IN MULTICULTURALISM'S WAKE:

A STUDY OF THE SHIFTING COOPERATIONS IN THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF EUROPE'S REFUGEES

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I, the undersigned Alexandra P. Sveikauskas hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis.

To the best of my knowledge this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgement has been made. This thesis contains no material which has been accepted as part of the requirements of any other academic degree or non-degree program, in English or in any other language.

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Abstract

While millions of asylum-seekers are arriving to Europe, the policies designed to integrate newcomers, and create inclusive and diverse societies, have come under critical scrutiny for "failing." How are social integration policies in this extraordinary context being created anew? This paper investigates the shifting cooperations of contemporary social integration policymaking. It sheds insight on how collaboration is occurring across policy levels (at the European Union, European Union member state, regional, and local levels), and by a multiplicity of governmental and nongovernmental actors. It also highlights some of the most important assumptions, rationales, and implications of these actors' approaches. Utilizing fieldwork, content analysis of key actors' websites and reports, and scholarly literature, it argues this field of policymaking has grown increasingly complex and multi-level. While at the European Union level there has been an emerging shift in multi-governance bypassing the national level through a focus on cities and a new emphasis placed on the formation of shared indicators, the experiences of Italy and Finland reveal two distinct models of burden-sharing across policy levels and actors, as well as conditions and moments of convergence.

Key words: refugees, migration, social integration, social inclusion, collaborative policymaking

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Above all, this thesis is dedicated to my parents; my first intellectual mentor, and editor-in-chief, my father, and my first travel partner and confidante, my mother.

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List of Abbreviations

ASGI	The Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration in Italy
AMIF	Asylum Migration and Integration Fund
ECJ	European Court of Justice
ECRE	European Council of Refugees and Exiles
ELY Centers	Centers for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment in Finland
EU	The European Union
MIGRI	The Finnish Immigration Service
FRA	The European Union Fundamental Rights Agency
IGO	International Governmental Organization
MIPEX	Migrant Integration Policy Index
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OECD	The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SPRAR	System for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees in Italy
UNHCR	The UN Refugee Agency

Introduction

In many ways, 2015 marks a significant inflection point for Europe. The European Union (EU) saw an unprecedented influx of new people from diverse political, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds entering its territory, driven by extreme conflict, persecution, and hardship in their home countries. More than 2.4 million people registered as asylum-seekers in 2015 and 2016 (UNHCR 2017).

There were other marked departures from politics as usual. The nations championing notions of inclusive and diverse societies have been dwindling in number (Malik 2015). While significant tightening in rhetoric within countries such as the Netherlands, Germany, and Great Britain took place prior to 2015, this shift has accelerated (Malik 2015). Populist and far-right parties have succeeded in elevating the voices of a narrower and more homogenous population at the expense of, and often excluding, minority groups (Muller 2016). Immigration policies and practices of the past have more frequently come under critical scrutiny by mainstream politicians. Germany's Angela Merkel, for example, infamously remarked that Germany's multiculturalism had "utterly failed" (Malik 2015).

The EU and its member-states face a daunting task. Public trust in EU member-state institutions are at historic lows (Eurobarometer 2013). Fierce debates over national identity have become common. Longstanding policies designed to integrate newcomers into European societies are under fire.

Despite these many challenges to social cohesion, policy-makers are seeking to improve the social-integration methods of the past to integrate millions of refugees into European societies. Social-integration policies are being evaluated and implemented on various levels (EU, member states, regional, and local) and by a multiplicity of governmental

and nongovernmental actors. Who are the main actors? What is the division of labor among them? What are key assumptions, rationales, and implications of their choices?

Chapter 1 provides a brief theoretical and academic overview of the debates to which this thesis responds. It describes how scholars have defined and understood key aspects of social integration. Chapter 2 focuses on newer developments at the EU policymaking level. Though well-positioned to provide a bird's-eye view, the EU, which largely fills stopgaps and facilitates knowledge exchange, lacks the agency and the legitimacy to take actions which could be interpreted as encroaching upon member-states' sovereignty, particularly within the current political climate. Two significant developments have marked the EU's push for greater knowledge management and data-collection schemes -- an emerging shift in multi-governance bypassing the national level through a focus on cities and the formation of shared indicators to develop the EU's *evaluative* capacities.

Chapter 3 provides case studies of social integration, policy implementation and evaluation in EU member-states Italy and Finland. It examines the contextual specificity of "burden-sharing." Italy takes a decentralized, fragmented approach where national and municipal-level actors cooperate on a voluntary and incentivized basis whereby municipalities opt in. The Italian social-integration model relies heavily on close collaboration at the *local level* between state and non-state actors (between the municipalities and civil society specifically). Nonstate actors, including NGOs and volunteer-driven national organizations embedded within international networks, (as exemplified by the Italian Red Cross), serve as direct social-service providers, sometimes as a *contractor* of the state, and sometimes *in lieu of* the state.

In contrast, Finland's model is characterized by a *state-driven* cooperation among national, district, and local-level authorities. Civil-society actors have a clearly defined and

largely separate mandate. They focus on creating community cohesion through interpersonal social activities and advocacy, education, and awareness-raising initiatives.

Despite the substantial differences between the two countries' social-integration configurations, the models exhibit some signs of convergence, especially in times of crisis or criticism. Finland was facing the immense pressure of a 966 percent increase in asylum applications within 2015 (Leskinen 2016). As a result, it relied more heavily on non-state actors, engaging them in direct service provision, including for some services previously delegated only to the state in the form of social-service provision. In Italy, pressure from international governmental actors (IGOs) and national and local NGOs played a critical role in moving the country toward greater state-actor ownership, consolidation, and centralization of social-integration policies. A series of measures and rhetoric coming from the Ministry of Interior advocated "the more equitable distribution across Italy" of refugees and new incentives for the municipalities (Italian Ministry of Interior 2016). Funding flowing from the national to the local level increased (European Migration Network 2017). Lastly, this paper concludes by reflecting on some of the key challenges and opportunities presented by multi-level, multi-actor, collaborative social-integration policymaking.

Chapter 1 – From Theoretical Frameworks to Policymaking

Social integration is often an explicitly stated as well as an implicit policy goal of the EU and its member states at all levels. It also takes on significant meaning for *refugees themselves* at both individual and at group levels, as well as for native Europeans and their existing communities. "There is no single, generally accepted definition, theory or model of immigrant and refugee integration," writes Castles (2002). "The concept continues to be controversial and hotly debated" (Castles, Korac, et al. 2002: 46). It is "contested and contextual" (Robinson 1998: 118).

The conceptual and theoretical debates regarding social integration do not exist in a vacuum. They inform and are informed by debates occurring within societies, within politics, and in policies. "... The social sciences have played an important role in shaping public understanding of immigrant integration processes, and ... also in shaping government policies …. The reverse may also be the case: policymakers ... play a role in shaping the production of knowledge" (Scholten, Entzinger, and Penninx 2015). This section, a theoretical foundation for the remainder of this paper, briefly highlights the conceptual aspects of social integration that have been emphasized by scholars. These concepts in turn have been utilized by state and nonstate actors implementing policies of social integration.

The critical foundation of integration consists of defining rights and responsibilities for both individuals and states, Ager and Strang stress (2008). While it contains context-specific elements in terms of the conditions under which rights and responsibilities are granted, citizenship to a person solidifies the most generous configuration of rights and responsibilities within a given country. "Rights and citizenship are foundational to understandings of refugee integration .... Notions of nationhood, citizenship and rights will

vary across settings, but in all cases such ideas are fundamental to understanding the principles and practice of integration in that situation" (Ager and Strang 2008: 176-177).

Later chapters of this paper will highlight how certain areas of rights, such as the right to employment, are being more actively stated and/or protected through policy measures for the social integration of refugees, even if these refugees do not currently have the same "right" and "responsibility" to work which is available through citizenship.

Some scholars have focused more on emphasizing the *social* connection aspect of integration or "the manner in which bonds, bridges and links establish [and re-establish] forms of reciprocity and trust in social relations" (Ager and Strang 2010: 589). Establishing and reinforcing social bonds is critical to the imagining and re-imagining the "socially constructed" political community of the nation (Anderson 2016). Though all members of a state will never meet face-to-face, Anderson argues, the political community of the nation survives because "in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 2016: 2). Because of shared and reciprocal social links, a given socio-political community is perpetuated by communication and shared participation in events, activities, culture, and notions of identity. Social integration requires links which must be established and reinforced. It involves a dynamic process through active participation of both newcomers and native individuals and societies (European Council on Refugees and Exiles 1999: 29).

The country case studies of Italy and Finland will later illustrate how policy implementers are involved with the social ties of integration. It will highlight how the building of socially integrated ties in Italy is involving refugees in locally driven and tailored community-level projects facilitated by NGOs and the local municipalities. In Finland, meanwhile, civil society has recognized the importance of reciprocal social bonds by providing services explicitly aimed at building interpersonal links between native Finns and refugees.

Table 1

- Conceptions of rights and responsibilities between the state and the individuals serve as a critical foundation for social integration.
- Social connections between individuals and forming communities - "bonds, bridges, and links" which establish and reinforce trust, reciprocity, and social solidarity are key.
- Social integration is "multi-dimensional." It occurs at individual and group (local, regional, national) levels.
- It is a dynamic, two-way process.
- It occurs in different life "spheres" or social arenas such as the labor market, educational system, housing, healthcare, etc. Examining these spheres can serve as markers, measures, or indicators of the extent of integration. Integration or lack thereof in one sphere can further enhance, block, or compound social integration in another.
- Knowledge of language, the host society's structure, rules, and culture, as well as a context of peace, stability, and safety are enabling conditions. They facilitate social integration.

Source: Summary based on Ager and Strang 2008; Anderson 2016; European Union 2004; European Council on Refugees and Exiles 1999; Castles et al. 2002.

A number of scholars have emphasized the multi-dimensional aspect of integration (Entzinger and Biezeveld 2003; Heckmann and Schnapper 2003; UN DESA 2009 et al.). Integration is multi-dimensional in the sense that it occurs on different levels (individual, local, regional, national). It also "involves the forming of relationships across people with multiple and overlapping identities. Lewis and Vrecer...elaborate integration as a process of negotiating new identities. Lewis argues...it makes no sense to define a refugee-community event as belonging to either 'here' or 'there'. It is...a space where new identities are forged" (Ager and Strang 2010: 607). Integration is a process of active negotiation, where all identities are shifting and being reshaped.

Finally, integration is also multi-dimensional in terms of the markers, means, social arenas, and spheres in which it occurs (Ager and Strang 2008). While labor-market participation has often been an area of focus in terms of individuals' own priorities and in

terms of being targeted by policymakers, integration touches upon many other areas such as education, housing, healthcare, and public and political participation (Castles 2002).

Inclusion in one sphere often compounds or enhances inclusion in other spheres. For example, educational opportunities can lead to securing better employment, which in turn allows one to secure better housing. Conversely, a lack of access to education can lead to the perpetuation of a vicious cycle of poverty where an individual cannot access education, and in turn this means they cannot secure a job with a livable income, housing, healthcare, etc.

"Language and cultural understanding" of a society's structure, rules, and the native population's customs, are facilitators of social integration (Ager and Strang 2008). A context of peace, stability, and safety serve as enabling preconditions for the integration process to occur in the first place (Ager and Strang 2008). In particular, the Italian context will later highlight how the NGO community has become concerned about how an initial failure of refugee integration into the labor market has become compounded, cyclical, and entrenched.

Figure 1 – Key Aspects of Social Integration

Source: Ager and Strang, "Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework," Journal of Refugee Studies Vol 21 no. 2 (June 2008).

Chapter 2 – The Role of the EU: Addressing Stopgaps, Knowledge Exchange and Evaluation

The EU has a unique dual role. It acts as a *supranational* institution with its own authority and as an intergovernmental organization advocating and functioning through *cooperation* among member states' *national authorities*. The former role in migration and social integration policy in particular is relatively new for the EU. "After 2003, the European Union (EU) ... entered this ... field of policy" (Scholten et al. 2015: 1).The shift "of competencies to the supranational level" has been a "a slow and uneven" as well as a highly complex process, particularly with the field as a whole growing more "multi-level," and including various dynamic and shifting cooperations (Scholten et al. 2015: 1-16; Schierup et al. 2006; Baldaccini et al. 2007; Menz 2009).

Currently the EU does rely markedly on *EU member- state--level cooperation.* The EU defines a basic, minimal shared framework of rights and responsibilities of its states toward refugees. The principal architects, implementers, evaluators, and *enforcers* of each state's social integration approaches rests with each member-state. The EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) aptly describes the current relationship: "While the EU has a mandate to *promote* integration [as a supranational authority], as well as to *support* and *coordinate* Member State efforts [as an intergovernmental cooperation] to integrate third-country nationals, the responsibility for actually implementing relevant strategies, measures and actions *lies with the Member States*" (FRA 2017).

Despite the fact that the EU is still *predominantly* an intergovernmental actor in this policy realm, its role may be best understood as a *cooperative model with supranational elements.* It has been seeking to increase both aspects of its role in the past few years. Its scope, role, and authority in social integration-related policymaking is to serve as *an*

institution in and of itself, and also to enhance, through incentives and support, the effectiveness of its respective *member states.*

2.1 Addressing Stopgaps

The EU has promulgated new *legal* directives explicitly related to asylum-seekers and refugees, such as the Qualification, Family Reunification, Asylum Procedure, and Reception Conditions Directives (European Commission 2016). These directives both *build on* other bodies of laws, particularly international refugee law, and *fills gaps* in EU member-states' existing laws. It has provided greater clarity and specificity, and set higher common standards regarding asylum-seekers and refugees accessing healthcare, education, employment, etc. Particularly in the newer EU member-states, "the Directives ... led to the raising of standards ... [and] to an extension and strengthening of rights" (Abdou 2016: 115; Joppke 2011: 228).

Alongside these legal directives, the Lisbon Treaty also enhanced the competencies of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in regard to migration-policy cases. A key consequence of this has been further evidence of a duality. On the one hand, the court has exercised its authority by rulings on a number of key cases (see the *Chakroun* Case (C-578/08), *Chen*(C-200/02), *Zambrano* (C-34/09) as examples). On the other hand, EU member-states are finding ways such as changing their laws at national levels in order to circumnavigate the court's authority.

The ECJ's insertion of "rights-enhancing elements" has stirred concern at the national level. "Member States who are concerned about the impact of ECJ rulings upon their ... capacities, appear to respond by altering policies at the national level that circumvent the potentially 'liberalizing' effects of ECJ rulings (e.g. tightening of Irish nationality law in the

aftermath of the Chen case) .... An enhancement of 'supranationalism' leading to an 'increase in rights-based elements' causes an inverse reaction and the strengthening of control-based policies at the level of national governments" (De Somer 2012: 17).

Understanding the immense common resource and capacity constraints EU member-states face as they seek to improve border security, receive and integrate asylum-seekers and refugees, and the long-term implications of this significant policy challenge, the EU has set aside significant supplementary *financial support*. Funding initiatives have included the European Fund for the Integration of third-country nationals (2007-2013) and the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) (2014-2020) (European Commission 2016). By requiring states to adopt national integration programs with certain basic implementation parameters in order to access funds, including strategies "encompassing different aspects of the two-way dynamic process," the EU is able to exert greater influence over respective member-states' integration agendas even if member states are still largely autonomous in this policymaking arena (FRA 2017: 24).

2.2 Coordinating Knowledge Exchange

Another important priority for the EU has been to act as a *facilitator of knowledge exchange* and best practices, as well as evaluative techniques. It does this across and between member-states, and at different levels of policymaking, including at the local level, given that the EU has the privileged position of being able to disseminate information more evenly and in a high-profile way across EU member-states.

There have been some promising developments. First, the EU has established a variety of knowledge-sharing platforms (virtual and in-person) which vary in terms of scope and participating actors, including regularly occurring Ministerial Conferences on

Integration, the Network of National Contact Points on Integration Group, the European Migration Forum, and the European Website on Integration (European Commission 2016). "The flow of information between member-states developed substantially ... involving exchanges not only between senior officials and researchers, but also with civil society and others involved in integration programmes," Pratt has written. "This took place not only at European level, but there was a spinoff effect at national levels, too" (2015: 121).

There has been growing acknowledgement at the EU level of the critical role that local and on-the-ground actors play in driving and shaping integration policies (Cinalli and Hariri 2011; Katz et al 2016; Penninx 2015). Seeking to include greater consultative elements, local participation, and understanding and sharing of bottom-up approaches, the European Commission has established a partnership with EUROCITIES called *Integrating Cities.* This collaboration focuses exclusively on participating *cities* rather than *member-states.* It also creates knowledge-sharing opportunities. "Recently European cities have developed significant new relations outside their national context, particularly in the form of networks of cities that exchange knowledge and practical experiences in local integration policies. Although such initiatives primarily aim at cross-national horizontal forms of cooperation between cities, all of these networks have strong connections with and support from the European Commission. New coalitions have emerged in the multi-level governance of migration and integration in Europe" (Penninx 2015: 105). These cities follow a shared charter that outlines specifically the "cities' commitment to integration of migrants" (Eurocities 2015).

This network and others like it serve as a vital connection for the EU to gain better insight and understanding of daily practices on the ground. The EU can use these structures to encourage other member-states' cities. These contexts lend themselves well to becoming laboratories for experimentation and innovation in social-integration policies. Some scholars

have also argued “cities and municipalities are more likely to start integration policies and use research to underpin their local policies [including in implementation and developing evaluative criteria and frameworks] when they are stimulated and supported to do so by higher-level governance [including the national and supranational levels]” (Penninx 2015: 111).

A note of caution is appropriate. While local state actors are “increasingly turning to new partners outside the national arena in their search for knowledge and resources for their policies,” the tensions which have sometimes been generated historically between national and local-level authorities who are more directly confronted with the daily consequences of higher-level policies will require creative political interaction. Policies first devised “at the city level rather than the national level” will need to be managed carefully (Penninx 2015: 105-108). For the time being, it is simply interesting to note the trend that “increasingly direct policy cooperation has come into existence between the European Commission and local authorities, bypassing the national governance level” (Scholten 2015: 12).

2.3 Towards Shared Integration Concepts and Evaluation

Despite various EU-level legal, policy, and funding instruments, actors such as the EU’s FRA argue that: “Not all Member States consistently apply the [basic founding principle of EU integration policies enshrined through the soft law document] Common Basic Principle that [provides a shared definition of integration referring to] ... integration as a ‘dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States” (FRA 2017:7). If adopted by the EU and its member states as a whole, the above definition would enable refugees, EU member states, and host societies all to be active actors with responsibilities as well as rights relating to social integration. “Integration ...

places demands on both receiving societies and the individuals and/or the communities concerned" (FRA 2017: 26).

While the primary "bedrock principles of ... integration policy" in European and international human-rights law continues to be the right to *nondiscrimination* and *equality* before the law, FRA notes a contradiction. A central challenge has been that there is a degree of unenforceability to the law. What if member-states adopt their own legislation different in spirit and intent than that at the EU level? "Current EU law does not require Member States to legislate against discrimination based on nationality, but the impact of integration policies could be strengthened by using a legal framework that bans nationality-based discrimination – a form of discrimination that can easily become a proxy for ethnic or racial discrimination" (FRA 2017: 61).

EU member-states are applying asylum and migration policies inconsistently and differently from one another. They even conceive of "integration" differently from each other. The EU has responded to this challenge by concentrating its efforts on prioritizing and on seeking to lead in the development of a comprehensive body of *evaluative* practices.

Some of these measures were introduced through components of the Lisbon Treaty and Stockholm Program. As recently as "the early 2000s there was very limited comparative information available and certainly very little which gave an overview of all or even a number of the then 15 member states" (Pratt 2015: 212). The European Union aspires to create a common understanding of effective social- integration practices through greater adoption of common indicators as a "shared language." Ultimately, "indicators are a means to an end, a kind of language through which all integration actors can learn and communicate with a wider audience" (Eurostat 2011).

Building on a 1996 report by the Council of Europe on "Measurement and Indicators of Migration," the EU has sought to develop a typology of integration indicators. The first set

of indicators focuses on "accessibility," focusing on the "*legal framework [*of laws of a country] in which migrants [and refugees] live .... Legal provisions reflect a country's political will and determine in how far a migrant has access to crucial sectors of a country, for example, its labor market" (Council of Europe 1996). The second type focuses on "the *actual situation* of migrants [and refugees] in their host country," using "'classical' indicators such as employment situation, education, dependence on welfare of housing." These are gathered from information from national statistical offices (Council of Europe 1996). The final type focuses on "*attitudes*" of both the migrants [and refugees] and indigenous population regarding "expectations ... and participation in social and political processes." Information is gathered using national and EU-level opinion polls and surveys (Council of Europe 1996). A current "major policy assessment" tool, the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), produced by the independent Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB) and the Migration Policy Group (MPG), employs no less than 167 policy indicators, including both the "typical" indicators like access to education, housing, the labor market, and other indicators such as family reunion, long-term residence, and broad categories such as "anti-discrimination" (FRA 2017: 34).

The Zaragoza Declaration of 2010 sought to simplify the initiatives of other regional intergovernmental and nongovernmental actors and reinforce the EU's data collection and evaluative practices. It advocated establishing shared integration indicators in four key areas: employment, education, social inclusion, and citizenship (FRA 2017). The evidence seems to suggest these efforts to systematize and collect harmonized and shared data are still limited and slightly problematic. Reports in 2011, 2013, and 2015 produced by Eurostat generated collaborations between the European Commission and the OECD for example, consistently cite difficulties and limitations in trying to harmonize data from member-states' national

contexts (Eurostat 2011; European Commission 2016; OECD 2016 et al.). These reports also cited problems in creating shared definitions and interpretations.

Table 2

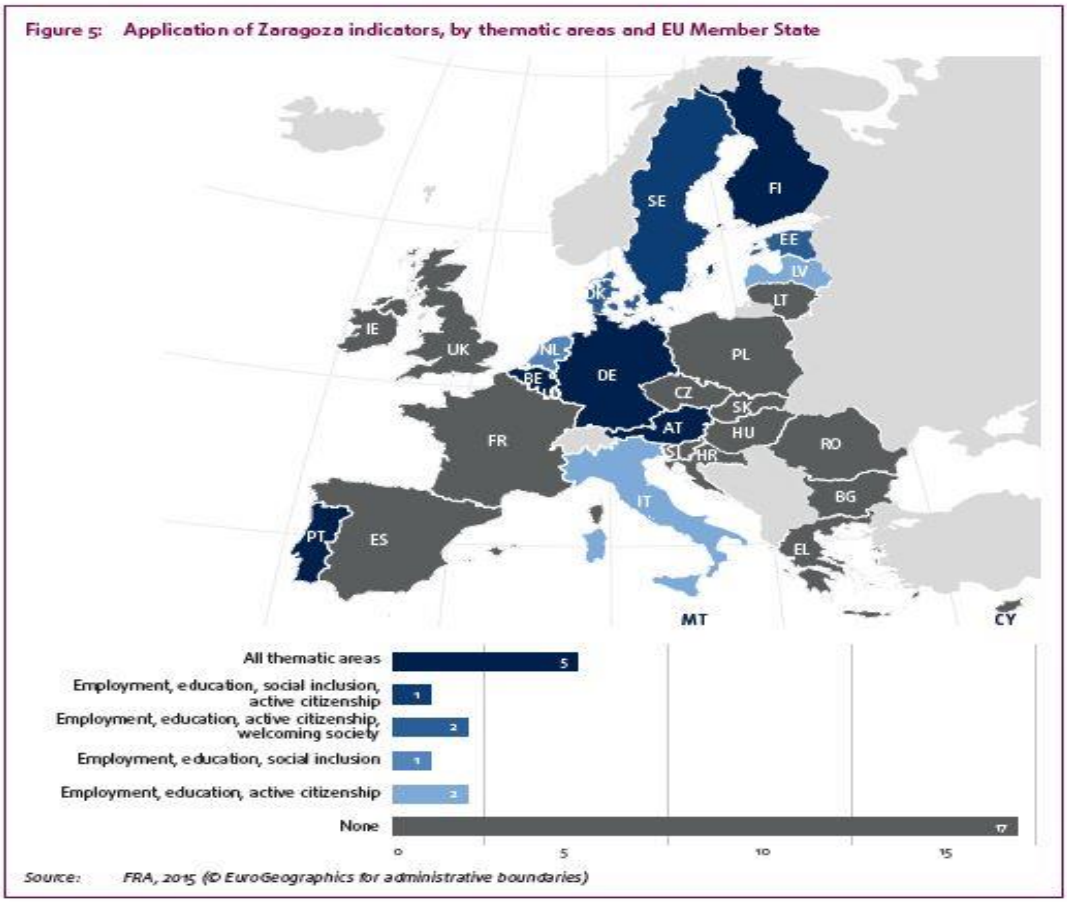
Current EU Level Indicators of Immigration Integration (Joint European Commission-OECD Project)

Policy area	Indicators
Employment	• employment rate • unemployment rate • activity rate
Education	• highest educational attainment (share of population with tertiary, secondary and primary or less than primary education) • share of low-achieving 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science • share of 30–34-year-olds with tertiary educational attainment • share of early leavers from education and training
Social Inclusion	• median net income – the median net income of the immigrant population as a proportion of the median net income of the total population • at risk of poverty rate – share of population with net disposable income of less than 60 per cent of national median • the share of population perceiving their health status as good or poor • ratio of property owners to non-property owners among immigrants and the total population
Active Citizenship	• the share of immigrants that have acquired citizenship • the share of immigrants holding permanent or long-term residence permits • the share of immigrants among elected representatives

Source: European Commission. "European Website on Integration: Migrant Integration Information and Good Practices," 2016.

Further evidence that national governments, municipalities, and local actors (including civil-society and nongovernmental actors) continue primarily to inform what constitutes social integration in their respective contexts, is that there has only been limited utilization of the Zaragoza indicators on an EU member state level. “Of the 19 EU Member States with an active national integration strategy or action plan, 15 conducted some type of periodic assessment or review by 2015 ... 11 ... monitor progress ... regularly through official integration indicators mostly recently adopted and referring to all or most of the Zaragoza indicators. Four have developed...but not implemented” Zaragoza-based indicators (FRA 2017: 35).

Figure 2



Source: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. Together in the EU - Promoting the participation of migrants and their descendants. Vienna, Austria: European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2017.

Some countries, such as Germany and Portugal, have supplemented existing indicators. They have made additions in regard to citizenship and social inclusion, including monitoring "host-society involvement" by including indicators such as "public opinion and attitudes, proportion of mixed marriages, and immigrants' sense of belonging or trust in institutions" (FRA 2017: 37). Germany's approach in particular reveals the critical role of *multi-level* actors, with actors at various levels playing a significant role. While there are 64 indicators at the *federal* level, "at a regional level federal states [Bundeslander] ... develop their own indicators distinguishing between structural components ... social components ... cultural components ... and identification issues .... Some cities also monitor integration -- for example, Wiesbaden" (FRA 2017: 37).

Despite difficulties in harmonizing data, the EU's attempts to take more ownership over evaluative practices has created some critical valuable evidence which can serve as a foundation for more effective policies. The 2015 report for example, shows some of the most comprehensive evidence yet on the significant gaps among refugees, immigrants, and native-born populations across the different European countries (European Commission 2016). While over time (within the refugees' and migrants' lifetime as well as through their descendants) these discrepancies lessen, there is an acute existing need for policymakers at different levels of governance to focus on creating targeted and holistic social integration related policies to improve the inclusion of these newcomer populations (FRA 2017).

Chapter 3 – Case Studies of Social-Integration Policy in Italy and Finland

Differences in policies in regard to social integration among the EU member-states become more evident when their approaches, strategies, and underlying concepts are closely examined. Finland and Italy, for example, provide two very different contexts. The differences in their welfare states have already been well documented by other scholars (Barr 2012; Garland 2016; Castles, Leibfried, Lewis et al. 2010). The different political and social organization of the two nations has played a significant role in informing and shaping each country's reaction to the recent refugee crisis.

3.1 Case Selection and Methodology

This paper focuses on the *implementation realities* of social-integration policies within these two national contexts. What do the rhetoric and realities of cooperative policymaking mean and look like in Italy and Finland, given the differences in demographic flows of asylum-seekers under the vastly different institutional arrangements, welfare states and contextual conditions of the two EU nations? By studying such different contexts, can one learn something new about cooperative policy implementation? Are there convergences of actors and divisions of labor even in these diverse contexts? What might this study reveal for policy actors about the key challenges and opportunities of social integration of refugees in Europe?

These two cases have been selected for several reasons. Germany has already been the case study dominating scholars' focus recently, and this case study affords new and fresh perspectives (Katz et al. 2016). The Nordic countries are vastly understudied in this sphere despite their often been held up as exemplary models for social-welfare states (*Foreign*

Affairs 2013). They also excel in other governance and policymaking arenas. How do these nations, which have historically received lower levels of immigration, approach social integration?

Finland saw a sudden uptick of 966% in its asylum application rate in 2015 (Leskinen 2016). The case of Finland could grow in importance and significance in other significant displacement crisis moments. Neighboring Sweden also experienced rapid growth in the 2013-15 period (alongside the EU countries of Austria, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Spain, and the Netherlands) (Eurostat 2016). Italy, meanwhile, merits investigation because it has historically been and continues to be an important country in the context of the refugee crisis. While primarily a transit country, it also has a growing role as a destination nation (Eurostat 2016).

Italy and Finland have very different social-welfare-state systems. Finland follows the Nordic model and Italy the Mediterranean model (Barr 2012). In geography and in refugee flows, there are many other divergences. One can examine how these respective social-welfare contexts serve as background conditions affecting the cooperations and configurations among the actors in social integration. The contrast between the two may provide scholars with insights of what they might look for and focus more on in future studies. As John Gerring's theories of diverse case selections highlight, examining such cases is likely to highlight illuminating moments or conditions of significant divergence or convergence which warrant further study (Gerring 2008: 650-652).

Lastly, I am being slightly opportunistic in selecting these two countries. Since I was working with the Italian and Finnish Red Cross earlier this year on an internal assessment to examine how their volunteer activities were fostering social inclusion, I had a unique and privileged opportunity. I learned firsthand how social-integration policies were being implemented on the ground as well as the dynamics that were in play among the social actors.

The participant-observation techniques and structured interviews I used to collect information went beyond scholarly perspectives on this paper's central research questions. While it might have been more methodologically orthodox for me to spend more time questioning case selection, the contrast in social context explored in initial fieldwork was extremely rewarding and felt worthy of further investigation. However, I want to openly acknowledge this limitation. If I were to take this project further, I would certainly strengthen the methodology, applying more sophisticated research techniques including through the use of structured interviews, more participant observation, and rigorous quantitative data gathering.

3.2 Case Study Italy

3.2.1 "Multi-Governance" Among the Actors

Italy makes a sharp distinction between its short-term reception operations for arriving newcomers and its handling of the participants in the long-term social-integration programming known as the System for the Protection of Asylum Seekers and Refugees (SPRAR). This distinction is made clear in the language of the policies. While the former is referred to officially as the "first reception phase," SPRAR is the "second reception phase" (ECRE 2017). While "first reception is guaranteed in the *governmental* accommodation centers," SPRAR consists of "smaller-scale decentralized projects" run by local authorities [Italian municipalities] and/or NGOs but publicly funded through predominantly national and local-level public sources (ECRE 2017). At times, NGOs contracting directly with municipalities have had to look "outside the state system" because of delay or other payment issues threatening their work (Norwegian Organization for Asylum Seekers 2011). SPRAR is truly a "multi-governance model" in terms of both funding and implementation.

3.2.2 SPRAR as a Locally-Centered Working Model

Much like the EU's function in relation to the EU member-states, the national-level Italian Ministry of Interior plays a *supervisory* role setting standards, providing guidelines and criteria, and dictating priority areas of social integration (Italian Ministry of Interior 2016). It functions much like a safety valve.

The ministry also facilitates knowledge exchange by convening a national body known as the ANCI, the National Association of Italian Municipalities (a network which both regional and local authorities can voluntarily participate in) (Italian Ministry of Interior 2016). It also produces an annual report on SPRAR and conducts other activities (Italian Ministry of Interior 2016). A network of local state and non-state actors, municipalities, NGOs, local associations and cooperatives, meanwhile, take up and operationalize the legal decrees and written guidance of the ministry practically speaking (Expert 1 - April 13, 2017).

Concretely, the Ministry of Interior has identified the priority areas of "…mediation services, legal counselling…Italian language…access to schools for minors, health assistance, socio-psychological support in particular to vulnerable persons, professional training, support at providing employment, counselling on the services available at local level to allow integration locally, information on (assisted) voluntary return programmes, housing, as well as information on recreational, sport and cultural activities" (ECRE 2017).

The municipalities design and deliver programming, ".... Local authorities have a certain degree of autonomy ... thanks to decentralization provided by the Italian Constitution and the legal changes introduced over the years. Specifically, regions plan, organize and coordinate the social services at the local level, and have a crucial role in providing social and welfare services" (Caneva 2014: 14-15). Local authorities largely provide reception services via close collaboration with nationwide local non-governmental actors such as the Italian Red

Cross Settimo Torinese branch. Local institutions, in partnership with the voluntary sector, implement local reception projects, bringing together SPRAR's guidelines and standard with the characteristics and specific factors affecting the local areas (Bertelsmann-Stiftung 2016: 79-92; Italian Ministry of Interior 2016).

Depending on the "… purpose, capacity, and expertise of local stakeholders and taking into account the available resources (professional, structural, and economic) ... local institutions can choose the type of reception services to be provided" (ANCI, Caritas Italiana, Cittalia, et al. 2015: 8-9). The strategies and services offerings can vary significantly (both in quality and type), depending on what local NGOs and associations have a presence in a given municipality, as well as the capacities of the municipality itself (ECRE 2017). The municipality and the NGOs ultimately decide how to divide up who delivers what services (Expert 1-April 13, 2017; ECRE 2017).

SPRAR projects include a focus on *local* needs and context, including the existing opportunities on a local level to participate in local sports associations and tournaments, classes and trainings offered at the local library or civic center, arts exhibitions and social mixers, the cleaning of local parks and streets, and other needs and happenings "in line ... with the community" (Bertelsmann-Stiftung 2016: 86). Social integration in the Italian context, then, benefits from being highly adaptive, flexible, and responsive to local needs and sensitive to existing local resources.

3.2.3 The Role of Non-State Actors

When it comes to reception services and activities, from language classes, running accommodation centers, providing healthcare, vocational training, internships, and recreational activities, the delivery of many initiatives has been handed over to civil society and NGOs: "These non-state actors sometimes collaborate with local authorities in

integration projects (receiving funds and organizing activities for them) ... but they often substitute them. This is due to ... the inhomogeneous distribution of interventions in Italian regions" (Caneva 2014: 17).

Insufficiencies and gaps within state welfare services occur. Much of Italy's legal social-welfare framework, while theoretically accessible to refugees, in reality is not, according to NGOs and nongovernmental actors, "The municipalities have social housing available to all people in need, including people with protection status. However, applicants need to have lived in Italy for at least five years" (Swiss Refugee Council 2016: 48). Similarly, though publicly run language courses are available, there is often insufficient personnel. As a result, most Italian courses for refugees and asylum-seekers are "run by NGOs and not by the state" (Swiss Refugee Council 2016: 49; Expert 2- April 13, 2017). Refugees who seek to access healthcare often find it inaccessible due to cost (Expert 2- April 13, 2017). NGOs and volunteers in the Italian context have sought to work in close partnerships to provide these kinds of critical services, "NGOs like MEDU and Cittadini del Mondo in Rome and Naga in Milan visit refugees in squats and on the streets to inform them of their rights and offer them medical treatment .... In Milan, volunteer psychologists, doctors ... therapists and other experts work at the Naga-Har centre run by the organisation Naga" (Swiss Refugee Council 2016: 53). Other rights, such as that to education, legally guaranteed to minors, are only accessible when NGOs facilitate the process of accessing this right (Expert 1- April 13, 2017). A 2015 report suggests that the trend of reform has been slowly changing, however. As the Italian system increases the number of migration-related statewide decrees, "organizations in the voluntary sector ... went from playing a stopgap role --- in a context of a legislative and planning vacuum -- to assuming the position of preferred partners" (ANCI, Caritas Italiana, Cittalia, et al. 2015: 8).

The government contracts closely with nongovernmental actors such as the Italian Red Cross for the provision of basic social goods for refugees (Expert 1- April 13, 2017). It is perhaps a relationship of convenience based on previously established rapport. Actors such as Italian Red Cross are known entities with longstanding histories of providing what might be considered state public goods in other contexts (Expert 3- April 13, 2017). For example, there is no state-run ambulatory and emergency medical service in Italy. The Italian Red Cross provides it. Because of its work in this capacity and in disaster preparedness, the Italian Red Cross already has a high profile (Expert 3- April 13, 2017). It is a known entity amongst the Italian public and Italian policymakers.

The rationale for choosing an actor which has little history of social-integration service delivery within the country has historical roots. The Red Cross, while not experienced in social-inclusion work in Italy, at least has the benefit of being part of an international movement where some of its national entities have done this kind of work. For example, the Finnish Red Cross runs high-profile and successful anti-racism campaigns and other social-inclusion-related work (Expert 4- April 29, 2017). Communications within the Red Cross are not optimal, however. Interviews with the Red Cross' regional office for Europe in Budapest, as well as with representatives from the Italian Red Cross and the Finnish Red Cross, all cited challenges in establishing consistent and sufficient opportunities for knowledge-sharing across national contexts (multiple interviews - April 13, 29 et al.). Repeated attempts to work on this issue have not so far borne as much fruit as desired.

3.2.4 A Move Toward Greater Centralization

After reports and urging from prominent and high-profile intergovernmental actors such as the UNHCR over the last few years to consolidate and improve its reception and social-integration policies, the Italian state appears to be considering moving towards a more

centralized state-centered approach (please see the UNHCR report mentioned in this paper's bibliography). Changes in the distribution of refugees and the funding of social-integration efforts are anticipated. In 2016, the Italian Ministry of Interior issued a series of announcements. The rapid expansion of SPRAR from 19,175 in 2015 to at least 40,000 this year has been announced (Italian Ministry of Interior 2016). At the same time, the ministry said it aimed "to encourage municipalities to host asylum-seekers in their territories." The ministry said it would pay municipalities €500 per refugee. It said it would not be opening more temporary reception centers within participating municipalities and might close down existing centers used to host arriving asylum-seekers when the first-line governmental first-aid and reception centers are full (Ministry of Interior 2016). Lastly, the ministry promised further measures "to create a gradual and sustainable distribution of asylum-seekers and refugees across the country" (2016). According to the Italian membership-based Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration (ASGI), the introduction of these new "incentives" were as yet insufficient to increase municipality participation (ECRE 2017). According to the ASGI, the only way to alleviate the issues of insufficient capacity within the SPRAR program would be to mainstream the program within the state's general "obligations of municipalities … [to provide] social services" (ECRE 2017).

Changes in the funding configuration are congruent to a more centralized approach. In the past, a greater burden was on the municipalities. In 2016, it was announced that as much as 95% of the budget for integration projects in SPRAR will now be financed through a National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services (ECRE 2017). In 2010 approximately 20% of the funds for these projects had to come from the municipalities (Norwegian Organization for Asylum-Seekers 2011).

The rationale behind this change in policy is to enhance effectiveness, efficiency, and stability, particularly for civil-society partners more immediately affected by delays in

payment because of their financial-capacity constraints (Norwegian Organization for Asylum-Seekers 2011). This greater trickle-down may also partially be attributed to an increase in funding from the European regional level to the Italian state level, and from the Italian state to the regional level. (Italy, which is receiving funds from the EU Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund for 2014-2020, is also redirecting almost a third of its 2017 national development assistance budget toward its short-term reception and long-term integration work - further evidence of centralization and consolidation (ECRE 2017).)

3.2.5 Defining and Evaluating Integration in the Italian Context

Revealing its perspective on what integration is and should look like according to the Italian state, the SPRAR website describes the "primary objective" of this long-term integration program. SPRAR aims "to provide support for each individual in the reception system, through implementation of an individual program designed to enable that person to regain a sense of independence, and thus enable effective involvement in life in Italy, in terms of employment and housing integration, access to local services, social interaction and scholastic integration for minors" (Italian Ministry of Interior 2016). In the Italian context then according to the state, social integration focuses on the "individual" level, establishing a "sense" of "independence." This definition also seems to suggest a privileging or prioritizing of employment, housing, and, in the case of minors, educational integration. While "involvement in life in Italy" and "access to local services" are slightly more vague, this suggests access to local services, and perhaps to interpersonal social interaction opportunities are also seen as quite important to integrative success.

In terms of patterns in *implemented* projects, 82.3% of SPRAR projects incorporated ten hours or more a week of Italian-language courses perhaps revealing an implicit assumption that language acquisition is key to "involvement in life and access to local

services" in Italy, while 73% of projects incorporating professional training courses, particularly in the service industries (ANCI, Caritas Italiana et al. 2015: 10-11). Labor integration in particular has also been approached from many different angles, suggesting a broad-based alignment on its importance. Some 90% of projects were "mapping ... employment requirements within the local area," while 60% directly provided internships or work grants, and 28.5% involved "at least one employment integration activity" within one year's time (ANCI, Caritas Italiana et al. 2015: 10-11). According to interviews with Red Cross staff in a reception center in Settimo, as well as existing NGO reports, the socially related activities of "learning Italian, knowledge of and access to services, and identification of specific social networks" are also seen as critical from their perspective in the Italian context (Expert interviews - April 26-29, 2017).

The focus on labor market and housing aspects of social integration particularly makes sense in the Italian context. The rationale behind this choice is that it is the most often identified and condemned observed gaps on the local level of the cities by civil society in the Italian context, who, beyond their direct service delivery role, continue to play an important role as a constructive critic of governmental policy (Doctors Without Borders 2016 et al.). Social actors such as the Swiss Refugee Council and the UNHCR for example, draw attention especially to labor-market integration. The high unemployment rate in Italy in general compounds the problems of refugees and asylum-seekers. In a 2013 report, the UNHCR called attention also to the insufficient statistics kept to record the full extent of the issue, "There is a lack of statistical data .... Information is ... difficult to obtain concerning access to employment and unemployment rates among both asylum-seekers and beneficiaries of international protection." As a result, "many people look for work on the black market, where it is somewhat easier to find jobs" (Swiss Refugee Council 2016: 48). A growing number of NGOs are also calling attention and expressing concern regarding people who are

either homeless, or living in slums (Doctors Without Borders 2016; Caritas 2015 et al.). NGO Cittadini del Mondo, for example, has called SPRAR's services "insufficient" (2015). Too many people tend to be "left without accommodation and usually without work" (Swiss Refugee Council 2016: 37). Seventy-three percent of these residents are unemployed, while the situation for those who have found work is at times precarious, Cittadini del Mondo has said (Swiss Refugee Council 2016: 37). The lack of access to housing and to a source of income leads to unstable conditions, especially for children and women (Expert 1- April 13, 2017).

The Italian state's information on precise roles and responsibilities, as well as their data collection and evaluation methods, is far from systematic. First, "the large variety of associations makes difficult to have structured information on their involvement and actions, and the Ministry of Interior has, for the moment, only created a list of accredited institutions, which can be part of assistance projects" (Bertelsmann-Stiftung 2016: 90). Italian statistics institution reports Italy has established Zaragoza indicators and has been collecting data on the areas of education, employment, and active citizenship since an original pilot report on the Social Condition and Integration of Foreign Citizens in 2011-2012 (FRA 2017). As recently as the latest 2015 report, however, the Italian government still does not distinguish or mention "refugee or asylum-seeker" as a separate category (ANCI, Caritas Italiana et al. 2015).

The evaluation of social integration of refugees specifically has fallen largely to local level nonstate actors (Expert Interview 2- April 28, 2017). The Italian Red Cross, for example, is currently experimenting with smaller scale, ad-hoc evaluations. It is partnering with another non-state actor, Ground Truth Solutions, which specializes in supporting humanitarian actors through evaluation. Starting from a small-scale basic survey in three of their SPRAR reception centers, they hope to develop an instrument routinely to track data

more effectively over time. They also hope to scale these efforts up. The kind of information is, however, only very basic.

3.3 Case Study Finland

3.3.1 State-Centered Multi-Level Governance

Finland's approach to social integration is more state-centered (including national and local-level actors) than Italy's. It is more dominated by the national-level actors. It also has a more distinct division of labor between state and non-state actors.

The Finnish Ministry of Interior focuses on the "reception" of asylum-seekers and provides "general guidelines" for the other actors implementing reception and social-integration policies in Finland (MIGRI 2017). In contrast to Italy's opt-in system for municipalities to host SPRAR centers, the Finnish Ministry of Interior more directly participates in initial social-integration decision-making, including in the local context. It "makes the decisions concerning the establishment, location, and closure of reception centers" (European Migration Network 2016). The local municipalities have less autonomy and discretion than in the Italian model. They are only *informed* that a new accommodation center will be put in place.

The Finnish Immigration Service (MIGRI) falls under the jurisdiction and umbrella of the Finnish Ministry of Interior. It bears the primary responsibility for overseeing the implementation and evaluation of *initial* social-integration-related policies for refugees (European Commission 2016). It is guided by the regulations promulgated by the ministry. Sites have been identified by the ministry, and MIGRI is "responsible for the operative management, planning, and monitoring of the reception centers; the management of the

detention center; and supervising implementation of the system of assistance for victims of human trafficking," as well as "making decisions on asylum applications" (MIGRI 2017). After the initial reception and placement within a reception center, the Ministry of Employment and the Economy oversees "the general development, planning and guidance of the integration policy," including "coordination, national evaluation and monitoring" (Koskela 2014: 8).

Finland takes a mainstreaming approach in the sense that "anything related to establishing a life in Finland is the responsibility of the same Ministry that would be responsible for that issue in relation to native Finnish populations. For example, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is in charge of the health and social welfare issues ... the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the education" (Koskela 2014: 8). Two other actors at the national level play a role beyond social welfare-related functions, a Non-Discrimination Ombudsman and an Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations. The latter takes a unique positive role, liaising across levels (local, regional, and national) and actors (authorities, NGOS, political parties), seeking to build bridges so that the voices of ethnic minorities and all other actors are integrated into the political and policy framework of Finland (European Commission 2016).

There is a much more active layer of top-down state authority at the *regional* level in Finland. These actors partially focus on the longer-term social integration of refugees: the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centers) and the Regional State Administrative Agencies. The ELY Centers serve as the administrative and supervisory authorities for "immigration, integration, and good ethnic relations" by "counseling the municipalities, supporting and monitoring the development of their integration strategies" (European Commission 2016). They create and execute contracts

related to labor-market integration policy and help the Ministry of Interior with creating the plan of which municipalities to send refugees to (European Commission 2016).

In contrast, the six Regional State Administrative Agencies "promote regional equality" by providing the implementation of the different services as outlined by the various national ministries (European Commission 2016). That is, they implement the Ministry of Education and Culture regarding education and the culture, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, regarding health, etc. The municipalities, meanwhile, may work with these regional actors and through them the various national ministries to make an integration plan, or "as a group with *other* municipalities" (European Commission 2016). There is very active multi-directional state-centered collaboration.

3.3.2 Non-State Actors as Support

Civil-society organizations predominantly play a supporting or supplementary role facilitating social interlocution in Finland. When providing support services such as language classes or social activities in a reception centers, they are contracted directly and centrally by the MIGRI's reception unit (Expert 4- April 29, 2017). They respond to identified gaps at various levels. Local, regional and international non-state actors from "native and migrant-led associations, voluntary organizations, church groups, international NGOs" tend to focus on what can be characterized as "more interpersonal state-integration measures" (Koskela 2014: 10). These include "cultural [including customs] and language knowledge" (Koskela 2014: 10). They establish and build interpersonal links between newcomers and communities of Finnish natives. It is a mainstreaming approach, not a form of programming which explicitly and exclusively targets refugees. District branches of the national Finnish Red Cross offer befriending programs open to refugees as well as Finns. These include new interpersonal connections and ties, as well as opportunities for individuals to help elderly Finns in their

homes and in publicly-run homes for the elderly, language clubs, homework clubs, international clubs, and orientation services (Expert 4- April 29, 2017).

The Finnish Red Cross' website makes clear that these services *supplement* rather than replace the work of authorities. For example, regarding the language and homework clubs it says, "The aim of the language clubs is to offer a flexible opportunity to practice Finnish or Swedish skills needed in everyday life. Language clubs supplement the courses provided by the authorities …Homework clubs ...aim ... to prevent marginalization and improve school motivation" (Finnish Red Cross 2017).

Non-state actors also provide supplementary support to state-led social-integration efforts through public awareness-raising, education and advocacy. One of the higher-profile activities by the Finnish Red Cross provides a nationwide anti-racism campaign to encourage greater community-level social cohesion (Expert 4- April 29, 2017).

Representatives of the Finnish Red Cross Helsinki and Turku branches reported a great deal of regional variation in their engagement with individual municipalities, (as is also true in Italy). Sometimes municipalities are not even aware that there is a local Red Cross presence (April 29, 2017. In other instances, the Red Cross is regularly consulted and invited to participate as an advisor and expert regarding community-building and social-integration activities. Still, they are listed on a national government website as a "key partner" (MIGRI 2017).

3.3.3 Changes in Trends in Times of Crisis

There are two contingent moments at which the social-integration division of labor between Italy and Finland seem to converge. The first is in times of crisis. In 2015, Finland saw a rapid uptick in asylum-seekers. While usually there are about 3,000 applications, there were over 32,000 in that year (Leskinen 2016). State services became overwhelmed beyond

capacity. The Finnish Red Cross, which had been running six reception centers nationwide, was running 109 six months later (Leskinen 2016). The Finnish Red Cross found itself operating with an increased number and type of social-integration activities. It was contracted to teach language and cultural knowledge of Finland courses in addition to the ones run by state authorities (Expert 5- April 29, 2017). The Red Cross contracted with the ELY centers to assist with the employment-related integration measures, a task previously almost exclusively performed by the regional and municipal authorities (Expert 5- April 29, 2017).

At the same time, the division of labor involving state actors shifted, too. While previously municipalities were "consulted" with regarding establishment of new reception centers, a new law was passed so that the municipalities would only need to be "notified" in the future (Hofverberg 2016). The rationale behind this centralization was that time and capacity constraints had forced the ministry to be less consultative and participatory and more reactive.

After this moment of crisis passed, the government close down these supplementary Red Cross-run reception centers, though some of the new divisions of labor between state and nonstate actors has since remained, at least for the time being. The Finnish Red Cross in Turku has continued to partner with the ELY center, the Regional State Administrative Agency, and the ministry on piloting a new labor-market integration training tool and a short-term internship program known as "On the Job Learning" (Expert 5- April 29, 2017). As part of a larger "Personal Integration Plan" outlined by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, this program is funded by the state-level Social Insurance Institution or by the municipality (Koskela 2014). Red Cross has been tasked only to implement a small portion of the work of this program. It conducts skills assessment with individual asylum-seekers and refugees. This information, used by the Regional State Administrative Agency and the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, matches individuals with potential brief

internship, job, and/or training opportunities (Expert 5- April 29, 2017). Data is kept on the outcomes of the program, although it is not available in English (MIGRI 2017).

3.3.4 Defining and Evaluating Integration in the Finnish Context

Despite the national ministries being responsible for the social integration of migrants and refugees, it is the City of Helsinki which maintains the most comprehensive online information portal on social integration for migrants and refugees. When one searches the web for information on social integration in Finland, the other authorities' websites re-direct the user to this site. According to this website, "Integration (kotoutuminen) means that you settle in Finland and acquire knowledge and skills that you need in Finnish society. Factors that promote integration include learning the language, finding a job or student position, and forming contacts within Finnish society" (City of Helsinki 2017).

Language learning, labor-market skill and educational integration, and interpersonal community integration are prioritized as important arenas and markers of Finnish social integration. While the labor-market integration overlaps with Italy, the emphasis on "language" and "forming contacts" on the Finnish website suggests more of a social focus than Italy's nationwide SPRAR website does. Though the Ministry of Employment and the Economy holds jurisdiction over economic integration, refugee social integration is also emphasized.

While the declared primary objective of SPRAR in Italy speaks of "independence ... and involvement in life in Italy," Finland's website seems to put more emphasis on the formation of cultural, communal, and social ties. The integration plan in both countries is tailored to the individual. In the Finnish context, however, an "individual contract" between the individual and the Finnish *state* is specifically emphasized (Koskela 2014). A plan is

crafted with the help of a job counselor at the service center at the branch of the national Employment Office.

An applicant goes through an "initial assessment ... integration plan ... and integration training" which includes "detailing measures that will aid your integration," including "Finnish language studies, other education or practical training" (City of Helsinki 2017). There is also a section entitled "An immigrant's native culture in Finland," which highlights both integrating into Finnish society at large ("Even though you move to Finland and are integrated into the society") and the possibilities of cultural and community preservation for newcomers (City of Helsinki 2017). "Your own culture, language and religion can still remain an important part of your life...An immigrant association can help you to maintain and develop your native culture. There are many immigrant associations operating in Finland" it declares (City of Helsinki 2017).

Statistics Finland, the national statistical institution in Finland, provides data on population, education, housing, culture, and the labor market, but it does not track the type of residence permit a person has (Sarvimaki 2017: 8). In that respect, it is similar to Italy. While Statistics Finland does not appear to publish the relevant reports in English which would be needed for a comprehensive assessment, other credible sources such as MIPEX reports that Finland's "culture of piloting and evaluations has developed effective integration support in several areas, including employment and education. Further data, evaluations and pilots can make these integration policies even more effective in practice" (2017).

While in Italy it is the local level nonstate actors piloting and experimenting with new evaluative techniques, it is the Finnish *national ministries* which are driving new partnership and division of labor configurations as well as evaluative configurations. In spring 2016, the Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy announced a new program which would combine language learning, training, and "a quick pathway to employment" (Finnish

Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2016). This program would be partially funded via private investors, and plans were announced that its impact would also be evaluated via "an RCT where the Ministry of Employment and Economy invites randomly selected refugees to participate" (Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2016). To this author's limited knowledge, such an RCT would be the first of its kind in terms of social integration of refugees-related policies.

Conclusion

This paper has sought to capture a small piece of the incredible dynamism and highly collaborative shifting cooperations that have emerged in social integration policymaking in response to the greatest refugee crisis since World War II. While Europe and its communities will undoubtedly face many challenges in the years ahead as it integrates newcomers, the involvement of a multiplicity of governmental and nongovernmental actors, as well as the many policy levels where measures are taking place, should provide ample space for hope. From the spaces of the city to the European Union, policy actors are approaching social integration by building critical new partnerships and applying new ways of thinking. The case studies highlighted in this paper reveal several key lessons. First, there is no one-size-fits-all approach and solution to creating effective social integration. Instead, knowledgeable social actors with a broad range of perspectives and expertise, as well as refugees themselves, should work together to identify the most pressing needs and challenges and create policy solutions. Secondly, policy implementation must balance both the critical needs for a clear division of roles and structure with room for flexibility, improvement, and innovation. Lastly, the experiences of state and nonstate collaboration in Italy and Finland, as well as the emergence of new partnerships between the EU level and cities, reveal unlikely alliances may prove most promising of all.

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