998, pp. 113–114); hence, a difference can be identified, which is in line with findings concerning other political attitudes and behaviors mentioned.

As for political knowledge, however, it was also found that immigrants who have been living for a rather long time in Sweden were almost as informed as Swedish-born citizens (Petersson et al., 1998, pp. 113–114). The report was based on a general Swedish sample which included a rather small number of immigrants and did not allow more detailed controls or research into why this

change occurred. The aim of this article is therefore to fill this gap.

As discussed above, this article also aims at explaining potential time-related differences in political knowledge between immigrants. Here, we draw on the quite universally applicable AMO model suggested by Luskin (1990; cf. Rasmussen, 2016). It may be considered as a general framework for factors that encourage learning, manifested in Luskin's "sophistication equation" terminology (Luskin, 1990, pp. 334–336). It is argued that people eventually become more politically sophisticated if the conditions for learning about politics and public affairs are beneficial. As suggested, the set of conditions in this regard should, to a large extent, be determined by a given individual's ability, motivation, and opportunity for acquiring political information (Luskin, 1990). Rather intuitively, information must not only be supplied within the context of the individual. She or he must also have the necessary ability and competence to organize and memorize the information, summing up facts and arguments.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, such a "sophistication" process reasonably also requires that the individual is sufficiently motivated and thus interested to pay attention to things like public debates and political decision-making.

Focusing on potentially important ability factors, this study examines the influence of education in Sweden and (arguably closely connected) Swedish language skills, which in both cases are expected to promote knowledge about politics and public affairs in Sweden. The sensible relationship between schooling and political knowledge has been firmly and empirically supported among societal members in general (see, e.g., Jerit, Barabas, & Bolsen, 2006; for Swedish studies see: Holmberg & Oscarsson, 2004, pp. 208–16; Oscarsson, 2007). In our specific case, moreover, education in Sweden for immigrants may often involve the explicit learning of political facts about the new home country as part of the curriculum. Swedish language proficiency obviously facilitates the understanding of news and political information in Sweden. Financial resources are also considered. The idea is that money is beneficial for the ability to afford information supply and political news through mass media, via newspapers, and TV, as well as through computer and internet access (cf., Luskin, 1990).

As for motivation factors, Luskin does not specify in detail which ones should be included. Nevertheless, on a general note one may argue that psychological orientations proved to be important for political participation (cf., Verba et al., 1995, chapter 12) reasonably could have corresponding influences on political knowledge. Being politically interested and being political efficacious, due to a confidence in one's ability to understand politics, are properties that have long been known to enhance individual-level political activity (cf., Almond & Verba, 1963, chapters 7 and 9; Luskin, 1990). Such motivation factors may arguably also have a positive impact on the

propensity to obtain political knowledge. In this article, the analyses will also take into account the consumption of political news in mass media (cf., Jerit et al., 2006).

Opportunity factors, finally, may be regarded as determined within the social context of the individual (cf., Luskin, 1990). In line with this reasoning, it is assumed that an expanded access to social networks, aside from family and relatives, would facilitate an immigrants' acquisition of political knowledge concerning the new home country. Indeed, case study findings suggest that especially important sources for knowledge are interpersonal contacts, e.g., between colleagues, friends, and neighbors (see, e.g., Hakim, 2006). In sum, the access to social environments is assumed to increase the probability of being engaged in political discussions and thus a continuous political learning. Below, survey questions on the participation in both formally and informally structured arenas of exposure to political discussion and political information will be utilized.

### 3. Data and Measurements

For the empirical analyses, we rely on the large-scale Swedish Citizen Survey 2003 ('Medborgarundersökningen 2003'; for a more detailed description of the survey, see Esaiasson & Westholm, 2006). This survey employed face-to-face interviews with a stratified random sample of inhabitants in Sweden (aged 18 and over) which consists of a large over-sample of immigrants (originally selected on the basis of official registry data). Hence, the data were collected rather recently after a previous major flow of refugees to Sweden that took place in the 1990s. Moreover, just like the recent refugee wave, which had its peak in the autumn of 2015 (Riksrevisionen, 2017), a significant part of the refugees originated from countries with large Muslim populations (in the former case mainly coming from Bosnia and Somalia, and in the latter case from countries such as Afghanistan and Syria). Comparing the two time periods, there are many similarities, as evidenced by the domestic debate regarding Sweden's actual capacity to receive and integrate the refugees (cf. Byström & Frohnert, 2017). Therefore, we believe that our findings, although based on data from the early 2000s, are both interesting and enlightening, as they may very well shed light on the contemporary situation in Sweden than initially would have been expected.

The total sample in the Swedish Citizen Survey 2003 included 2,138 respondents of which 858 originally had immigrated to Sweden. The survey employed a complex sampling scheme, increasing the selection probability for refugees and for immigrants from developing countries, while under-representing immigrants from Nordic and Western European countries. At the same time, the design allows for necessary adjustments to produce representative samples of the total population, the native population and the population of immigrants, respec-

<sup>1</sup> According to Luskin (1990), it is also necessary to sum up the information to a meaningful whole, but we agree with other scholars who argue that this is actually not demanded in order for an individual to gather political knowledge (see, e.g., Boudreau & Lupia, 2011).

tively. Moreover, to our knowledge, it is one of few sources of information on political knowledge in Sweden and very suitable for investigating a large number of explanatory factors. Furthermore, it contains numerous questions on immigration-specific experiences and life circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

Items on *political knowledge* were included at the end of the questionnaire, to avoid effects on political attitudes. Three questions were asked, and the answers were added together to an index variable, scaled 0–1; results from a principal component analysis, using the Kaiser criterion, suggest one single dimension, explaining 56% of the variance (factor loadings vary between 0.4 and 0.7). The questions were:

- 1) In most places, there is a public authority to which you can turn when it comes to questions about, for example, the basic pension, the National Supplementary Pensions Scheme (ATP), children's pensions and widows' pensions. What is this authority called?

Results show that 48% gave the right answer—Försäkringskassan (the Swedish Social Insurance Agency)—in the full sample (51% in the immigrant sample).

- 2) How many parties currently have seats in the Swedish cabinet (*regeringen*)?

Results show that 27% gave the right answer—one party—in the full sample (21% in the immigrant sample).

- 3) What body makes the laws of Sweden?

Results show that 53% gave the right answer—*riksdagen* (the Parliament of Sweden)—in the full sample (48% in the immigrant sample).

The primary independent variable, *time in Sweden*, measures a respondent's length of residence in the new home country. The measure takes into account the number of years as well as months the respondent has been living in Sweden (also taking into account temporary periods abroad).

Turning to the ability factors, *post-migration education* measures the number of years spent in combined full-time schooling and occupational training in Sweden. When it comes to *Swedish language* skills, the survey data allows a construction of an additive index variable (ranging from 0–10), based on the following four questions answered by the *interviewer* after having conducted the interview with a respondent (thus aiming to

document skills more objectively, compared to an optional self-evaluation by each respondent): 'How would you assess the respondent's Swedish pronunciation?'; 'Apart from the question of accent, how would you assess the respondent's ability to express him/herself orally in Swedish?'; 'How would you assess the respondent's ability to understand spoken Swedish?'; and finally, 'How would you assess the respondent's ability to understand written Swedish?'. All assessments were made on a scale ranging from 0 to 10, where higher values represent better Swedish language skills.<sup>3</sup> Income, finally, is measured by including registry data information on each respondent's disposable household income.

When it comes to social networks (opportunity factors) and the potential importance of working life in this sense, the dummy variables *weak labor force attachment* (coded 1 for respondents that are unemployed, or on disability/early retirement pension, or not working for other reasons; and 0 otherwise) and *pensioner* (coded 1 for those who are retired; and 0 otherwise) separates respondents in the corresponding categories from those who are employed, and thus may take part in social interaction in workplaces. Regarding civil society organizations, we include a measure of *associational activity*, based on questions about engagement in 28 different types of voluntary associations. The measure includes a wide-ranging array of recreational organizations, interest and identity organizations, as well as ideological organizations. The information was summarized in an additive index variable (the different types of organizations are mentioned in detail in Part 2 of the Annex). Moreover, we include an overall index measure of *political participation*, based on conventional forms of participation as well as acknowledged non-parliamentary ways to bring about societal change. The index variable consists of items on a total of 19 different modes of participation included in the survey (such as voting, party activities, personal contacts, protests, and political consumerism; the items included in the index are described in detail in Part 2 of the Annex).<sup>4</sup> Analogous to the expected non-linear effects of length of residence, the associational activity and political participation variables are logarithmically transformed in the multivariate analyses below.

As for less formal networks, one variable is included measuring *political discussion*. It is based on the following interview question: 'How often do you discuss politics with others?' Possible answers were 'often' (coded as 1), 'sometimes' (0.67), 'seldom' (0.33), and 'never' (0).

As for motivation factors, *political interest* is measured via the question 'How interested are you in Swedish politics on the national level?' Possible answers

<sup>2</sup> Principal investigators were Karin Borevi, Per Strömblad and Anders Westholm at the Department of Government, Uppsala University. The fieldwork was carried out in 2002 and 2003 by professional interviewers from Statistics Sweden. The overall response rate was 56.2 percent. All analyses in this article have been conducted with proper adjustments for the stratified sampling procedure.

<sup>3</sup> The construction of a one-dimensional index is supported by a principal component analysis (not shown). It should be mentioned that the survey interview involved showing each respondent many cards with written information (with the purpose to efficiently convey response options); hence, by the end of the interview, it is, therefore, likely that the interviewer had a good grip on the respondent's ability to also understand written Swedish.

<sup>4</sup> A scree-test, based on a factor analysis, in fact, gives some support for treating political participation as a one-dimensional phenomenon (for a similar approach, see, e.g., Verba et al., 1995, especially p. 544).

were 'very interested' (coded as 1.00), 'Fairly interested' (0.67), 'not especially interested' (0.33), and 'not at all interested' (0). *Media consumption* is an index variable (ranging 0–1) based on the following four questions about how often the respondent does the following concerning news about Sweden: reads about politics in a daily newspaper; listens to or looks at news programs on the radio or on TV; listens to or watches programs on politics and social issues on the radio or on TV; and uses the internet to obtain information on politics and society. Possible answers to each question were 'every day' (1), '3–4 days per week' (0.75), '1–2 days per week' (0.5), 'less often' (0.25), and 'never' (0). Supported by factor analysis, the answers were summarized into one index variable, rescaled to run between 0 (equivalent to answering 'never' on all four questions) and 1 (answering 'every day' on all questions). *Internal political efficacy* is based on the interview subject's assessment of her/his capacity and competence to influence political and administrative decisions compared to that of other citizens. The measurement is an additive index based on three interview questions concerning interview subjects' views on their opportunities to persuade politicians to consider their demands, communicate their demands to politicians, and seek redress if treated wrongly by a government agency. For all three questions, the answers are given on a scale of 0 ('much less opportunity than others') to 10 ('much greater opportunity than others').<sup>5</sup> The index variable for *external political efficacy* is constructed in a highly similar way and based on three identical questions with the difference being that the items concern the respondent's views on the opportunity for *people in general* to affect political and administrative decisions (both indices on efficacy are scaled 0–1).

When it comes to control factors, the demographic factors age and gender have sometimes been found to correlate with political knowledge and will be included (see, e.g., Jerit et al., 2006; for analyses of Sweden, see: Holmberg & Oscarsson, 2004, pp. 208–216). The variable *female* is coded 1 for women and 0 for men, and *age* is the respondent's age the year the interview took place.

As for potentially important migrant-specific variables, potential differences due to reasons for migration is captured by the variable *refugee* (coded 1 for people who migrated to Sweden either because they were refugees themselves, or because they accompanied or joined a relative with refugee status; and 0 for those who came to Sweden for other reasons, such as for work or studies). We also constructed a set of dummy variables separating immigrants into three categories based on

their respective origins in different regions of the world (Myrberg, 2007). The first category 'West' (used as a reference category in the statistical analyses in the next section) consists of immigrants from Western and Anglo-Saxon countries; specifically, other Scandinavian countries, North-western Europe, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the US. Next, the second category 'East' consists of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe. Finally, the third category 'South' consists of immigrants from Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America. The trichotomy is admittedly crude, but Myrberg (2007) has nevertheless demonstrated its empirical validity when it comes to conditions for immigrants in Sweden.<sup>6</sup>

*Pre-migration education* measures the number of years spent in combined full-time schooling and occupational training before migrating to Sweden. *Economic expansion* is a simple dummy variable, measuring whether the respondent arrived in Sweden in times of economic expansion, here measured as the 1960s and earlier and the 1980s (coded as 1), or in times of recession, i.e., the 1970s and 1990s (coded as 0).<sup>7</sup> Descriptive statistics for all variables are presented in Table A1, in Part 1 of the Annex.

#### 4. Empirical Findings

Starting with basic descriptive analyses, immigrants report lower levels of knowledge than Swedish-born individuals (0.38 on the 0–1 knowledge scale, compared with 0.43 for Swedish-born participants). Moreover, these differences especially apply to immigrants from non-Western countries, as the means are 0.37 for immigrants from Eastern countries, 0.29 for immigrants from Southern countries, and 0.44 for immigrants from Western countries. Furthermore, in bivariate regression analyses, findings in previous research are replicated when it comes to knowledge levels increasing over the years lived in Sweden, reaching the levels of Swedish-born individuals after approximately 30 years living in Sweden.

Moving on with multivariate analyses, firstly we investigate whether there seems to be a genuine positive learning effect of living in Sweden on political knowledge when controlling for background factors. Results from multiple regression analyses (OLS) are reported in Table 1.<sup>8</sup> In Model 1, pre-migration education and gender show expected effects in line with previous research with higher educated and men scoring higher on the knowledge index, controlling for the other factors. Age is not related to knowledge. The country origin differences seem to remain concerning immigrants from Southern

<sup>5</sup> Imputation was applied for this variable; respondents were assigned a value as long as they answered at least two of the three questions.

<sup>6</sup> All models have been rerun using a more detailed set of dummy variables, based on a categorization of 21 world regions, presented in Part 2 of the Annex; the effects were only changed to very minor degrees. In additional analyses (not shown) we also control for geographic location in Sweden by including dummy variables indicating the type of place of residence of a given respondent at the time of the interview (rural area; village; small town; larger city). This control does not affect the reported coefficients to any noticeable degree.

<sup>7</sup> We have also rerun these analyses using a variable measuring the unemployment levels the exact year of immigration. Unfortunately, data were not available for rather many years, and therefore we have chosen not to show these findings. However, these additional analyses show very similar results as reported above.

<sup>8</sup> All main analyses have been rerun using ordered logit analysis. The findings are in general very similar to what is presented here and do not change the main conclusions.



**Table 1.** Predicting political knowledge (0–1) among immigrants in Sweden, considering time-related differences and ability, motivational, and opportunity factors.

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Time in Sweden (log)	0.137*** (0.032)	0.030 (0.036)	0.009 (0.036)
Female	−0.084*** (0.023)	−0.091*** (0.022)	−0.067*** (0.022)
Age	0.003 (0.005)	0.007 (0.005)	−0.003 (0.006)
Age squared	−0.00005 (0.000)	−0.00005 (0.000)	−0.00008 (0.000)
Pre-migration education	0.013*** (0.003)	0.016*** (0.003)	0.012*** (0.004)
Refugee	0.046 (0.031)	0.035 (0.030)	0.031 (0.029)
<i>Origin</i> (West = ref.)			
East	−0.029 (0.032)	−0.023 (0.032)	−0.028 (0.031)
South	−0.092*** (0.033)	−0.069** (0.033)	−0.065** (0.032)
Economic expansion	0.049* (0.027)	0.041 (0.026)	0.029 (0.026)
Post-migration education		0.013*** (0.004)	0.008** (0.004)
Swedish language skills		0.025*** (0.007)	0.026*** (0.007)
Income		0.029** (0.013)	0.032** (0.013)
<i>Labor market position</i>			
Weak labor force attachment			0.038 (0.033)
Pensioner (Employed = ref.)			−0.165*** (0.059)
Associational activity (log)			−0.005 (0.008)
Political participation (log)			0.001 (0.018)
Political discussion			0.044 (0.044)
Political interest			0.162*** (0.048)
Swedish news consumption			0.108* (0.058)
Internal political efficacy			−0.096 (0.076)
External political efficacy			−0.106* (0.064)
Constant	−0.085 (0.131)	−0.441*** (0.147)	−0.257*** (0.164)
<i>N</i>	666	666	666
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.098	0.162	0.197

Notes: \*\*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*  $p < .05$  \*  $p < .10$ . Entries are ordinary least-squares (OLS) estimates with standard errors in parenthesis. The sample is weighted to be representative of people who have immigrated to Sweden; the dependent variable political knowledge runs from 0 (no correct answer) to 1 (correct answers on all three knowledge questions).

countries (but not Eastern countries). Moreover, a positive effect is also discovered for economic expansion, i.e., arriving in Sweden in a decade characterized by a strong economy seems to be positively related to being informed about Swedish politics later in life. The variable measuring the reason for migration, whether being a refugee or other reasons, is however not significantly correlated with political knowledge. Turning to the variable of our main interest, the effect of years lived in Sweden; a strong and statistically significant effect is discovered. In other words, this result supports the hypothesis that there is a true learning effect of living in Sweden.<sup>9</sup>

Hence, the attention is now directed to the second research question, i.e., explaining the effect of time spent in Sweden using the AMO model. In Model 2 the ability factors are introduced. All three behave as expected, showing positive and statistically significant effects. Moreover, the coefficient for time in Sweden is now considerably weakened, and not statistically significant. Hence, no direct effect of years lived in Sweden remains, and in line with the AMO model, the reason seems to be that immigrants increase their abilities to learn about Swedish politics over time.<sup>10</sup>

In Model 3, all other AMO factors are added. The ability factors are still substantially and statistically significant, in contradiction to surprisingly many of the motivation and opportunity factors. Only political discussion, political interest, and the pensioner dummy show expected signs and statistically significant effects. Moreover, time in Sweden remains rather unaffected, and not statistically significant, when all these other variables are introduced. In Model 1 in Table A.2, in the Appendix, the same model is shown but with the ability factors excluded. The motivation and opportunity factors still, to a large extent, show similar effects and, even more notably, a significant effect of time in Sweden is displayed. Hence, the inclusion of ability factors is necessary in order to explain why political knowledge levels increase with years lived in Sweden. Model 2 in Table A.2 helps us qualify our finding even further. Here only two of the ability factors are controlled for, i.e., post-migration education and Swedish language skills. Looking at the coefficient for time in Sweden, it is clear that these two factors have a strong impact. Adding income (cf., Model 2 in Table 1) affects the time variable coefficient only to a small extent.<sup>11</sup> Hence, our findings are rather clear-cut: with time, immigrants get more educated in Sweden and they improve their Swedish language skills. Consequently their knowledge about Swedish politics increases. Increased motivation and opportunity (in terms of social networks), as well as income, do not constitute the main explanation of the learning process.

Two-way causality may, of course, affect the results to some degree. Arguably, this problem is most present

when it comes to motivational factors; political knowledge is more likely to affect political interest and political efficacy than to affect educational achievements in Sweden or Swedish language skills. Taking potential two-way causality into consideration then adds to the picture that motivational factors do not constitute the main explanation at work here.

Another potential method problem concerns self-selection. A general desire to integrate in Sweden could affect both time spent in the country (the person in question wants to stay) and political knowledge (the person wants to know more about Swedish politics). We cannot rule out the existence of such effects, but we do think the controls here are rather ambitious, firstly considering the number and composition of background factors controlled for in Model 1 in Table 1; and, secondly, considering that the effect of time in Sweden also remains to large extent, after controlling for motivational factors but not ability factors (cf., Model 1 in Table A2, in Part 1 of the Annex). In a further analysis, which is not shown, two additional factors are considered, which should also be rather good measures of a general will to integrate: whether the respondent is a Swedish citizen and whether he/she wishes to continue living in Sweden. This additional test does not change the aforementioned to any notable degree.

## 5. Conclusion

Findings in previous research have repeatedly pointed to a lack of political integration in Western democracies. This article contributes by looking at political knowledge, an aspect of political integration rarely studied before. Our findings—based on evidence from the significant immigrant country of Sweden, with a reputation of being immigration friendly—show similar signs of inequality as immigrants, in general, are less informed about Swedish politics than individuals born in Sweden. As expected, these differences primarily concern immigrants from non-Western countries. However, from an integration perspective, it is promising that our analyzes, being the most rigorous in the Swedish contexts, show increasing knowledge levels over the years living in Sweden, an effect that remains after rather ambitious controls.

A major task of this article has been to explain why knowledge levels increase with the years living in Sweden. Using the AMO model our results are clear; the increase in knowledge is possible to explain, and it is especially post-migration education and improved Swedish language skills that boost this learning process. In other words, more recently arrived immigrants have less political knowledge, not because they don't want to, but because they have no means of obtaining it; they lack Swedish education and language skills, which make it

<sup>9</sup> The coefficient is even stronger, substantially, when the control factors are included (0.14), compared with when controls are excluded (0.08).

<sup>10</sup> Moreover, years lived in Sweden has, both substantially and statistically, very strong and positive direct effects on education in Sweden, Swedish language skills, and income.

<sup>11</sup> This pattern is also confirmed if controlling for the three ability factors one by one, in separate analyses, which also shows education and language skills impacting to a similar extent.

more difficult to become politically informed. As it takes a substantial number of years before immigrants reach the knowledge levels of native-born Swedish individuals, supporting faster learning of the Swedish language as well as promoting further education in Sweden seem called for, in order to strengthen political integration among more recently arrived immigrants.

It is true that education and language skills may capture not only the ability to learn but also, to some extent, an ambition to learn; and, educational institutions may provide social opportunities to be exposed to political information (cf., Luskin, 1990). Hence, we cannot be sure that these factors affect political knowledge exclusively via improved cognitive skills or language skills. Still, a rather ambitious set of factors were included in our analyses, aimed at measuring motivation and opportunity more directly, and these additional factors did not contribute to any substantial degree. Hence, we find it rather unlikely that education in Sweden and Swedish language skills should only (or mainly) capture motivation (or opportunity), and not ability. Other kinds of data are needed, such as panel surveys, to investigate this more thoroughly.

This article has concerned Sweden, which is a rather special case considering, on the one hand, its reputation as an immigration-friendly welfare state and of having a tradition of ambitious multicultural policies, and, on the other hand, immigrants' rather poor position in the labor and housing markets. We encourage future studies with a similar general approach like ours, but conducted in immigrant countries different from Sweden, in order to find out whether our findings are valid only in the Swedish context or apply to other contexts as well.

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### Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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**Annex: Part 1**
**Table A1.** Descriptive statistics.

	Min.	Max.	Mean	St.d.
Political knowledge	0	1	0.41	0.30
Years in Sweden	2	73	27.65	14.96
Age	20	81	48.81	14.86
Female	0	1	0.54	0.50
Pre-migration education years	0	25	9.05	5.50
From Eastern country	0	1	0.25	0.44
From Southern country	0	1	0.27	0.45
Refugee	0	1	0.25	0.44
Economic expansion	0	1	0.53	0.50
Weak labor force attachment	0	1	0.14	0.35
Pensioner	0	1	0.15	0.35
Associational activity	0	9	1.07	1.31
Political activity	0	19	3.40	3.16
Political discussion	0	1	0.59	0.29
Political interest	0	1	0.59	0.28
Swedish media news	0	1	0.46	0.21
Internal political efficacy	0	1	0.47	0.18
External political efficacy	0	1	0.46	0.20
Post-migration education years	0	23	4.22	5.05
Swedish language skills (index)	0	10	5.76	1.91
Disposable family income	0	16076	2829	1654

Notes: The sample is weighted to be representative of foreign-born people living in Sweden; N = 666.

**Table A2.** Predicting political knowledge (0–1) among immigrants in Sweden, considering time-related differences and ability, motivational, and opportunity factors.

	Model 1	Model 2
Time in Sweden (log)	0.091*** (0.032)	0.053 (0.034)
Female	−0.064*** (0.022)	−0.091*** (0.022)
Age	−0.006 (0.006)	0.008 (0.005)
Age squared	0.00007 (0.000)	−0.00006 (0.000)
Pre-migration education	0.012*** (0.004)	0.017*** (0.003)
Refugee	0.039 (0.030)	0.038 (0.030)
<i>Origin (West = ref.)</i>		
East	−0.022 (0.031)	−0.017 (0.032)
South	−0.076** (0.032)	−0.069** (0.033)
Economic expansion	0.032 (0.026)	0.036 (0.026)
Post-migration education		0.013*** (0.004)
Swedish language skills		0.025*** (0.007)
Income		
<i>Labor market position</i>		
Weak labor force attachment	0.012 (0.033)	
Pensioner (Employed = ref.)	−0.187*** (0.060)	
Associational activity (log)	−0.003 (0.008)	
Political participation (log)	0.011 (0.019)	
Political discussion	0.012 (0.044)	
Political interest	0.194*** (0.049)	
Swedish news consumption	0.163*** (0.057)	
Internal political efficacy	0.006 (0.075)	
External political efficacy	−0.123* (0.065)	
Constant	0.044 (0.149)	−0.307** (0.133)
<i>N</i>	666	666
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.168	0.142

Notes: \*\*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*  $p < .05$  \*  $p < .10$ ; entries are ordinary least-squares (OLS) estimates with standard errors in parenthesis; the sample is weighted to be representative of people who have immigrated to Sweden; the dependent variable political knowledge runs from 0 (no correct answer) to 1 (correct answers on all three knowledge questions).

## Annex: Part 2

**Types of organizations included in the associational activity index:** ‘Sports club or outdoor activities club’; ‘Youth association (e.g., scouts, youth clubs)’; ‘Environmental organization’; ‘Association for animal rights/protection’; ‘Peace organization’; ‘Humanitarian aid or human rights organization’; ‘Immigrant organization’; ‘Pensioners’ or retired persons’ organization’; ‘Trade union’; ‘Farmer’s organization’; ‘Business or employers’ organization’; ‘Professional organization’; ‘Consumer association’; ‘Parents’ association’; ‘Cultural, musical, dancing or theatre society’; ‘Residents’ housing or neighborhood association’; ‘Religious or church organization’; ‘Women’s organization’; ‘Charity or social-welfare organizations’; ‘Association for medical patients, specific illnesses or addictions’; ‘Association for disabled’; ‘Lodge or service clubs’; ‘Investment club’; ‘Association for car-owners’; ‘Association for war victims, veterans, or ex-servicemen’; and ‘Other hobby club/society’.

**Items included in the political participation index:** Voting in the local elections (2002), and whether one—in trying to bring about improvements or to counteract deterioration in society—during the last 12 months has: Contacted a politician; Contacted an association or an organization; Contacted a civil servant on the national, local or county level; Membership in a political party; Worked in a political party; Worked in a (political) action group; Worked in another organization or association; Worn or displayed a campaign badge or sticker; Signed a petition; Participated in a public demonstration; Participated in a strike; Boycotted certain products; Deliberately bought certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons; Donated money; Raised funds; Contacted or appeared in the media; Contacted a lawyer or judicial body; Participated in illegal protest activities; Participated in political meetings.

**21 world regions, used in additional tests mentioned in the text:** East Africa; West Africa; Central Africa; South Africa; North Africa; West Asia (Middle East); Caucasus and Central Asia; South Asia; Southeast Asian; East Asia; North America; Caribbean; Central America; South America; Australia and New Zealand; Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia; The Nordic countries; Northern and Western Europe (excluding The Nordic countries); Eastern Europe; Balkans (excluding Greece); and Southern Europe.

Article

## A Migration Project in Retrospect: The Case of the Ageing Zero Generation in Emirdağ

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### Abstract

In the twentieth century, Emirdağ (Turkey) witnessed extensive emigration and is now home to the ‘zero generation’: a group of elderly people who stayed behind when their children moved abroad. We investigate how these elderly people, with at least one child who left the country, evaluate their situation as they have grown older. Using fieldwork observations and in-depth interviews, we found that this group mainly associated the migration of their offspring with loneliness and exclusion from society, due to separation from their children and changes in the traditional family culture. The respondents clearly note a shift in the social position of family elders in Turkish culture, from highly respected to being ignored and looked down upon. While this change in status might be experienced by all elderly inhabitants of the region, feelings of distress were reinforced by an emerging discourse which suggests the migration project is a failed enterprise. The constraints their children experience in the immigrant country have led the zero generation to rely less on them and become more dependent on their own resources. Future research on ageing, migration and transnational care should focus on the different ways in which migration systems evolve, and the long-term effects on social inclusion of all generations.

### Keywords

ageing; elderly; migration; Turkey; zero generation

### Issue

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### 1. Introduction

In the twentieth century, Emirdağ, Turkey, experienced extensive emigration (De Haas, 2001; İçduygu & Sert, 2016; Timmerman, Lodewyckx, & Wets, 2009). This led to the creation of a culture of migration, reflecting the overall popularity of emigration within the region (De Haas, 2001; Timmerman, Hemmerchts, & De Clerck, 2014), as well as a change in the ways these now transnational families function and take care of each other (Baldassar & Merla, 2014). The issue of caring is becoming increasingly important, as these emigration patterns also led to the creation of the ‘zero generation’, a term that

has been employed by various scholars in migration research to refer to a group of parents who did not migrate but became part of transnational families when their children moved abroad (e.g., King, Cela, Fokkema, & Vullnetari, 2014; Nedelcu, 2009). The migration trajectories of this zero generation may also be quite variable, as some in this group have followed their children and migrated as well, while others have engaged in transnational mobility, moving back and forth between the two countries (King et al., 2014). As they grow older, members of the zero generation need increasing care, which puts existing care systems under pressure and changes the nature and reciprocity of care (Baldassar & Merla, 2014). Previ-



ous studies introduced the concept of the zero generation as a new unit of analysis to efficiently examine and describe their subject of study. They demonstrated the importance of also including non-migrant parents in migration studies (King et al., 2014; Nedelcu, 2009). Despite these initial explorative studies and the development of important migration systems between Turkey and Western Europe since the 1960s (İçduygu & Sert, 2016), little research has focused on the Turkish zero generation.

The consequences of migration for the distinct life spheres of this zero generation need to be examined in greater depth to fully assess the needs of the elderly living in Turkey who are part of transnational families. Research on the contribution of migration to the health status of this zero generation in transnational families is inconclusive. On the one hand, direct beneficial effects of an adult child's migration on the physical health of elderly parents have been reported, such as better Body Mass Index (BMI), increased mobility, better self-reported health (for Moldova, see Böhme, Persian, & Stöhr, 2015), and a reduction in mortality risk (for Indonesia, see Kuhn, Everett, & Silvey, 2011). On the other hand, there are also negative impacts of a child's emigration on the mental health of elderly parents, such as increased symptoms of depression, loneliness and sadness and even deteriorating physical health (for Mexico, see Antman, 2013).

To better understand these different effects of migration on the health of the elderly zero generation, more attention should be paid to the care arrangements in both the sending and receiving countries. More specifically, by looking at the contribution of migration to care for the elderly zero generation, the concept of the 'circulation of care' is revealing. This concept was defined by Baldassar and Merla (2014) as the:

reciprocal, multidirectional and asymmetrical exchange of care that fluctuates over the life course within transnational family networks subject to the political, economic, cultural and social contexts of both sending and receiving countries. (Baldassar & Merla, 2014, p. 25)

The introduction of this concept is relevant as it allows us to document the unforeseen and unintended consequences migration circuits may have for both migrants and (relatives in their) communities of origin. Thus, when looking at the circulation of care for the zero generation, more research is needed to examine how this varies across specific migration contexts, and how it impacts the prevailing culture of migration, and what type of support is given by children to their parents, and vice versa. For example, in Romania, Zimmer, Codrina and Stoica (2014) found that, in line with common expectations, children who live further away from their parents tend to provide them with more financial assistance for their care, in contrast to those living nearby, who take upon themselves the direct, instrumental care, for which they need to be physically present. Similarly, in Cambo-

dia, Zimmer and Knodel (2013) observed the same mechanism and concluded that the migration of a child usually indicates a positive evolution for a parent, as the monetary support they receive increases, while they do not lose out on other types of support.

We aim to contribute to the literature on the zero generation, transnational care and ageing in the context of migration by focusing on a long-established migration system, which could be said to have seen a decline in recent years. We will demonstrate that even in migration systems with a long history, the establishment of transnational familial bonds that ensure the provision of the necessary care is not an obvious outcome. The results of the research contribute further knowledge on the development of a culture of migration and whether it can be interpreted as a failed or successful enterprise, influencing further chain migration (De Haas, 2001; De Haas, Fokkema, & Fihri, 2015; Timmerman et al., 2009, 2014). First, we will specifically examine the impact on one particular life sphere, namely elderly care, and determine how issues concerning this care also relate to migration issues and discourses. Second, by examining the transnational family care arrangements, or the lack thereof, we will gain greater insight into the actual support parents receive from their migrant children, as well as the reciprocal nature of this support. As such, we move away from the general depiction of transnational care as limited to the impact of an adult child's migration on the financial well-being and health of the zero generation, and recognise that the zero generation is actively involved in negotiating the consequences of their adult children's migration and cannot be merely conceived as passive bystanders (Baldassar & Merla, 2014). We will do so by focusing on Emirdağ, a region in Turkey that has witnessed considerable emigration to Western Europe. In the following sections, we will set out the migration context of this region in greater depth, describe how it gave rise to a particular culture of migration (Timmerman et al., 2009, 2014) and how transnational care is organised.

## 2. Research Context

### 2.1. *The Migration Context in Emirdağ*

Emirdağ is a district in the province of Afyon. The primary town in the district bears the same name and is the scene of our research, together with some smaller villages in its direct vicinity. When comparing all districts in Turkey in terms of socioeconomic situation, development and urbanization, Emirdağ generally falls just below average in rankings (Karcı, Üstübcü, & De Clerck, 2010). The region of Emirdağ is situated on the central Anatolian plateau around 1000 metres above sea level with a semi-arid climate. Agriculture in the region is difficult and industry is relatively underdeveloped, while the service sector, although also limited, is the healthiest economic sector (Karcı et al., 2010; Teule, Vanderwaeren, Mbah-Fongkimeh, & Timmerman, 2012).

The signing of a bilateral agreement between Belgium and Turkey in 1964 sparked the first emigration waves from Emirdağ to Belgium, which has remained the primary destination, although the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden and Denmark have also received tens of thousands of immigrants from the region. In 1974, Belgium stopped accepting Turkish migrants for labour, but migration continued through family reunification and the arrangement of tourist visas, often resulting in the creation of 'transplanted communities', with most members of such communities coming from the same region (Timmerman, 2006, 2008; Van Kerckem, Van de Putte, & Stevens, 2013). Consequently, marriage now remains one of the few means to migrate and enter Europe legally, although overall emigration numbers are decreasing (Timmerman et al., 2009).

This long history of migration, creating a 'tradition' of emigrating to Europe, and the positive image of Europe which was promoted by migrants who returned home temporarily, has created a culture of migration in Emirdağ (Timmerman et al., 2014). Despite the initial positive image of Europe, however, the perceptions about economic opportunities and living conditions in Europe have changed in Emirdağ, with more negative migration aspirations now becoming apparent. This is due to the recruitment of the labour force for manual labour, the low degree or lack of formal education of most migrants, and the difficult working conditions faced by migrants coming from this region. Consequently, migration aspirations in Emirdağ have become even lower than those in a similar city in the same region that has not been affected by migration to the same extent (Timmerman et al., 2014).

Not only have perceptions about migration changed, but also related practices. Before Europe experienced a period of recession, the population of Emirdağ used to triple in the summer as many migrants returned temporarily to visit family and friends. However, due to the recession and the weakening of the third generation's ties with Emirdağ, the number of returnees in summer is decreasing. Some also prefer to spend their holidays on the Mediterranean coast rather than in Emirdağ (Karcı et al., 2010). Similarly, there has also been a general decrease in remittances sent back to Turkey. According to the Balance of Payment Statistics of the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey, remittances started to decline significantly after 1998. In this year, 2.8 million Turkish expats sent USD 8.2 billion back to Turkey. Although the number of migrants further increased to 4.3 million in 2012, remittances dropped to USD 961 million (World Bank, 2015). This decline in the extent of remittances in Turkey should also be seen in conjunction with other developments in Turkey, such as the increase in expenses in other domains, such as in tourism and exports (Içduygu, 2005).

This decrease in remittances might also reflect the changing migration dynamics, which can be related to a number of factors, including: permanent residency in the host country; higher living costs and weaker attach-

ment to the homeland; changes in the socioeconomic status of the immigrants and their descendants; a second and third generation that prefer to invest in their own businesses in the host country rather than their family back in Turkey; the political environment; the economic policies in the host and home countries; dropping interest rates; and a rise in tax on remittances (Betin, Elitok, & Straubhaar, 2012; Içduygu, 2005; Koc & Onan, 2006). Finally, changes in the family situation of the migrant and non-migrant households may influence or stop remittance flows. For example, unmarried migrants without children of their own tend to send more money than those who are married or who have children. Remittances from migrant daughters can also change when they marry, as they generally channel their care and remittances to their husbands' parents (Coles, 2001; King et al., 2014). As to familial changes on the receiving side, the death of a father may end remittances to the mother if this weakens the son's filial piety, or remittances may be redirected to another male household member (Coles, 2001). All these developments concerning emigration from Turkey have an impact on the zero generation in Emirdağ, as we will demonstrate below.

## 2.2. *Transnational Care in Turkey*

The role of the family in providing care to elderly family members is believed to remain important despite migration, and this is a question of utmost importance to the zero generation. In relation to Turkey, only a few studies (Coles, 2001; Şenyürekli & Detzner, 2008; Bilecen, 2013) have examined the provision of care or the arrangements within families with members that have migrated in the recent past. Bilecen (2013) illustrated how protective resources flow between Germany and Turkey, distinguishing between informational exchange, care relations, financial protection and social activities such as having meals, doing sport and having tea. Coles (2001) found that the traditional social hierarchy in rural families changes, specifically concerning care relations, and her study showed how this often leads to feelings that care for the elderly is often not sufficiently valued. Furthermore, in their study of intergenerational relationships between Turkish families in the US and Turkey, Şenyürekli and Detzner (2008) mention the stress felt by the US-based migrants, due to the necessary flexibility required in terms of time, holidays, transportation and financial resources, should they need to travel to Turkey in an emergency. This stress is also seen as one of the drivers of Turkish migrants returning from the US to Turkey or settling in Europe (Şenyürekli & Menjívar, 2012).

If one considers that family and children are the two most important factors that contribute to the happiness of the elderly in Turkey (TurkStat, 2015), it is logical that separation from one's migrant family can lead to feelings of loneliness and eventually to unhappiness and mental disorders (Coles, 2001). Furthermore, changes in future

prospects contribute to poorer mental health of the rural elderly in Turkey. First, being alone late in life is not what they expected in terms of intergenerational relationships and filial responsibilities. Many members of the zero generation grew up in extended households following a patrilocal pattern of residence (for Albania, see King et al., 2014). Second, more so than the reduced social support from migrating daughters, the loss of filial responsibility usually reserved for the adult male children and the change in the power hierarchy between the parents and daughters-in-law who have migrated seems to result in a loss of social status and feelings of isolation, especially in rural female elderly. Parents often go to live with their son and daughter-in-law and must adjust to their household organization and rules (Coles, 2001; for Albanian elderly see also King et al., 2014). Third, tied with health concerns, rural elderly people have constant concerns about the future and the necessary health and aged care they require (Coles, 2001).

### 3. Methodology

Our research aims to provide insight into the effects of a child's migration on the elderly zero generation in Emirdağ, a specific generation created by the mass emigration to Europe between the 1970s and 1990s. We began with participant observations in Emirdağ, covering a period between 1990 to 2018, carried out by one of the authors. We also included field observations, interviews and surveys in the context of the EUMAGINE project in 2011 and a study of the zero generation in the summer of 2015. Over the years, one of the researchers spent some period of time in Emirdağ nearly every year, residing with local families, and following up on the dynamics within the culture of migration that emerged in the region from the 1970s on. This was described in her PhD research and other studies on the migration context in Emirdağ (e.g., Timmerman, 1995, 2006, 2008; Timmerman et al., 2009, 2014). Targeted information for this article was also collected through interviews in 2015 with several very elderly parents whose children left when emigration to Europe gained momentum. We also interviewed key informants who, because of their professional or social status, were well placed to give their perspective on the situation. In total, 14 elderly parents accepted our invitation to talk about their situation in the summer of 2015. We focused on interviewees who lived in the city of Emirdağ or a neighbouring village and had at least one child living abroad who had left for Europe at the height of the emigration era in Emirdağ. Our sample consisted of two people living in the centre of Emirdağ, nine in a neighbouring village and three in residential care. Ten of the respondents were women and four men, with an average age of 81.6.

The zero generation respondents were selected and contacted with the help of key informants who were already acquainted with the issue and who could comment based on their own experience and position in so-

ciety, such as local politicians, businessmen and social workers. Additionally, 14 of these key informants also participated in an interview, in which they were asked about their views on the position of elderly people in contemporary society and the effects of migration on their lives.

The interviews for the research were based on semi-structured questionnaires addressing six central themes: 1) opinions of the respondent about the quality of life in Emirdağ; 2) opinions about the status of elderly people in family life and society in general; 3) opinions about migration; 4) the relationship with family members living abroad; 5) physical and mental health of the elderly respondents; and 6) wishes and needs of the elderly respondents. In the interviews with the key informants, we asked them about their views on the situation of the very elderly zero generation in Emirdağ.

All of the interviews took place in an environment which allowed the interviewees to feel as comfortable as possible, such as their own homes, the retirement home or another place of their choice. All of the interviews were recorded (after agreement), except for two interviews with key figures and one with an elderly woman. The interviewer spoke Turkish, the mother tongue of the interviewees. Afterwards, the interviewer translated the recordings and notes for analysis into Dutch and English.

A thematic approach was chosen to analyse the data. First, two researchers coded and analysed the translated interviews separately in order to ensure objectivity of the results. The researchers in this phase treated the interviews with the elderly zero generation and with the local key informants as two distinct sets and composed two thematic lists, one for each participant group. In a second stage, these thematic lists were compared and brought together in order to contextualise the information received from the zero generation.

### 4. Results

The houses used to be small and inhabited by a lot of people, but now the houses are big and there is no place in them for anybody. (Female key informant, 23, social worker in a retirement home)

#### 4.1. *The Historical Making of the Zero Generation*

Firstly, the research confirmed that the elderly inhabitants of Emirdağ viewed their city as greatly affected by processes of migration throughout its recent history. The first phase was in the 1960s, according to many of the respondents, with the lack of job opportunities in Emirdağ triggering a first wave of emigration from the region. Financial difficulties and poverty as a result of the economic situation in the region were seen as the main reason for emigration from Emirdağ, and many people are said to have left because they had no other choice. These findings are in line with results from the ongoing participant observation study conducted over the years in the

region of Emirdağ (e.g., Timmerman, 1995, 2006, 2008; Timmerman et al., 2009, 2014). Their original intentions were to find a job abroad and to return with their savings later. According to a male key informant, middle-aged, lawyer in Emirdağ:

The people left because they had no money, they were poor, and this led them to migrate to a foreign country. The first of them left in the 1960s, having in mind to save some money and then return. But they didn't. They started a family there, or moved their family there, and the children born there, stayed there because they were used to it. They have their social networks.

Two of the interviewees were themselves among these first economic migrants. However, in contrast to the general perception among the interviewees that these migrants for the most part never returned, these two people did find their way back to Emirdağ. One of them returned because he became ill as a consequence of the unhealthy working conditions, while the other left Europe to care for his ageing mother. A third respondent, 87, living in a retirement home in Emirdağ, described his own migration path within Turkey and stated that he returned because he missed his hometown: "I worked in other cities, like Bursa, for a long time. To be far away from home is also a kind of migration. I missed it too much".

In a second phase, between 1980 and 1990, migration was not only a way to escape poverty, but came to be seen as an opportunity to make good money quickly, and many young people left in search of wealth and riches (Timmerman et al., 2009). It is this migration wave in which many children of the respondents took part. "If they had stayed here, they would have become hard workers", says a female respondent, 70, currently living in a village of Emirdağ. She continues: "They already used to work hard and right when things began to sort themselves out, Europe became more interesting to many, including to my children".

As a consequence of the historical importance of migration in the narratives of all of the respondents, all of the elderly men and women interviewed could be rightly said to exemplify what has been described as the zero generation. Their life histories are invariably connected with the migration projects of their fellow community members, friends, family and direct offspring, and have shaped their views on migration and on life in general. Looking back on their own lives and the migration project of their children, the interviewees referred to a number of negative consequences of migration, which could broadly be summarised as: the consequences for the family left behind (i.e., for the elderly people themselves), the consequences for the children who migrated, and the consequences of migration in Emirdağ in general.

#### *4.2. The Migration Project of their Children in Retrospect: The Consequences for the Zero Generation*

The most regularly occurring consequence mentioned by the interviewees in relation to themselves was the inevitable feelings of loneliness in the long periods that their children were away, and that they must live on their own: "No, I have nothing to complain about", says a male respondent, 83, living on his own in the village of Karacalar to the southeast of Emirdağ. "The only thing that makes things hard is the constant feeling of loneliness". A female respondent, 89, living on her own in the centre of Emirdağ, elaborates:

It feels very bad to stay behind alone, I am sad. I find it difficult when my daughter-in-law returns home in the evening, while she spends the whole day here. You are old and you are afraid of dying alone. I cannot take care of myself anymore. If I fell, I would not be able to get up anymore. Loneliness is very bad.

Some respondents in this context even referred to extreme examples of their situation. One of them described how he sits the whole day looking at the door, waiting for someone to pay him a visit. Another woman spends the whole day next to the phone, waiting for one of the sporadic phone calls from her children, which would leave her beaming with joy. Others recalled how some elderly people they knew had died alone and were found in their homes only days later. A male respondent, 86, living on his own in the village of Suvermez to the east of Emirdağ, said:

We married off one of our daughters to a boy from there [Europe]. Our son did not like it here, so he married someone from there as well and left. They do not get along well, however. My son works there now. It was difficult to let them go. My daughter divorced her husband because they did not get along well either. I lost my wife in 2009, she suffered from a brain tumour. I asked my neighbours to call me from time to time, so they may find me when I am dead.

Regardless of the number of children or their place of residence, it was mainly the overall feeling of being left alone and not having someone nearby to help them with their daily needs and care that was most often mentioned by the respondents. According to our findings, the situation of this zero generation was aggravated by their perception that not only their children had deserted them, but also that they had nobody at all to take care of them. "I have heart problems", explains a female respondent, 90, living on her own in the village of Güneysaray to the west of Emirdağ:

They took me by ambulance to Afyon. My son could not make it, so I went there on my own. In one month,

I had to go to Afyon four times. I am ill, but still I do everything myself. Nobody comes knocking on your door asking how things are. I sit here on the balcony for the whole day, staring outside. I pay someone to do the tasks I cannot do myself anymore.

Connected to this are feelings of sadness, longing and disappointment. Most elderly people are disappointed about the outcome of the investments they made on behalf of their children. They do not think their children are grateful. “I did everything for my children, but now I see how it has all been for nothing” says another female respondent, 82, living on her own in the village of Karacalar to the southeast of Emirdağ: “I sit here all by myself. And I am not the only one, a lot of people are dissatisfied with their children”.

A second change that the respondents noted as a consequence of the migration of their children was in their financial situation. They observed that remittances from their children strongly declined around 1998 (see İçduygu, 2005; TurkStat, 2015). A significant number of the parents had once received money from their children, but now their children had too many financial difficulties themselves (see also Bettin et al., 2012). Others said that, in general, they did not receive anything anymore from their children, because they are entitled to a state pension. Our results are in line with the findings of Koc and Onan (2006), who found that elderly people in the country of origin do not receive financial help from their family abroad. “They [the children] say they have financial difficulties themselves and therefore they do not send me anything. They have never sent me money” says a female respondent, 75, from her home in the centre of Emirdağ. “They [the children] say that the retirement pension I get suffices”, says another male respondent, 86, living on his own in the village of Suvermez: “They have their own obligations and a family for which they are responsible, so I do not expect anything from them”.

Initially, both migration and remittances are seen as risk-spreading and co-insurance livelihood strategies by households and families (De Haas, 2007; De Haas et al., 2015). However, especially according to the elderly in our sample—who supported their children in their migration project, not only to secure them a better living, but also to ensure that they would have sufficient resources to be taken care of as they aged—their efforts have not paid off. From this migration perspective, less support was expected from other public or community-based support systems. Apart from the decline in remittances, the respondents indicated that their financial situation had deteriorated because when their children left they were left on their own financially. All of the elderly respondents belonged to the lower social class and most of them were not entitled to receive a retirement pay out. The women, in particular, had a hard time securing sufficient financial means to survive. Some of them received a small amount of financial support from the state after their husbands had passed away, but this was

only the case for legally married women, and not for those who married their husbands as a second wife under religious law (see also Basara, Mollahaliloglu, Pulgat, & Kavuncubasi, 2014). The elderly respondents who did not receive a pension said they survived on gifts, religious financial help, and earnings from small jobs. A female respondent, 82, living on her own in the village of Karacalar to the southeast of Emirdağ, notes:

Every two months I receive 500 lira [approximately EUR 156 or USD 177 at the time of writing] because I am a widow. I try to manage. It is not enough, but I try to manage anyway. I pay the electricity and water bills with it.

We can conclude that the feelings of loneliness and disappointment are related to the lack of overall care that these elderly people receive and the inability—in terms of financial means—to find care elsewhere as an alternative to the lack of familial emotional, practical and financial support. Adding to the feelings of disappointment is the feeling that the migration of their offspring to Europe was a failure rather than a success. However, this does not apply to offspring who went to live in Turkey’s big cities, because they are considered to be still ‘at home’ and taking part in the success story of the economic revival occurring at the time of the interviews.

#### *4.3. Consequences of Migration on Emirdağ*

The results of the research reveal that in the opinion of these elderly zero generation interviewees whose children left at a time when emigration from Emirdağ was at its height, migration did not bring their children economic relief. In contrast, most respondents noted how very hard it is to survive financially in Europe. In their opinion, this also negatively affected family ties, as they lacked the means to travel and visit one another. In addition, some respondents even said that the quality of life in Europe is worse than in Turkey. From a male respondent, 86, who lives on his own in the village of Suvermez to the east of Emirdağ:

Those who now return [to Turkey] for a holiday, including my son, say that Europe is over. There is a crisis going on and money flows away quickly. It is impossible to save anything, you should not imagine anything like that. My son says from time to time that he regrets having left [Turkey].

A logical consequence related to the phenomenon of the zero generation is the demographic ageing of the population of Emirdağ. According to some respondents, a decrease in production due to the ageing of the population resulted in an increase in living costs, which are much higher than in other small Turkish towns. Moreover, the surrounding villages also appear to have become less populated than before, due to the migration of



the young people to larger Turkish cities and to Europe, as was also demonstrated in previous research (İçduygu & Sert, 2016). Several of the key informants stated that in a few years, when the older generation has passed away, these villages will be completely empty and disappear. In some villages this is already the reality, with several deserted over the last decades (İçduygu & Sert, 2016).

In addition to demographic and economic changes, the respondents observed a general change in moral values. According to some respondents, their family in Europe had lost their cultural identity, their religion and, most importantly, their sense of the importance of family values and connections. One example of this was their view on marriage. While migration to Europe through marriage to a European citizen was favourably judged in the past, the key informants now generally considered it as disruptive of traditional family life, arguably because many of these marriages ended in divorce (see also Timmerman et al., 2014).

Our findings indicate that all the respondents shared a similar view in the final evaluation of the migration project of their children: it has failed. For them, the negative consequences, such as loneliness, financial difficulties both in Europe and Turkey, and a change in family values, were more than enough to condemn migration as a useless aspiration. Some local informants even proposed that the Turkish state should organise the return of all those who had once left:

I think that the state should promote their return by facilitating a couple of things for the people who want to start a business here. It would also create more jobs for the people from here and they would not be tempted to leave anymore.

The respondents indicated that their evaluation of migration was shared by the whole community and that the negative connotation which migration had now acquired, had brought about a visible change in migration processes. For example, they observed that fewer marriages occurred in the summer months, which is generally the time when migrants return to marry their European fiancés. Also, they see more young people consciously deciding to leave for the larger cities of Turkey rather than Europe.

The most important change, however, was the visible emergence of the phenomenon of return migration. Generally, people now find that the situation in Europe has deteriorated, with the financial crisis also increasing discrimination, and that conditions in Turkey have improved. A key informant states:

Turkey is doing economically much better nowadays, and people stay here. There is also an evolution in social security: people get extra grants for their children, grants to start a business....This surely convinces people to start a business here.

Nevertheless, those who are returning are said to be wealthy and old, while the younger people who return more often move to the larger cities in Turkey rather than back to Emirdağ. “The reason why they return to cities other than Emirdağ is to avoid people talking about their failures, about the fact that they did not succeed”, says a key informant: “That is what I, from my experience, think is happening”.

Only one respondent said that he knew someone who, after returning to Turkey, moved back to Europe again, because his family could not get used to the country.

## 5. Conclusion

The present study built on the framework of care circulation (Baldassar & Merla, 2014) and the culture of migration (De Haas, 2001; Timmerman et al., 2009, 2014), with the aim of understanding how ageing and transnational care is perceived by the zero generation in Emirdağ, a region that witnessed massive emigration over the last five decades, mainly by low skilled people who emigrated in the context of family reunification (Timmerman et al., 2014). Our study found that the now very elderly zero generation created between the 1970s and 1990s in Emirdağ, feel rather isolated from society, are disappointed by the lack of return for their investment in their children’s migration project, and now find themselves in a particularly vulnerable life stage in which they need additional care. The respondents often referred to a shift in the social position of family elders in Turkish culture, from being highly respected to now being ignored and looked down upon. While this change in status might be experienced by all of the elderly inhabitants of the region, the isolation of this very elderly zero generation in particular is exacerbated by the absence of their children due to emigration. The reciprocity of care over their life span is perceived to be unbalanced and not worth the investment, leading them to believe that migration is a failed enterprise.

The latter reflects a changing culture of migration (De Haas, 2001; Timmerman et al., 2014). In the 1990s, there was a positive culture of migration, and emigration was considered a good investment in the future, resulting in chain migration to Europe (Timmerman, 2008). However, today, emigration has a negative connotation, which is reflected in a decrease in numbers of emigrants to Europe from Emirdağ (Timmerman et al., 2014). Moreover, the elderly generation feels that it has lost its sons and daughters, who are now unable to return because of financial constraints. The financial hardships of their children deprive the elderly zero generation of any monetary support, making them dependent on small state pensions, gifts and sometimes money received from selling part of their land or property.

The lack of compensatory care for these elderly people—due to financial constraints—further highlights the lack of support from their children. This case study

shows that there are very important structural factors involved, related to institutional and familial care arrangements, the financially precarious situation of both the non-migrants in the sending countries due to ageing, and migrants with little formal education taking jobs in precarious working conditions and having to take care of their new families in the immigrant countries. Additionally, the specific migration context in Emirdağ—in which massive emigration has completely changed the demographic composition of the community—has meant that it has not been able to compensate for the loss of a generation of children, who were assumed would take care and provide for the elderly within this society and traditional care system. The combination of these factors has led to a change in the culture of migration and left the zero generation disappointed. The distorted circulation of care has impacted the migration dynamics and the prevailing culture of migration in Emirdağ unequivocally and unintentionally, and lays bare the lack of structural care provision for elderly in this region.

Finally, this study has shown that there is a gap between the demand for care and care provision in Emirdağ. While the interviewees related their lack of care and the direct consequences of this, such as loneliness and health problems, to the downsides of their children's migration (physical absence of relatives, financial difficulties), previous studies on elderly care in Turkey highlight other factors that are also at play here. For example, it has been argued that feelings of loneliness among elderly people in Turkey are more prevalent than in other countries due to a general transition in family structure to nuclear families and inadequate services (Aylaz, Aktürk, Erci, Öztürk, & Aslan, 2012, p. 551). It is important that national and international policies aimed at improving elderly people's standards of living in Turkey take into account this full array of socio-political conditions, including the less obvious factor of migration, as we argue here. An interesting comparison can also be drawn with research on elderly care in other Mediterranean countries. In Spain and Italy, for example, a similarly high demand for elderly care, attributed to population ageing and the entrance of women into the formal labour market, has had a different effect on migration patterns: it has stimulated the immigration of foreign, mostly female, carers to work in the domestic sector as a replacement for family care (Bettio, Simonazzi, & Villa, 2006; León, 2010).

As a recommendation for both future research and policy consideration, we would like to propose here that an international comparison might prove insightful in relation to the question of why similar responses to the demand for elderly care are not yet emerging in Turkey, and on the intricate relationship between elderly care and migration. Additionally, as a contribution to theory on transnational care and the zero generation, greater attention should be paid to the way in which financial care and direct, instrumental care are interlinked, as these forms of care are usually treated separately. It would also be of value to understand how this relationship af-

fects or even disrupts the prevailing care arrangements for the elderly and family ties (Zimmer, Codrina, & Stolica, 2014; Zimmer & Knodel, 2013). We found that for the very elderly zero generation of Emirdağ and their migrant offspring, the latter cannot make up for their failure to provide financially, as due to changing demographics, there are few possibilities available to provide instrumental care.

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### Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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Article

## Integration Journey: The Social Mobility Trajectory of Ethnic Minority Groups in Britain

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### Abstract

This article studies the processes of social mobility by the main ethno-generational groups in Britain. We compare the origin-education-destination (OED) links between the first- and second-generation ethnic minority groups with those of whites, with a particular focus on whether the second generation are getting closer to whites than do the first generation in the links, hence becoming increasingly integrated into the socio-economic lives of British society. Using data from the UK Household Longitudinal Study and adopting structural equation modelling (SEM) methods, we find strong evidence of first-generation setback, and some signs of second-generation catch-up. Indians and Chinese are making progress, but the two black groups and Pakistanis/Bangladeshis are lagging behind. The analysis shows persisting ethnic disadvantages in the labour market in spite of their high levels of educational achievement, and it also shows an emerging order of ethnic hierarchy, running from Indian, Chinese, black Caribbean, Pakistani/Bangladeshi to black African groups.

### Keywords

ethnicity; generation; minorities; social mobility; UK

### Issue

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### 1. Introduction

One of the most important features in contemporary British sociology is the ongoing debate on the patterns and trends of social mobility. Is mobility rising, declining or showing a trendless fluctuation? High levels of social mobility, in terms of both absolute and relative rates and in the downward as well as the upward directions, are usually taken as evidence of a vibrant and meritocratic society whilst low levels of mobility are emblematic of a rigid and exclusive society (Goldthorpe, 2013; Payne, 2017; Vandecasteele, 2016).

Social mobility research has consistently shown that there are marked class differences in educational attainment, occupational achievement and labour market earnings in British society. While there is little disagreement about this overall conclusion, there are different views about how social divisions are changing

over time. In the numerous studies conducted over three decades, Goldthorpe and his colleagues (see, for example, Goldthorpe, Llewellyn, & Payne, 1987; Goldthorpe & Mills, 2008) hold that there is little change in mobility in British society, in terms of either absolute or relative rates. A somewhat more optimistic account is shown in findings by another group of researchers (Devine & Li, 2013; Heath & Payne, 2000; Lambert, Prandy, & Bottero, 2007; Li & Devine, 2011, 2014; Li & Heath, 2016). While details differ, a common feature in these studies is the evidence they provide on signs of social progress, as exhibited by a small but significant rise in relative mobility rates. A third view is held by economists, arguing that social mobility is declining in Britain (Blanden, Goodman, Gregg, & Machin, 2004).

While there are heated debates, a closer look would reveal greater commonality than difference. Among sociologists, the main issue is whether there are signs of



weakening origin-destination associations. Goldthorpe's main argument is that mobility trends tend to show trendless fluctuations. But he and Mills also show rising relative mobility in the analysis of 'complete tables', namely, between male origins and conjugal households (Goldthorpe & Mills, 2008, fig. 9). This kind of growing, although limited, openness is also found in Breen, Luijkx, Müller and Pollak's (2009) analysis of educational mobility and in Li and Heath's (2016) study of social mobility (Li & Heath, 2016, fig. 3, panel a). Secondly, it is noted that the differences between sociologists and economists are more methodological than substantive in nature: the former use the occupation-based measure and the latter use the income/earnings-based measure in examining trends of intergenerational mobility. When the two measures are directly compared, the substantive findings are not much different (Erikson & Goldthorpe, 2010). Furthermore, by using Mosteller's (1968) iterative adjustment method, Goldthorpe showed that 'analyses based on five-class mobility tables...capture a *stronger* intergenerational association than do quintile family income/earnings tables' (Goldthorpe, 2013, p. 439, emphasis in the original). Thus, in spite of the debates among exponents of the three theses, the overwhelming evidence points to the same basic conclusion, that is, while there are profound inequalities in British society, class mobility might be on the increase although directions of income mobility are less certain.

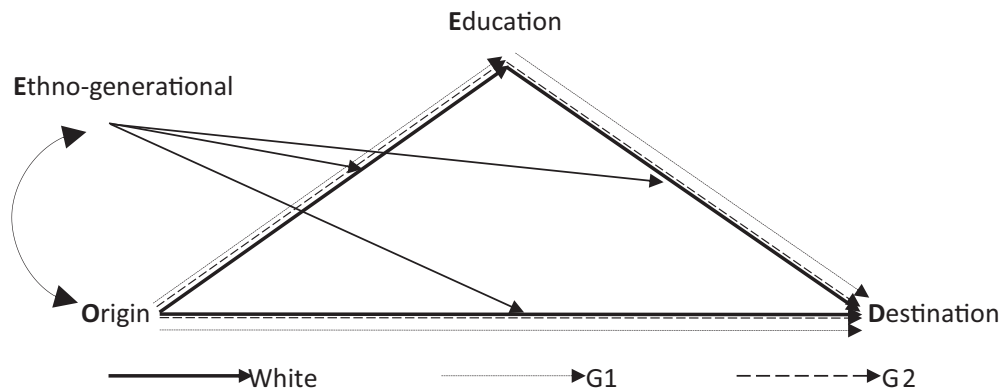
The possibility of a loosening social (class) structure calls for explanation. Goldthorpe and Mills (2008) attribute this to the rising participation rates of women in the labour market who compete with men for more advantaged positions. Breen et al. (2009) suggest that the welfare system adopted since the Second World War coupled with greater provision of educational opportunities may have reduced the class inequality in educational attainment in the developed countries although Sturgis and Buscha (2015) argue that the impact of educational expansion on social fluidity was both indirect and weak. Li and Heath (2016) suggest that the rising composition of ethnic minority members in the population may be an important contributing factor if the minorities do not follow the same pattern of social reproduction as do the majority group.

The addition of ethnicity as a separate dimension to mobility research poses a new challenge to the already complicated analysis but offers a new perspective. Do immigrants and their children in Britain have the same opportunities as do the majority group? Do they suffer greater downward mobility and experience a 'perverse openness' (Hout, 1984, p. 1393)? Earlier research tends to ignore the ethnic dimension due to insufficient ethnic minority samples in the datasets, such as the National Child Development Study (NCDS) of 1958 and the British Cohort Study (BCS) of 1970, the sources used by Blanden et al. (2004), and by Goldthorpe and his colleagues mentioned above. In recent years, more attention is being paid to ethnic social mobility. For in-

stance, Platt (2005) examined the mobility profiles of children of black Caribbean and Indian heritages who were aged 8 to 15 in 1971 using the Longitudinal Study with linked records from the censuses of population in England and Wales from 1971 to 1991, and she found that black Caribbean and Indian families were less able than whites to transmit resources to their offspring. Heath and McMahon (2005) compared the mobility profiles of Irish, black Caribbeans, Indians and Pakistanis with white British using data from the General Household Survey (GHS) for the years 1985–1992. They found that 'class origins operated in much the same way among ethnic minorities as they did among British-born whites' (Heath & McMahon, 2005, p. 411). More recently, Li and Heath (2016) used data from the GHS, the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) and the UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS) to look at the mobility trajectories of the main ethnic minority groups in Britain over four decades from the 1980s to the 2010s. They found that black Africans and Pakistanis/Bangladeshis faced even greater disadvantages than Platt (2005) found for black Caribbeans and Indians. These and other studies in this regard have provided significant insights to the origin-destination associations of the ethnic minorities in Britain. Yet they do not show how education mediates the origin-destination association, whether the role is similar for ethnic minorities as for whites, or whether the impact is stronger for the second than for the first generation. Given this, the present study seeks to make a contribution to scholarship in this regard by examining the ethno-generational differences in social mobility processes in contemporary UK society, namely, how the origin-destination association is mediated via education.

Addressing issues of ethnic mobility processes is arguably more difficult than that on the general population. Firstly, there is the distinction between migration and ethnicity to be made and, secondly, there is the multiplicity issue to consider as ethnic minority groups are frequently found to be more different from one another than they are as a whole from the white majority. Thus, addressing issues of ethnic integration requires investigation of how the 'fates' of different groupings change over time and/or across generations in terms of the interplay between family origin, educational attainment and labour-market (occupational) destination.

Figure 1 suggests a framework of analysis for ethno-generational social mobility in terms of origin, education and destination (OED) relations. The solid thick line represents the majority group (white British in the present case), the thin line represents the first-generation, and the dashed line represents the second-generation, ethnic minority groups. In the origin-education (OE) relations, the lines for the first- and the second-generation groups are set close to each other and to that of whites on the assumption that the educational attainment of the two generations and of whites would be similarly affected by family origins: parents tend to use whatever socio-economic resources at their command to



**Figure 1.** The OED moderated by ethno-generational status. Notes: First generation (G1) refers to ethnic minority respondents who were foreign born and who arrived in the UK at age 13 or older. Second generation (G2) refers to those who were UK born or who arrived in the UK by age 12. The lines for the first and the second generation ethnic minorities are placed outside of those for whites for convenience but the distances between the G1 and G2 lines with the white lines indicate the degree of integration.

help with their children’s schooling and it is class, rather than ethnicity or nativity, that will play a predominant role in this regard. The extent to which this assumption will be borne out in reality is an empirical matter depending on the interplay between micro-level decision-making and macro-level economic conditions and employer preferences (for a discussion see Li, 2018). For the ED and OD relations, there is reason to believe that the two generations will have quite different trajectories, with the first generation to face more disadvantages in translating their educational qualifications into occupational achievement but the second to follow the majority group more closely. Immigrants tend to have overseas qualifications unrecognised by British employers, their parental resources are less functional in helping them obtain good jobs and, coming from developing countries, their parental resources are not expected to bear resemblance with those of whites. Overall, the immigrant generation are expected to have weaker associations in the ED and the OD relations than do the majority group, as is implied by the wider gaps between the first-generation and the white lines than between the second-generation and the white lines.

However, it can be expected that the first-generation setbacks will be largely avoided by the second generation who were born in the country or who arrived as children, and are thus raised and educated in the UK. Unlike their parental generation who might have a ‘sojourner’ orientation to their stay in Britain and may cherish the hope of returning to their country of origin, the second generation have a different orientation. For them, the UK is their country, English is their mother tongue, and British education is their passport to labour market achievement. Furthermore, unlike their parental generation whose migration process has disrupted their social networks with friendship ties left behind in the country of origin, the second generation will make friends with school mates, neighbours and others in the social circles just like their majority peers, with both bonding and bridging social

capital to help them with their work and personal lives. In short, the human-social-economic capital of the second generation is expected to yield the essentially same returns to their occupational attainment as it does for whites. Even if there might be lingering disadvantages against the second generation, these can be expected to be negligible as compared with those faced by the first generation (Heath & Li, 2008). Given these and other factors in favour of the second vis-à-vis the first generation, we may expect the second-generation to resemble whites in their educational and occupational attainment, or at least have ED and OD links much closer to whites’ than to those of the first generation co-ethnics, as shown in the framework of Figure 1.

The distinction made in the foregoing discussion between the first and the second generation makes conceptual sense, but existing studies do not usually make such differentiations. On the whole, existing research suggests that ethnic minorities suffer marked disadvantages relative to whites, in terms of higher rates of unemployment, especially during recession years (also called ‘hyper-cyclical unemployment’ in the relevant literature), lower class positions and lower levels of earnings (Berthoud & Blekesaune, 2006; Heath & Li, 2008; Li, 2010, 2018; Li & Heath, 2008, 2010, in press; NEP, 2007). Such studies also show considerable inter-ethnic differences, which exhibit themselves in a more salient manner than those that exist between ethnic minorities as a whole and whites. Some ethnic groups, such as those of black and Pakistani/Bangladeshi heritages, are usually found to face greater difficulties than do other groups. Given this, we need to differentiate both the main ethnic minority groups and the generational statuses.

As mobility research is primarily concerned with the strength of association between origins and destinations, an issue that is of central importance for analysing ethnic social mobility is whether ethnic minorities, the migrant generation in particular, have lower origin statuses than do the majority group in the destination country,

white British in our case. As immigrants tend to come from poorer countries, we may expect them to have lower parental classes and lower educational qualifications than do whites. Existing research has, however, suggested that most immigrant groups in the UK were ‘positively selected’ not only as compared with their co-ethnics who have stayed in the origin countries but also with the mainstream population. This may sound surprising at first sight, but a moment’s reflection would suggest this as an inevitable outcome of the raised thresholds of entry in the wave of the Race Relations Acts since the 1960s (Borjas, 1992; Feliciano & Lanuza, 2017; Heath & Brinbaum, 2014; Ichou, 2014; Li & Heath, 2008). But the labour market setbacks they typically face would put them into lower class positions and poorer economic situations (Li, 2018), which would result in a lower starting point for the second generation. In such circumstances, the second generation may not follow white children in educational and occupational attainment. Empirical findings in this regard are inconclusive. Some studies have found the second generation faring better in education than do whites (Lessard-Phillips & Li, 2017; Li, 2018), similarly well in occupational attainment (Cheung & Heath, 2007) but worse in avoidance of unemployment (Li & Heath, 2008, 2016). An explanation for the second-generational educational success is provided in terms of ‘reinvigorated aspiration’ (Li, 2018), that is, parental depressed class would push them to redoubled efforts leading to higher levels of educational attainment as a preemptive strategy against the possible discrimination in the labour market. Overall, while there has been considerable research on separate OE, ED and OD links, no analysis is currently available that addresses the three links simultaneously for the ethno-generational groups in contemporary British society.

Summarising the discussion above, we wish to address the following questions in the present study:

- Do class origins exert the same influences on the educational and occupational attainment of the ethno-generational groups as for the white majority in Britain?
- Do the second generation experience greater similarity to whites than do the first generation in educational and occupational attainment? and
- Do men and women of ethnic minority backgrounds have similar experiences to their white peers in the OED trajectories?

## 2. Data and Methods

To address these questions, we use data from the first three waves of the UKHLS which has a large general population sample and an ethnic boost sample, enabling us

to differentiate detailed ethno-generational groups, and which also contains rich information on parental socio-economic position and respondents’ own educational and occupational attainment. The data allow us to disaggregate the social mobility trajectories of different ethno-generational and gender groups simultaneously, and to test whether processes of social reproduction operate for the majority and for different ethno-generational minority groups in a similar fashion. The survey started in 2009 and is the successor to the BHPS. From Wave 2 onwards, the BHPS respondents were ‘rolled’ into the UKLHS and their information is included in this analysis.<sup>1</sup>

For origin and destination, we adopt both class and status approaches. With regard to the former, we coded parental and respondent’s class using the seven-category National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) schema: (1) higher salariat (higher-grade professionals and managers), (2) lower salariat (lower-grade professionals and managers), (3) intermediate (clerical and other routine non-manual workers of higher grades), (4) small employer and own account (excluding professionals), (5) lower supervisory and technical workers, (6) semi-routine, (7) routine workers. Including mother’s class is important given recent research evidence (Beller, 2009; Li & Devine, 2011). For parental class, we followed a variant of the dominance approach (Erikson, 1984) which takes the higher of father’s or mother’s class position if both parents’ class information is available (which is usually father’s position), or the non-missing parent’s class position if only one parent’s occupational information is available. The class measure is used in addressing issues of class advancement or decline by the ethno-generational groups.

As for socio-economic status, we used information on both parents’ and respondents’ job titles and turned them into standard International Socio-Economic Index (ISEI) scores following the conversion programme designed by Ganzeboom, De Graaf and Treiman (1992). With regard to parental socio-economic status scores, we first coded father’s and mother’s ISEIs and then used the Euclidian method<sup>2</sup> to derive the family status, which can more accurately capture the advantages and disadvantages of different types of family, such as dual- over single- career families, in terms of the socio-economic-cultural resources in their possession. For instance, the resources of one family where both parents were in senior (professional or managerial) salariat positions would be much greater than those of another family where one parent was in a senior salariat position but the other was a cleaner or shop assistant or non-employed, or where it was a single-parent family with, say, the mother working as a nurse. Using the dominance class approach would yield the same level of family class but with the Euclidian approach, the differences between them can be brought

<sup>1</sup> The response rates are high, at around 80% for the general population sample and 70% for the ethnic minority boost sample; see UK Data (n.d.).

<sup>2</sup> Using the Euclidian method, the parental socio-economic status is defined as the square root of the sum of the squares on each parent’s ISEIs when both parents’ scores are available ( $\sqrt{\text{father's ISEI}^2 + \text{mother's ISEI}^2}$ ) or the available score for one parent. As black Caribbean women are more likely to form single-parent households in Britain and as they are also frequently found to work as nurses in the NHS, using the dominance class approach would inflate the family resources they have relative to dual-career high-salariat families.

into much sharper relief. The parental and respondent's status scores are used in assessing the OED relations via the structural equation modelling (SEM) method.

With regard to ethnicity, we follow the standard practice of ethnic studies in Britain and include white, black Caribbean, black African, Indian, Pakistani/Bangladeshi, Chinese, and 'Other'. As the main purpose in the article is to assess the ethnic integration, whites are used as the reference group for whom no generational divisions are further differentiated. Lessard-Phillips and Li (2017, p. 49) differentiated six generational groupings for white British and white Irish each, and five generational groupings for white Other, in their study of educational attainment; and Li and Heath (2008, 2010, 2018) also differentiated different white groupings (although not generational ones) in their study of long-term risks of unemployment, access to salariat positions and labour-market earnings, and found increasing convergence among the three groupings. Given this, whites in all generations are used as one broad group. The 'Other' group in our ethnicity variable is very diverse in composition, and we do not differentiate generations for them either. As for generational status, we define the first generation as those born outside the UK and arriving at age 13 or older, and the second generations as those born in the UK or arriving by age 12 on the grounds that, unlike the former, the latter would have received most (or all) of their education in Britain, and would acquire the same kind of human capital and have fluent English as whites. Higher generations are included in the second for each of the main ethnic minority groups (for detailed information on ethnic generations, see Lessard-Phillips & Li, 2017). It is noted here that the first generation are not necessarily the parents of the second generation. Finally, in this regard, we need to bear in mind that while some ethnic groups tend to have stronger community ties which may foster higher levels of 'ethnic capital' conducive to children's educational attainment (Modood, 2004), the bonding ties may also place a particular emphasis on tradition and culture leaving a negative impact on female participation in the labour market (Portes, 1998). Given the complex interplay between ethno-generational and gender divisions, we conduct the analyses for men and women separately. We confine our study to respondents aged 16 to 65 for men and 16 to 63 for women. The sample sizes for the seven ethnic groups are 36,503, 891, 1,140, 1,722, 1,895, 268 and 1,913 respectively.

Our main concern with the ethno-generational social mobility in Britain includes two sub-themes: net social mobility between parents' and respondents' class positions, and origin-destination associations as mediated by education. To address the first issue, we use the net dissimilarity index (NDI) designed by Lieberman (1975; for application in mobility research see also Li & Heath, 2016):

The NDI is defined as  $ND_{xy} = \text{pr}(X > Y) - \text{pr}(Y > X)$  and further defined as

$$\sum_{i=2}^n x_i \left( \sum_{j=1}^{n-i-1} y_j \right) - \sum_{i=2}^n y_i \left( \sum_{j=1}^{n-i-1} x_j \right)$$

where, in our case,  $X$  indicates the parental class position and  $Y$  that of the respondent. It is noted here that we reversed the class order in calculating the NDI with 1 referring to the routine manual and 7 to the higher salariat.

Mobility researchers tend to use the dissimilarity index (DI) which shows the percentage of cases that would have to be reallocated to make the two distributions identical as a measure of the overall difference between two distributions. Yet the DI is insensitive to ordering and does not provide any directional statement about the differences between father's and respondent's classes. The NDI, however, does provide a directional statement about class decline or advancement, with a positive value indicating net upward, and a negative value indicating net downward, mobility. The range of the NDI is from  $-1$  to  $1$  in Lieberman's original article but is here rescaled to range from  $-100$  to  $100$  so that the scales could be understood akin to percentage-point differences. To address the second issue we use SEM with parental and respondent's ISEI scores to represent origin and destination status positions. For education, we follow Duncan (1968, p. 92) in using levels rather than years of education and we code an eight-way variable: (1) no formal education, (2) primary, (3) GCSE (O-Level) or equivalent, (4) incomplete A-Level, (5) A-Level or equivalent, (6) sub-degree, (7) first degree and (8) higher degree (masters or PhDs).

### 3. Results

We begin by looking at class and educational distributions by ethnic groups and by gender. For class, we also look at advancement or decline as shown in the NDI in Table 1 based on parents' and respondents' seven-class distributions. As the presentation of all these distributions would take too much space, we only show the proportions of parents and respondents in salariat positions. Again, for brevity, we only show the proportions with (first or higher) degree qualifications by respondents. The data on degree-level education are presented here to give an indication of possible mechanism of class decline or advancement. The majority group (white) are used as the notional reference group in this table even though only univariate rather than multivariate analysis is conducted.

The data in Table 1 show two main features: first-generation class decline, and second-generation catch-up. Both features are displayed within the overall structure of class rigidity and ethnic disadvantage of British society. The features can be better grasped by looking at the figures for whites for whom 34% of the parents, 39% of male and 36% of female respondents are in salariat positions, and 23% have degree levels of education. With these as benchmark figures, we find a salient

**Table 1.** Parental and respondents' salariat positions (%), net difference index (NDI) for intergenerational class advancement, and respondents' degree-level education (%) by ethnicity, generation and gender (N = 44,332). Source: The UKHLS waves 1–3.

	(% salariat							
	Parents		Respondents		NDI on class advancement		(% degree <sup>+</sup>	
	1st gen	2nd gen	1st gen	2nd gen	1st gen	2nd gen	1st gen	2nd gen
<b>Men</b>								
White	—	34	—	39	—	1.0	—	23
B Caribbean	23	34	27	35	-15.1	-7.8	21	18
B African	47	57	35	38	-27.7	-22.5	43	31
Indian	40	30	43	53	-10.1	30.1	53	39
Pak/Ban	34	14	24	31	-24.5	19.8	37	26
Chinese	55	24	51	45	-11.7	3.7	65	47
Other	39	46	34	42	-20.3	-11.8	43	28
<b>Women</b>								
White	—	34	—	36	—	-0.3	—	23
B Caribbean	21	30	30	39	1.8	16.7	20	27
B African	46	51	29	31	-33.9	-22.5	31	34
Indian	41	26	33	39	-18.1	22.5	41	32
Pak/Ban	29	15	28	26	-14.2	25.7	19	22
Chinese	58	22	51	42	-21.6	8.5	56	38
Other	40	41	38	37	-14.7	-4.4	38	25

Notes: 1st and 2nd gen refer to first and second generations. For analysis of the NDI, the seven-class schema for parents and respondents is used for each of the ethnic minority groups by generation and by gender. Weighted analysis for this and all other analyses in this study.

feature of first-generation 'positive selection' followed by subsequent class decline, and second-generation educational achievement. The term 'positive selection' is usually used to refer to the socio-economic resources of movers relative to stayers in the origin country, not to the majority group in the destination countries. Most immigrants to the UK come from developing countries and one might expect them to have poor family class and low education. Yet, the data on proportions of parental salariat and own degree-level education of our first-generation respondents suggest that they are not only highly positively selected relative to their compatriots who stayed in the origin countries but also compare well with the majority group in the UK. We do not, of course, have direct evidence on parental and own resources for stayers in all the source countries from which our first-generation respondents come, but we do have evidence on China which renders strong support to the intuitive thinking.<sup>3</sup> Most ethno-generational groupings are, with the exceptions of black Caribbean men and women and Pakistani/Bangladeshi women, as likely as or more likely than whites to have salariat parents and degree-level education. 65% of Chinese and 53% of Indian men in the first generation have degree-level education, over twice as high as for white men (23%). The parental class advantage of first-generation men is also clear, especially by

Chinese and black African men, at 55% and 47% respectively, as against 34% for white men. This gives substantial evidence on the immigrant positive selection in the UK as compared not only with their fellow-countrymen who have stayed in the origin country but also with the white British. One might, of course, argue that immigrants' parental salariat position and their own degree-level education do not carry the same returns to labour market positions in Britain as do those for whites. This may be true to some extent. For instance, a farmer in India may not have as much land as his counterpart in Britain. But if we take a relative position, in terms of the proportion of compatriots who do not have similar levels of resources, then it makes sense to say that immigrants tend to have better economic resources and human capital than do their compatriots who have stayed in the home country and it is this 'superior' position before, coupled with class decline after, immigration which may well serve as a source of reinvigorated aspiration to their offspring (Li, 2018).

When we compare the first- and the second-generation's parental class positions, we find clear evidence of immigrant class decline. As our second generation are those born in the UK or arriving by age 12, their parents' class position is indexed by the jobs they were doing in the UK labour market, hence measured in a

<sup>3</sup> For men aged 25–69 in China, only 11% of the parents and 14% of the respondents were in salariat positions (Li, Zhang, & Kong, 2015, p. 25). The Chinese immigrant men's class positions were therefore not only much higher than those of their fellow countrymen in China but also higher than those of the white British.



way comparable to that of white parents. As compared with whites, we find that all second-generation groups' parental class is lower than that of whites with the exception of black Africans. The immigrant class decline can also be seen from comparing the first- and the second-generation's own class positions. Although both generations have much higher levels of education than do whites (except for black Caribbean men and Pakistani/Bangladeshi women), their proportions in salariat positions are generally lower than for whites (except for Chinese and Indians).

The interplay between parental and respondents' class positions may present itself as class decline or advancement, as is captured by the NDI under the middle columns of Table 1. Here we see clear evidence of first-generation class decline and some evidence of second-generation advancement. With the sole exception of black Caribbean women, all first-generation men and women in all ethnic minority groups suffered class setbacks: in other words, they worked in jobs at a lower level than that of their parents. Amongst the second generation, Indian, Pakistani/Bangladeshi men and women, and black African women were finding themselves in higher occupational levels than their parents. Most of these features apply to ethnic minority groups of both sexes to a fairly similar extent although women tend to have lower class positions and educational qualifications than do their male counterparts.

The analysis above gives fairly clear evidence of positive-selection and class setback by the migrant- (and some advancement for the second-) generation. Yet the analysis is at a descriptive level. Moving from this, we now turn to a more formal test, to see how family origin affects the respondent's education which in turn affects their class destination using the SEM method.

In the SEM framework for OED analysis, the effects of OE, ED and OD links are simultaneously assessed. The coefficient for the OD link is called 'direct' effect, the multiplication of the OE and the ED coefficients is called 'indirect' effect, and the sum of the direct and the indirect effects is called 'total' effect. The five effects for the ethno-generational groups by sex are summarised in Table 2, all measured as standardised coefficients. By comparing the coefficients of the ethno-generational groupings with those of whites, we can see whether the strength of association is significantly different, hence whether a particular group is successfully integrated into British society in the domains under consideration. Similarly, by comparing the changes between the first and the second generations, we can gain insights into whether a particular group is making significant progress over generations.<sup>4</sup> Our main interest here is to see whether the second generation is much closer than the first generation to whites in each of the links. As ethnic minorities tend to be younger than whites, we have included age as a covariate in all models. Younger cohorts may, for instance,

have benefited from the expansion of higher education and of salariat class in British society than older ones.<sup>5</sup>

The data in Table 2 show some important features. First, when all factors in the models are taken into account, the effects of education on destination (ED) are much more salient than the effects of origin on destination (OD). With the sole exception of second-generation Chinese women, the coefficients on the ED link are highly significant for all ethno-generational groupings. But we need to remind ourselves that origin effects are mediated via education and that, in addition to separate ED effects, there are still sizeable direct and indirect effects. Thus, the origin effects manifest themselves in a powerful, albeit not always direct, manner since the mediating effects are mostly stronger than the direct effects. Second, with the sole exception of first-generation black Caribbean men who have been found to have the lowest education in Table 1 and who here show a significantly stronger ED association than for white men, there are no significant differences in the ED link between the ethno-generational groupings and their white peers. This, however, does not mean the education has the same returns for minorities as for the majority group. As shown in the emboldened figures, there are significantly weaker indirect and total effects for the second-generational men and women than for whites, which may explain why the second-generation members are so much better qualified but have worse labour market outcomes as frequently observed in research. And third, looking at the generational changes as indicated by italicised figures on the second generation, we find that second-generation black Caribbean men have significantly weaker indirect and total effects than their first-generation counterparts, as do Indian men's OE and Indian women's indirect links. The mechanisms in these cases may be different. As for black Caribbean men, it may be the 'downward spiral' to the white working class norms and aspirations as discussed in Li and Heath (2008) which may explain their greater integration. For Indians, the first-generation class decline and second-generation success may better explain their intergenerational advancement and the loosening links over the generation.

The findings on a greater distance between the second than between the first generation ethnic minority groups and whites in the mobility pathways run counter to the expectations as specified in Figure 1 and also seem counter-intuitive. For decades, ethnic studies scholars have been predicting over time and intergenerational progress in assimilation (Alba, 2005; Gordon, 1964; Li, 2010; Park & Burgess, 1921/1969). So, how do we make sense of the findings? Firstly, we need to think how the weaker strength of association comes about. If one group cannot pass the resources to their offspring as effectively as another, this would weaken the strength of origin-destination associations. Duncan (1968), for instance, shows that black people in the US were poor

<sup>4</sup> Significance tests in both regards are conducted via the procedure of 'nonlinear combination of estimators' (nlcom in Stata) within the SEM structure.

<sup>5</sup> I wish to thank an anonymous reviewer and the Academic Editor for this insightful point.

**Table 2.** Standardised coefficients for the OED by ethno-generational groups and sex. Source: The UKHLS waves 1–3.

	OE	ED	OD	Indirect	Total
<b>Men</b>					
White	.316***	.456***	.087***	.157***	.239***
G1: Black Caribbean	.411***	<b>.732***</b>	.013	.339**	.316*
G1: Black African	.246***	.424***	.050	.107***	.158*
G1: Indian	.248***	.442***	.097*	.126***	.206***
G1: Pakistani/Bangladeshi	.285***	.428***	.001	.120***	.125*
G1: Chinese	.259*	.312**	.091	.069	.179
G2: Black Caribbean	.195*	.317***	-.063	<b>.062</b>	<b>-.008</b>
G2: Black African	.198	.558***	-.068	.111	.025
G2: Indian	<b>.075</b>	.508***	.109	<b>.044</b>	.184**
G2: Pakistani/Bangladeshi	<b>.127</b>	.480***	-.020	<b>.066</b>	<b>.043</b>
G2: Chinese	.142	.650***	.127	.097	.215
Other	<b>.235***</b>	.433***	.074	<b>.109***</b>	-.086***
<b>Women</b>					
White	.356***	.465***	.066***	.165***	.231***
G1: Black Caribbean	.357***	.487***	-.002	.174*	.172
G1: Black African	.274***	.424***	.141*	.116***	.257***
G1: Indian	.348***	.548***	.053	.191***	.244***
G1: Pakistani/Bangladeshi	.326***	.392***	.201	.128***	.329***
G1: Chinese	.298**	.381***	.166	.114*	.279*
G2: Black Caribbean	.096	.451***	-.058	<b>.043</b>	<b>-.014</b>
G2: Black African	.219	.364***	.101	.080	.181
G2: Indian	.237***	.370***	.041	<b>.088***</b>	.129
G2: Pakistani/Bangladeshi	.214**	.416***	.024	<b>.089**</b>	.113
G2: Chinese	.229	.085	.406	<b>.019</b>	.426
Other	<b>.247***</b>	.447***	.120***	<b>.111***</b>	.231***

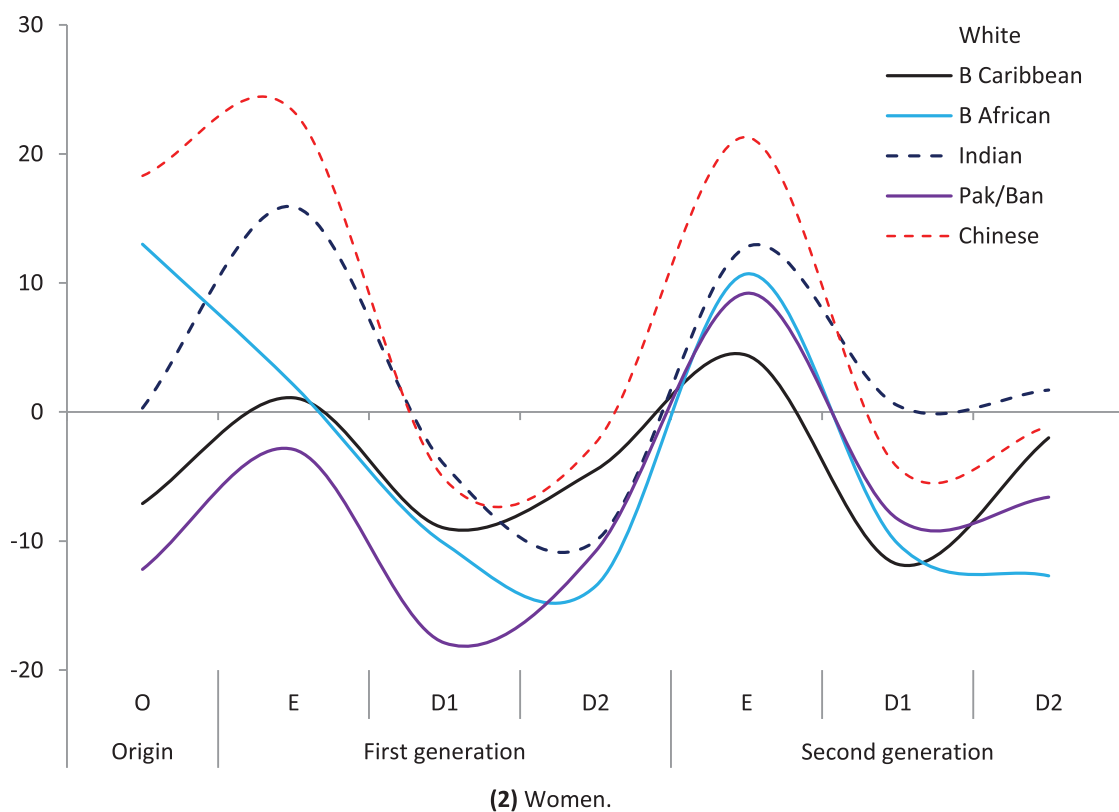
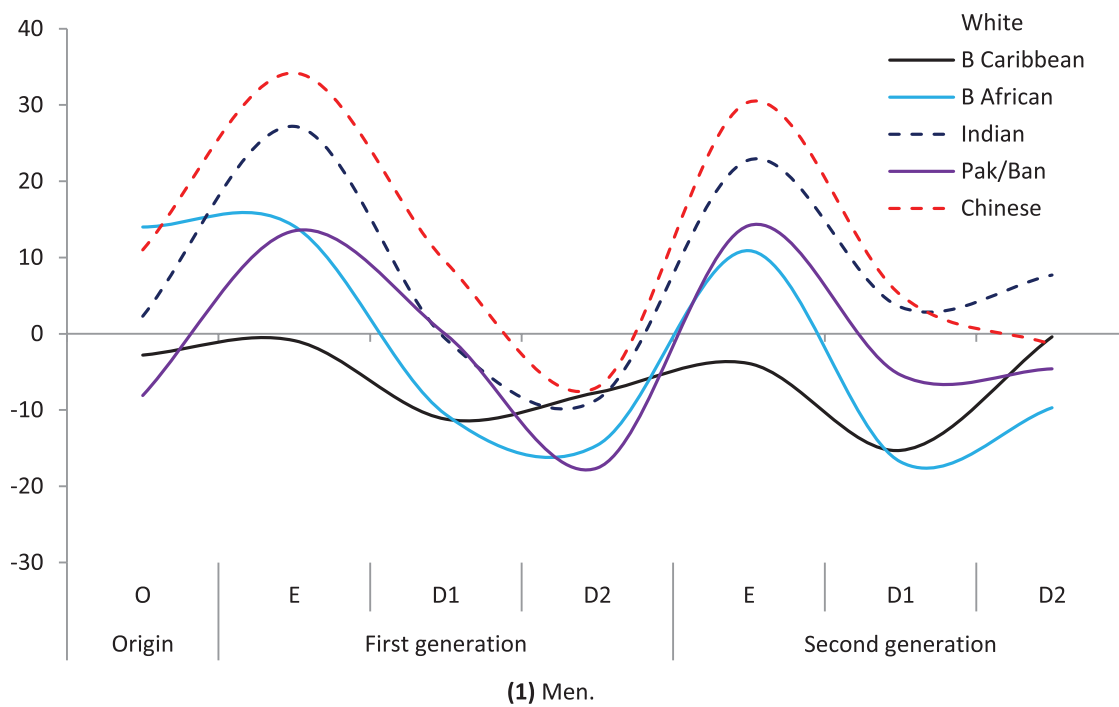
Notes: \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001. Significant differences between the ethno-generational groupings and whites (at the 0.05 level or above) are shown in bold, and significant differences between the first and the second generations of a particular group are shown in italics and placed on the coefficients for the second generation.

not because they were born into poverty but because they were born black. In this case, advantaged class origins had less importance for the mobility chances of blacks than for whites, exhibiting a greater fluidity or a ‘perverse openness’. Essentially what Duncan is arguing about here is that whilst most blacks in the US were in very low positions, some would achieve occupational success; but even for these lucky ones holding professional-managerial positions, their children may still face higher risks of downward mobility than for their white peers. Secondly, we need to think about not only parental position but that of the respondents as well. We have noted above that most immigrants suffered class decline and that the second-generation’s education was on the whole higher and their class position lower than those of whites. Thus, relative to the first generation, the second-generation’s much lower starting-point and still lower end-point would also imply a weaker origin-destination association.

Finally, we show, in Figure 2, a summary picture of the ethnic integration trajectory over generations in Britain. The data chart the changing fortunes of the first and the second generations starting from parental class to own education and destination (OED) where we also

include avoidance of unemployment (D1 in the figure) as part of the labour market position. Unemployment is an important area of ethnic disadvantage, but it is hard to integrate this into the SEM framework methodologically. However, we can obtain the net effects using logit model. The data are shown for men and women separately.

Figure 2 clearly shows that the ethnic minority groups suffer in the British labour market. Even though their family position is generally high, and their own education is well above that of whites, they encounter much higher risks of unemployment and enjoy much lower access to advantaged (salaried) positions. For instance, Chinese men’s degree-level education is 34 percentage-points higher than that of white men but their salaried occupancy is 7 points lower, net of all confounding factors which have been controlled for in the models, with a differential of 41 points. The corresponding figures are 36, 31, 29 and 7 points for Indian, Pakistani/Bangladeshi, black African and black Caribbean men. The first-generation’s class position (D2) would generally serve as parental class situation for the second generation, which is much lower than that of whites. Yet, even though they start from such disadvantaged positions, the second generation, with the sole exception



**Figure 2.** Integration trajectories of ethno-generational groups by sex. Notes: Whites' values are set at 0 and those of ethno-generational groupings are expressed as net differences from whites, in terms of percentage points. O: parental salariat positions; E: respondent's degree-level education; D1: respondent's avoidance of unemployment; D2: respondent's access to salariat. Parental class, age, age squared and ethno-generational status are included in estimating degree-level education, and education is further included in modelling unemployment and access to salariat. All data points except O are average marginal effects (AME) from the relevant models.

of black Caribbean men, still manage to acquire much higher education than white men, only to face higher unemployment rates and lower chances of career progression in their own labour market position. The same situation is found for women albeit to a smaller extent.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study analysed the processes of social mobility by ethnic minority groups over generations in contemporary Britain. We used the OED framework for assessing whether the ethnic minority groups in their first and second (or higher) generations experienced similar processes of social mobility with increasing social integration. Drawing data from the UKHLS and adopting the SEM procedure, we paid particular attention to whether the second-generation ethnic minority groups would approximate whites in the processes of social mobility. The first generation is expected to experience setback due to language barriers, overseas qualifications, lack of knowledge of local labour market, and overt or covert forms of racial discrimination but the second generation is expected to experience no such social exclusion.

Whilst our analysis does show serious setbacks by the first generation, the second generation's OE/OD links and indirect and total effects are rather weak, suggesting significantly greater fluidity than in the white pattern, forming an apparent paradox unpredicted from the classical theories. Yet, closer reflection suggests that the patterns that manifest themselves are well-grounded. As compared with whites, ethnic minority families may be better able to foster upward mobility just as they are less able to prevent downward mobility. In other words, ethnic minority children from lower family positions would be more instilled to perform well in education than white children from similar origin classes, just as those from higher family positions would be more likely to experience downward mobility due to inadequate or less effective bridging social capital possessed by their parents. Our analysis does show that in spite of their humble family origins, the second generation outperform their white peers in education but their excellences in human capital do not bring them equal returns to labour market positions. With so much higher educational credentials, they are still behind whites in avoidance of unemployment and in salariat occupancy. Further analysis reveals that, even among those with degree levels of education, they are significantly behind whites (69% and 76% for second-generation and white men respectively in salariat occupancy).<sup>6</sup>

Overall, our analysis, which we believe is the first systematic attempt at exploring the OED relations for ethno-generational and gender groups using the most authoritative data sources in the UK, shows that members of ethnic minority backgrounds have taken a long and bumpy journey in Britain. There is clear evidence of persisting

ethnic inequality over generations. There are also signs of a growing ethnic polarisation, as shown by the class declines experienced by both generations of black Africans. Prime Minister May (2017) said that the continued disadvantages by ethnic minorities in Britain must be 'explained or changed'. Our evidence shows such persisting ethnic disadvantages, hence the serious needs for overcoming issues of social exclusion. This is a challenge for the government, employers and wider society alike.

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#### Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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<sup>6</sup> Our data do not show whether the qualifications were obtained from Oxbridge or other Russell Group universities. This is a task for future analysis when appropriate data become available.

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