

# Neither multilevel governance nor battleground. Understanding the politics of immigrant integration in small and medium European localities

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## Funding information

European Commission, Grant/Award

Number: 101004714

## Abstract

This article explores the link between migration governance and politics in small and medium-sized localities (SMsLs), asking: what modes of immigrant integration governance emerge in SMsLs?; how are these modes of governance shaped by political factors such as local governments' (LGs) political affiliation, the presence/absence of radical right parties (RPPs) in local councils and the political affiliation of governments at higher levels? To answer these questions, we selected 26 European SMsLs across seven EU countries and applied a mixed-method design combining social network analysis and qualitative content analysis. We find that political dynamics decisively shape integration governance in SMsLs. Centre-left LGs have more frequent and collaborative relations with nonpublic actors, especially when RPPs hold seat in local councils and support regional/national governments. Centre-right LGs usually disengage from integration governance or, when facing strong RPPs, develop strategies to maintain control on issues perceived as highly salient. Vertical relations are either conflictual or absent in all SMsLs.

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## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Migration is one of those highly complex and thorny issues in which the engagement of local governments (LGs) in multilevel governance (MLG) relations – with governmental authorities across different tiers and with a multiplicity of public and nonpublic actors – is usually considered of paramount importance to ensure efficient and timely responses (Lidén et al., 2013). At the same time, migration is also a highly politicised and contested issue (van der Brug et al., 2015), which triggers dynamics of political and societal polarisation. To explore the intricacies of the politics and governance of migration (see: Introduction to this Special Issue), in this article we focus on European small and medium sized towns (SMsLs) that, during the 2015 ‘asylum crisis’, experienced contrasting and polarized reactions to the unprecedented arrival of humanitarian migrants (see e.g.: Trucco, 2022; Bock, 2018; Jäckle and König 2017).

Research on policymaking relations on migration in SMsLs is still scarce – mainly centred around individual case studies – and has provided mixed findings so far. Some scholars have shown that, as with local authorities of bigger cities and multicultural metropolises, LGs of small localities also tend to adopt pragmatic approaches in responding to migration-related challenges and to establish collaborative relationships with higher-ranked governmental authorities and nonpublic organisations, despite their smaller size and more limited institutional capacity and resources (Haselbacher & Segarra, 2022; Hillmann, 2022; Lidén & Nyhlén, 2015). Other studies have identified dynamics of politicisation of local migration policymaking, emphasising the role of party politics and (antimigrant) radical right parties (RRPs) (Castelli Gattinara, 2016; Pettrachin & Fred, 2022). Recently, the ‘battleground’ metaphor has been used to describe the prominence of conflictual relations between local actors, particularly on issues related to asylum seekers’ reception (Campomori & Ambrosini, 2020).

Despite growing interest in migration in SMsLs, we still lack a clear understanding of the relationship between politics and governance in these localities. Knowing more about such relationship seems highly important, considering the increasing role that SMsLs are playing in the management of migrant integration in Europe: these localities are at the forefront of refugee reception and integration since 2014, and have become key partners of national governments and the EU in migrant integration policymaking in Europe (OECD, 2018). Building on an understanding of governance as a process of policymaking where fundamentally political choices on the collective goals to be pursued underpin interactions between a multiplicity of public and nonpublic actors (Peters et al., 2022), this article asks: (1) What modes of governance underlie immigrant integration policymaking in European SMsLs? and (2) How does politics shape different modes of integration governance?

To answer these questions, this article conducts a cross-country and cross-locality study of the relations between politics and governance in 26 European SMsLs, with populations ranging between 10,000 and 120,000 inhabitants, located across seven EU countries (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden). All received asylum seekers during the 2015 ‘asylum crisis’ and were still hosting some of these migrants at the time of our research, between 2017 and 2020. By applying a mixed-method research design combining the use of social network analysis (SNA) and qualitative content analysis, we reconstruct different modes of integration policymaking in SMsLs and explore the influence of three key political factors: (1) LGs’ political affiliations; (2) the presence/absence of RRP in local councils; and (3) the political affiliation of governments at higher levels (and their political congruence/incongruence with LGs).

Our research findings show that, first, different modes of policymaking emerge in European SMsLs with high variation in the horizontal dimension of relations with civil society – ranging

between localist networked governance and segmented governance – and much less variation along the vertical/intergovernmental dimension, as most of our SMSLs engage very sporadically, if at all, with higher levels of governments on integration issues. Second, the paper shows that, rather than being oriented towards problem-solving, LGs' relations in SMSLs are profoundly shaped by political factors. The political affiliation of LGs in SMSLs seems to play a key role in shaping collaborations with nonpublic actors; these are much more frequent and less hierarchical in the case of centre-left LGs compared to centre-right ones. The presence of RRP in both local councils and governing majorities at the regional/national level also influences LGs' horizontal and vertical governance relations, leading to two opposite modes of policymaking. Centre-left LGs facing the opposition of RRP seem to react to the unfavourable political environment by playing a key role in structuring local network governance relations (guided by a sort of 'stronghold syndrome'). Conversely, centre-right LGs seem to react by disengaging from integration policymaking, limiting their engagement to contractual (and control-based) relations with few service providers to comply with regional/national mandates or to respond to highly salient local issues such as housing.

The paper is organised as follows. Section 2 introduces a conceptual space of possible modes of policymaking and discusses the relevant literature on migration governance and politics in small localities. Section 3 provides information on methodology, data sources and type of analyses carried out, while Section 4 illustrates the findings of our SNA and qualitative analyses. In Section 5 we discuss the main modes of policymaking emerging from our study. Our conclusion summarises the article's key contribution to the literature, discusses its policy relevance and suggests ways forward for future research.

## 2 | MIGRATION GOVERNANCE AND POLITICS IN SMALL LOCALITIES

### 2.1 | Modes of migration policymaking in SMSLs

Global challenges such as climate change, migration or the Covid-19 pandemic heavily impact the living conditions in local communities and responses can hardly come from distant national governments alone. LGs are acknowledged to represent strategic nodes for contemporary societies facing complex policy issues (Agranoff, 2018; Eckersley, 2017; Pierre, 2016; Teles, 2023). In particular, the existing scholarship on subnational governance argues that, to improve their governing capacity and acquire knowledge and material resources, LGs have no choice but to engage in building coalitions with a multiplicity of governmental and nongovernmental actors in complex multilevel and transnational configurations (Agranoff, 2018). In this perspective, multilevel governance (MLG henceforth) – intended as a mode of policymaking characterised by collaborative and non-hierarchical relations both on the vertical/intergovernmental dimension and on the horizontal/state-society dimension (Piattoni, 2010) – is a necessary response to the above-mentioned global challenges.

While instances of engagement of LGs in MLG have been identified on issues such as environment and climate mitigation (see e.g., Pierre, 2019), it is far less clear if and to what extent this mode of policymaking can also emerge in the more politically sensitive migration policy field, where party affiliation and political ideology are likely to shape policymakers' views to a large extent, leading to the emergence of fragmented interests and conflicts within local communities and in centre-periphery relations (see e.g., Adam & Hepburn, 2019; Caponio, 2021, 2022).

		Horizontal dimension	
		<i>Intense networking</i>	<i>Scarce networking</i>
Vertical dimension	<i>Collaboration</i>	<i>MLG</i>	<i>Intergovernmental collaboration</i>
	<i>No relations</i>	<i>Politics of adjustment</i>	
	<i>Conflict</i>	<i>Localist network governance</i>	<i>Battleground</i>

FIGURE 1 Modes of migration policymaking in SMSs from the LG perspective.

The existing literature in this policy field has so far largely focused on big cities and international metropolises, finding that LGs' involvement in MLG policymaking is rare (Pettrachin, 2020; Scholten, 2013; Scholten et al., 2018). With regard to the 2015 asylum crisis, comparative studies have shown the prevalence of a top-down and centralised mode of policymaking (Caponio & Ponzo, 2022). This puts much of the burden of reception on SMSs which had previously been affected by migration only marginally – if at all. This lack of experience adds to a more general position of structural weakness for SMSs in policymaking processes: existing research has observed how, in contrast to big cities, smaller localities usually rely on more constrained multilevel relationships (for a review, see: Kaufmann & Wittwer, 2022), and therefore have limited problem-solving capacity, or, following Eckersley (2017, 80), scarce ability to achieve political goals. Especially when devoid of administrative functions, SMSs are found to engage sporadically with higher-ranked governmental authorities and their relations appear to be generally limited to the regional level (Kumar & Stenberg, 2022). Furthermore, on the horizontal/state-society dimension, SMSs often present a limited associational ecology compared to big cities (Baglioni et al., 2007), that is, fewer associations and of a less varied kind, as well as a less diversified private sector (Kumar & Stenberg, 2022).

To explore modes of integration policymaking in SMSs we derive our theoretical framework from the existing literature on subnational governance and MLG (Agranoff, 2018; Pierre, 2016; Teles, 2023). This literature singles out two key dimensions underlying LGs' engagement in multilevel policymaking relations: the vertical dimension, that regards relations with higher-ranked levels of government; and the horizontal dimension, which reflects the emergence at the local level of complex partnership and/or contractual relations between public and non-public actors. Following previous work on local migration policy (see e.g., Caponio, 2021; Pettrachin, 2020; Scholten & Penninx, 2016), in Figure 1 we conceptualise these two dimensions as continuums defining a conceptual space of possible modes of local migration policymaking, that is, of taking decisions and implementing policy actions on migration-related issues. Whereas on the vertical dimension intergovernmental relations range from collaborative to no relations and conflict, on the horizontal dimension relations between LGs and non-public actors go from very intense (dense networking) to rather occasional and/or limited in scope (scarce networking).

Hence, five ideal modes of policymaking can be identified that correspond to different configurations of vertical and horizontal relations. A first mode is *MLG*, that, as anticipated above, is characterised by the emergence of collaborative relations between LGs and other actors on both the horizontal and vertical dimensions (Agranoff, 2018; Piattoni, 2010). More specifically, in *MLG*, LGs officials regularly engage in specific policymaking arrangements – like migration policy committees

or integration commissions – with local stakeholders and, at the same time, with representatives of higher ranked governmental authorities. A second mode of policymaking is *intergovernmental collaboration*, where LGs are involved in establishing collaborative relationships only with regional and/or national governments, reflecting the primacy of public decision-makers in the form of steering committees or coordination meetings. These types of arrangements, while multi-layered, do not entail any engagement of nonpublic actors, and therefore, as posited by Alcantara et al. (2016), have to be considered as instances of intergovernmental relations rather than of MLG.

At the bottom of Figure 1, *network governance* takes place essentially on the horizontal/state-society dimension of policymaking processes, with relations being characterised by ongoing social exchanges, common vision or purpose and reciprocity (Keast, 2016, p. 443). In the migration policy field, this mode can imply *localist* governance and decoupling, where local and national policies develop in divergent directions and follow conflicting goals (Scholten, 2013). In the *battleground* mode of policymaking – identified by Ambrosini (2018) – different coalitions of pro- and anti-immigrant actors have collaborative interactions within the coalition and conflictual relations with the other coalition(s). Adopting a LG's perspective, we use this label to indicate a mode of policymaking where LGs have conflictual relations with regional/national governments and are involved in few (if any) horizontal relations with NGOs based on ideological proximity. Alongside these four main modes of policymaking, an intermediate mode, called *politics of adjustment*, is identified by Haselbacher and Segarra (2022). This mode implies LGs' engagement in mediation and negotiation on both the vertical and horizontal dimensions to adapt centralised policies to local conditions – mainly in reaction to protests in the local community to the top-down redistribution of asylum seekers. In this mode, vertical relations are rather/mildly collaborative, even though LGs and regional/national governments do not share the same goals and pursue different logics.

## 2.2 | Local migration governance and politics: A literature review

By acknowledging the importance of conflict within policymaking processes on migration taking place at a local level, our theoretical framework departs from an understanding of governance as a process where multiple public and nonpublic actors work together to produce and implement policy (Ansell & Torfing, 2016; Stoker, 2019). However, such a process implies fundamentally political choices on the collective goals to be pursued (Peters et al., 2022), for example, on how to accommodate and integrate migrants and refugees. It follows that politics has a critical role in shaping who will work with whom and how in the making of local migration policy.

Such a political dimension of migration governance has become highly relevant in the past decade following the growing local political contestation and politicisation of the migration issue (Castelli Gattinara, 2016; Pettrachin, 2023). It follows that political factors can be potentially crucial in accounting for the emergence of different modes of policymaking in SMLs. Nevertheless, few scholarly works have thus far focused on the link between local migration politics and governance. Once again, they mostly focus on big cities and/or individual case studies. Our review of these works suggests that three main political factors can potentially influence local policymaking processes on migration:

- (i) *The political affiliation and ideology of LGs.* Before the 2015 'refugee crisis', Helbling (2014) argued that European centre-right and centre-left parties had remarkably similar views on immigrant integration, with favourable – yet moderate – attitudes regarding cultural difference. After 2015, Hadj Abdou, Bale and Geddes (2021, 12) argue that centre-right parties

increasingly framed immigration in socio-cultural (restrictive) terms rather than economic terms, emphasising perceived failings in immigrant integration in their rhetoric, while centre-left parties mostly maintained their more liberal positions on the issue (Hutter & Kriesi, 2019). Few scholarly works have reflected upon the effects of these developments for the local level. Most scholarly works on migration policymaking in fact tend to consider LGs' political affiliation as rather irrelevant: policymaking relations – they argue – are largely developed by local officers, whose priority is that of 'getting things done' (Jorgensen, 2012; Penninx & Martiniello, 2004; Poppelaars & Scholten, 2008; Schiller, 2016; Scholten & Penninx, 2016; Spencer, 2018). Most of these studies that argue that political dynamics do not play a role in migration governance processes focus on big cities, but this argument is also made by scholars focusing on small localities (Lidén & Nyhlén, 2022; Myrberg, 2017; Schammann et al., 2021; Søholt & Aasland, 2019). However, other studies suggest that cities led by centre-left parties tended to favour the involvement of migrant associations while centre-right LGs tend to prioritise relations with charitable or religious associations or the private sector (see e.g., de Graauw and Vermeulen 2016; Moutselos & Schönwälder, 2022). Particularly in the field of asylum seeker reception, the few studies on small localities point out that centre-right LGs are less prone than centre-left LGs to collaborate with nongovernmental actors (Caponio et al., 2022; Hernes, 2017; Lidén & Nyhlén, 2015; Semprebón et al., 2022; Pettrachin & Fred, 2022 identify an even more radical disengagement from migration governance in the case of LGs controlled by RRP in Italy).

- (ii) *The local presence/strength of RRP.* Some scholarly works have shown that the local strength of RRP within municipal councils can prevent LGs controlled by mainstream parties – particularly but not exclusively from the centre-right – from developing policymaking interactions aimed at favouring immigrant integration (Bolin et al., 2014; Steen & Røed, 2018) and/or lead them to outsource services to NGOs (Caponio et al., 2022; Pettrachin, 2023; Trucco, 2022). Other studies have instead shown that, when facing the presence of RRP in local councils, centre-left LGs tend to develop strong collaborations with nongovernmental actors to improve local management (e.g., of the refugee reception system) with the aim of decreasing local tensions (Semprebón et al., 2022).
- (iii) *Party (in)congruence between LGs and higher-level governments.* The role of party (in)congruence across governmental levels has been debated primarily by research on migration federalism and intergovernmental relations (Adam & Hepburn, 2019). This factor, however, can be potentially relevant also in accounting for different modes of migration policymaking in SMSLs. Recent case studies in fact suggest that, when facing restrictive policies developed by centre-right regional/national governments, centre-left LGs in SMSLs seek to strengthen relations with NGOs and other stakeholders to counter the negative impact of such policies for migrants (Bazurli et al., 2020; Bolzoni et al., 2022; Wahlbeck, 2022).

Overall, this review of the scarce existing literature suggests that, potentially, local political dynamics can decisively influence migration policymaking in SMSLs, either by weakening policy relations or by strengthening the cohesiveness of governance networks. This article conducts what is – to the best of our knowledge – the first systematic cross-country and cross-locality analysis in this field, aiming to assess the impact of the above-mentioned political factors on modes of migration policymaking. We specifically focus on the issue of the integration of migrants who arrived during the 'asylum crisis' between 2017 and 2021, thereby moving beyond existing analyses centred around asylum-seekers' reception. We do so by applying a mixed, quantitative-qualitative methodological approach that is described in the next section.



### 3 | METHODOLOGY

The article focuses on 13 centre-left and 13 centre-right SMSLs, located across seven EU countries that were all centrally affected by the 2015 asylum crisis (Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and Sweden). Case-localities were identified through a rigorous 'diverse case selection strategy' (Gerring and Cojocaru 2016, p. 400) aimed at selecting, from a large population of potential cases, a small array of diverse cases that, together, are intended to 'capture the diversity of the subject' (ibid.).

More specifically, we proceeded in three steps. First, we defined our 'population of potential cases' to include European SMSLs that were directly involved in asylum-seeker reception in 2014–2015, and still hosted some of these humanitarian migrants in 2021. We excluded satellite localities close to big cities and others that were well known for either their welcoming or hostile attitude towards newcomers and/or that hosted a disproportionately high number of asylum seekers (e.g., border localities). Second, we identified several parameters of theoretical interest, including: LGs' political affiliation, the number of inhabitants, experience with previous immigration flows, changes in the number of migrants between 2014 and 2021, unemployment levels, the presence of RRP (i.e., parties affiliated with the *European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR)* and *Identity and Democracy (ID)* groups in the European Parliament) within local councils, and localities' degree of local autonomy<sup>1</sup> and administrative status (e.g., district/provincial capitals). Third, we constructed a grid that maximised the combination of scores associated with these parameters (having broken the interval variables into discrete categories). Each of the possible resulting combinations was associated to one case-locality: individual case-localities were identified that corresponded as much as possible to the required characteristics. These case-localities were selected across different regions within each country, controlled by regional governments with different political affiliations. As a result, we obtained two samples of centre-left and centre-right localities that, on average, were as similar as possible in relation to all of the selected parameters (see Table A1, Annex).

To establish LGs' political affiliation, we looked at the mayorship, local council majority and the alderman responsible for integration in 2020–2021. In our centre-left localities these are all controlled by parties affiliated with the *Socialists & Democrats* and *Greens-EFA* groups in the European Parliament. Sometimes centre-left coalitions also include parties affiliated with the *European Left* (one locality), progressive local parties (four localities), or parties affiliated with *Renew Europe (RE)* (three localities).<sup>2</sup> In our centre-right localities, ruling coalitions include parties affiliated with the centre-right *European Popular Party (EPP)*, and, occasionally, local conservative parties (one locality), parties affiliated with RE (four localities),<sup>2</sup> or regionalist RRP (one locality).

Methodologically, this article relies on insights from a short, structured survey filled in by 496 interviewees, which was used to develop an SNA (Borgatti et al., 2013), and semi-structured interviews with the same interviewees, analysed applying qualitative content analysis (Zhang and Wildemuth 2005).

To select our interviewees, we extrapolated a list of relevant actors engaged in local integration policies from the analysis of scientific literature, local media and policy documents. During fieldwork, conducted between November 2021 and February 2022, we aimed to reach all relevant actors involved in integration policymaking within each locality (see Table A2, Annex). We tried to reach individuals occupying top positions within their institutions/organisations. For actors that were only marginally involved in integration policymaking – for example, members of opposition parties within the local Council – we aimed to reach at least one interviewee per locality.

As part of the structured component, interviewees were asked to complete a survey about the interactions on integration-related issues of their organisation/institution with a predetermined

list of actors<sup>3</sup> (Table A2, Annex). More specifically, we collected data on the frequency of interactions measured on a temporal scale 1–5<sup>4</sup> in two time periods (2020–2021 and 2017–2019), and about the quality of these interactions (scale: 1–5). The quantitative data about the frequency of actors' interactions were used to develop an SNA using the Gephi software.<sup>5</sup> More specifically, applying the SNA, we first mapped the policy networks within an 'average centre-right locality' and an 'average centre-left locality': the resulting network charts are illustrated in Figure 2, where nodes correspond to groups of actors, edges represent the existence of interactions between actors' groups on integration-related issues, and the edges' weight is proportional to the frequency of these interactions. Second, we compared the key features of the two networks. On the one hand, we calculated the actors' centrality values (including both their *weighted in-degree*<sup>6</sup> and their *betweenness centrality*<sup>7</sup>), to identify dominant actors that define the network's goals and 'coordinate and exert a function of intermediation between groups in the network' (Castells, 2009, p. 45) within both networks. On the other hand, we 'zoomed in' on LGs' interactions with other actors comparing the frequency of their interactions in centre-left and centre-right SMsLs.

In the semi-structured component, interviewees were asked several questions about their interactions with other actors, integration policies developed or implemented in the locality, the distribution of tasks and responsibilities among the actors involved and the key factors that influenced actors' approaches to refugee integration. Interviews were conducted in the national languages, transcribed and translated in English,<sup>8</sup> and then analysed through qualitative content analysis conducted in the Atlas.ti software. When coding the interview material with the aim of identifying prevailing modes of policymaking in our localities, we used a mixed deductive-inductive approach: codes were linked mostly to the modes of policymaking identified in our literature review, and one additional mode was identified inductively. Combining information from different interviewees we identified the dominant mode of policymaking within each locality. Finally, we assessed the links between modes of policymaking in our case-localities and different constellations of political factors (the political affiliation of LGs, the political affiliation of regional/national governments, the local/regional presence of RRP), and, more broadly, the influence of these political factors on LGs' relations.

## 4 | FINDINGS

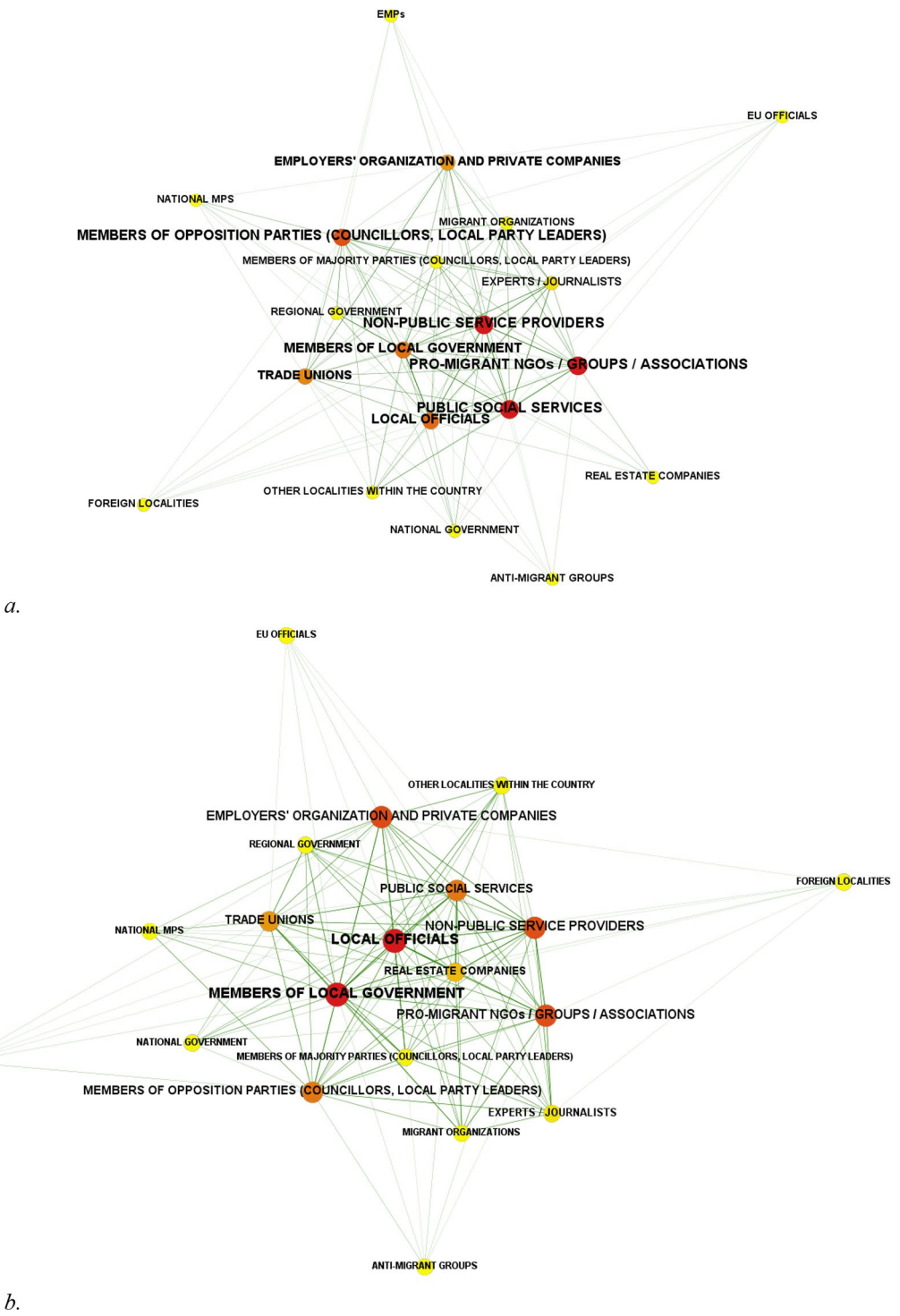
### 4.1 | Integration policy networks in SMsLs

Figure 2 visualises the integration policy networks in our average centre-left and average centre-right SMsLs.

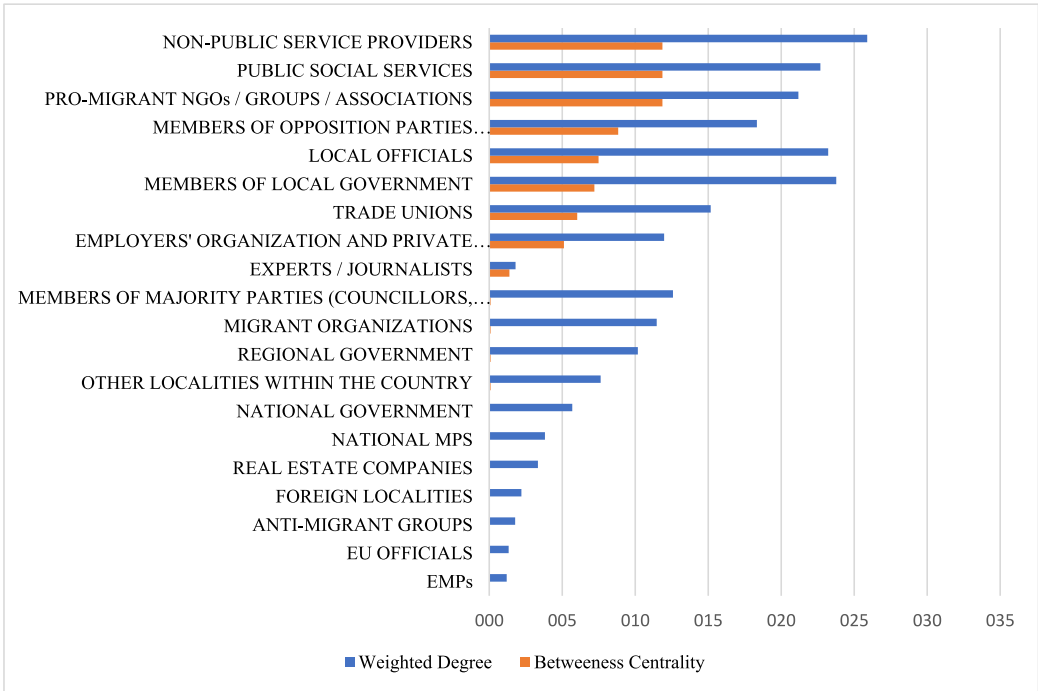
It is interesting to look first at the similarities between the two networks. In both types of localities, civil society actors are very central. Conversely, interactions between local actors and governmental policymakers at higher levels of governance are rather rare, particularly those with EU officials and members of the European Parliament, but also those with national governmental actors.

Figure 3 illustrates actors' centrality values within the two networks, which provides information about the role these actors play within the network. Here some remarkable differences emerge between centre-right and centre-left SMsLs. In centre-left localities, the network is dominated by LGs – that is, officials and elected members – which have the highest betweenness centrality and the highest weighted degree. Following Castells (2009), centre-left LGs are therefore the dominant actors, mediating interactions within their network and proactively setting the network's goals.

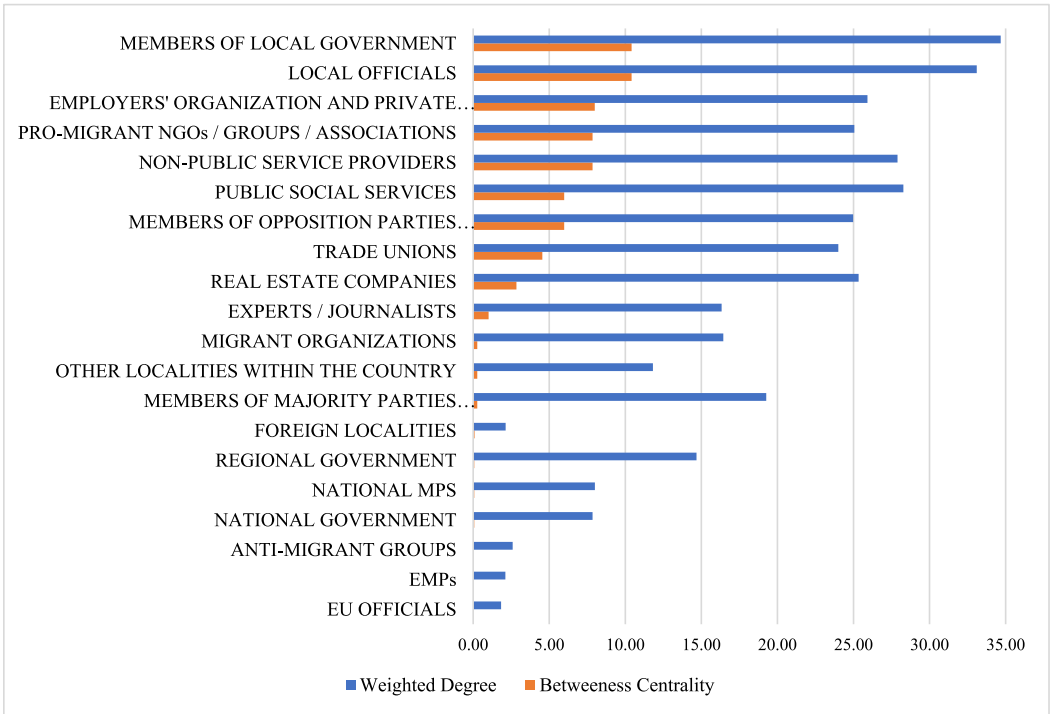




**FIGURE 2** Network charts mapping the frequency of interactions within the integration policy network in an average centre-left and centre-right locality. Nodes indicate groups of actors. Edges represent interactions between them. The weight of edges is proportional to the frequency of exchanges. Nodes' size is proportional to their weighted degree (nodes with highest weighted degree are marked in red). (a) Average centre-right locality. (b) Average centre-left locality.



a.



b.

FIGURE 3 Centrality measures of actors involved in the local policy networks, within an average centre-right and average centre-left locality. (a) Conservative localities. (b) Progressive localities.

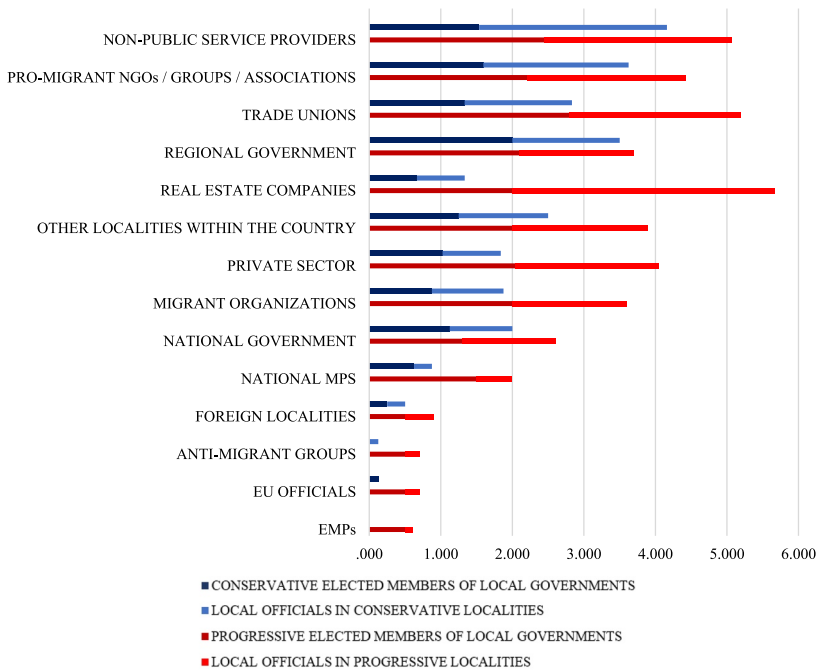


FIGURE 4 Frequency of interactions between LGs and other actors.

In the case of centre-right SMsLs, overall, both actors' betweenness centrality and weighted degree values are much lower compared to the network of centre-left SMsLs. Nongovernmental actors such as nonpublic service providers and pro-migrant NGOs have the highest betweenness centrality, while nonpublic service providers have the highest weighted degree. Compared to centre-left LGs, centre-right LGs have a lower betweenness centrality (7.2 vs. 10.4) and a much lower weighted degree (23.7 vs. 34.7). This suggests that centre-right LGs have much less interaction related to immigrant integration with other actors.

Figure 4 zooms in on LGs' horizontal and vertical interactions. We include in this analysis the relations developed by both elected politicians (e.g., mayors and other elected members of LG) and high-level local officials, with the aim of capturing the overall relations of LGs. As highlighted by the figure, there is little difference between local officials' and elected policymakers' relations, suggesting that in SMsLs, contrary to what has been observed in big cities (see e.g., Poppelaars & Scholten, 2008; Schiller, 2016), relations developed by local officials are largely agreed upon with elected politicians. The figure suggests that, overall, LGs' vertical interactions are very infrequent. In the case of horizontal interactions with nongovernmental local actors, major differences emerge between centre-right and centre-left LGs. Compared to centre-right ones, centre-left LGs have more frequent interactions with all actors. Differences are very high for trade unions, migrant organisations, and nonpublic service providers, but centre-left policymakers also have much more frequent interactions with estate companies and private companies.

The same analyses have been replicated with data collected about the 2017–2019 time period. Overall, similar patterns emerge compared to 2020–2021, but with a remarkable decrease (of around 1 point in our temporal scale) in the frequency of all integration-related interactions (regardless of LGs' political affiliation), presumably due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## 4.2 | Vertical policymaking relations

Having reconstructed the policy networks in our average centre-right and centre-left SMsLs, in this section we dig deeper into the analysis of the impact of political factors on vertical/intergovernmental policymaking relations on refugee integration.

Not surprisingly, our findings suggest that these relations vary across different types of institutional settings. Three scenarios can be identified: a high centralisation of competences on immigrant reception and integration at the national level in Sweden and the Netherlands; a centralisation of competences on immigrant reception and integration at the regional level in Belgium; a mixed system in other federal and regionalised countries (Austria, Germany, Italy, Spain), where national governments keep playing a role but responsibilities are mostly devolved to regional governments. While in centralised systems municipalities must implement policies established by higher levels of government and are assigned specific legal tasks and mandates, in federal and regionalised countries municipalities must deal with different policy frameworks and approaches, which generally require greater coordination efforts.

Our semi-structured interviews also confirm that (as shown by the SNA) intergovernmental relations are scarce in all of our localities. Most of the local policymakers interviewed complained about the isolation of LGs of their localities and their exclusion from discussions and policy processes taking place at higher levels of government:

It's unfortunate that we lack a direct connection with the Central Asylum Agency (CAO). Having such a connection would be highly beneficial, enabling us to expedite our efforts towards integration. However, this is not currently the case. (Local Official, Netherlands)

Furthermore, the interviews conducted suggest that these relations are characterised by a considerable degree of conflict, which often reflects different ideological stances on migration, with some notable differences between localities with different political affiliations.

Centre-right and centre-left SMsLs have rare relations or in a few cases some (mild) collaboration with governments at higher levels that have the same political affiliation. Instances of mild collaboration emerge in Horn and Kufstein, two small centre-right Austrian localities, where, after initial tensions with the respective centre-right regional governments (in Lower Austria and Tyrol) related to the opening of first reception shelters, some collaborative intergovernmental relations developed on integration measures concerning language courses and employment (for more details see: Skrivanek et al., 2022). In the small centre-left town of Cuneo (Italy), some collaborative relations developed with the centre-left regional government on the drafting of a protocol on irregular migrant work in agriculture, an initiative that was then abandoned in 2019 by the new centre-right regional government (for more details see: Ponzo et al., 2022). In Sweden, centre-left LGs had generally scarce interactions with the centre-left national government. Some centre-left local policymakers' criticism of Swedish national integration policies and related funding schemes revealed by our interviews suggest that the lack of relations might reflect distrust between governments at different levels.

Distrust and lack of communication often turn into open conflict in the case of interactions between governments with different political affiliations. In particular, highly conflictual relations emerge between centre-left LGs interacting with centre-right regional governments supported by RRP or controlled by EPP-affiliated parties. A case in point is Leuven (Belgium), a centre-left medium town that lamented scarce coordination and subtle opposition from the centre-right Flemish government (controlled by the ECR-affiliated N-VA, and the centre-right

CD&V and Open Vld) to local integration policies (for more details, see: Hantson et al., 2022). Similarly, in the small town of Sankt Pölten in Lower Austria, the relation between the centre-left LG and the regional government controlled by the radical right *FPÖ* and the centre-right *ÖVP* was described as conflictual by several interviewees: the centre-left LG tried to resist the implementation of restrictive measures (such as a new Social Assistance Act) developed by the regional government, which in turn tried to put pressure on the LG in various ways, including through the media. In the centre-left small town of Soria, relations with the centre-right regional government of Castile and León are depicted by one interviewee as ‘a constant fight about funding, with one level blaming on the other for anything that goes wrong’. In Cadiz (Spain) conflicts developed between a regional government controlled by the centre-right *Partido Popular* and the RR *Vox* and a centre-left LG led by the *PSOE* and *Podemos*. As a Spanish interviewee puts it:

In Spain, policies or initiatives coming from other administrative levels will be supported or opposed depending on the political party in power. It's strictly party-political. This is the main problem of Spain: the lack of cooperation between different levels of government that are not led by the same political party. (Spanish regional official, 2022)

In our sample, cases of open conflict between centre-right LGs and centre-left regional/national governments are far rarer, despite some centre-right localities being reluctant to implement inclusive regional policies (as in the case of the Walloon centre-right town of Arlon, see Hantson et al., 2022). Some conflictual relationships between centre-right LGs and centre-left national governments emerge in Girona and Olot in Catalonia, which reflects the ongoing struggle for independence in the region (for more details, see: Schweitzer et al., 2022), and in the Swedish town of Trelleborg, in the Scania region (on social assistance programmes for refugees; for more details, see Emilsson et al., 2022).

### 4.3 | Horizontal relations

Our interviews largely confirm that in centre-right localities policy networks are highly fragmented, with LGs developing infrequent horizontal interactions and nonpublic service providers playing a key role in connecting public and nonpublic actors involved in immigrant integration. Centre-right LGs tend to interact ‘bilaterally’ with nonprofit organisations with the main goal of delegating tasks or outsourcing services, particularly related to their specific policy priorities. A partial exception is represented by those SMLs where LGs have a specific legal task to coordinate immigrant integration policy mandated by national/regional legislation. In these localities, LGs are slightly more proactive in promoting networking, even though primarily of an informal kind and often limited to the organisations directly contracted by the municipality. In Katwijk, in the Netherlands, interviewees describe a ‘well-functioning’ and ‘collaborative’ network and the LG has regular meetings with nonprofit service providers. In Dessau, in Saxony-Anhalt (Germany), the Länder – consistent with a regional approach aimed at attracting migrants to counter demographic decline – has funded two positions of ‘local coordinators’ that played a crucial role in initiating a local network on social cohesion notwithstanding the scarce interest of the centre-right LG.

Our interviews also suggest that the presence of RRP within local councils noticeably influences centre-right LGs' interactions with nonpublic actors. These LGs seem more open to addressing requests from civil society and collaborating with nonpublic actors when RRP are not present in the local Council. In Arlon, in Wallonia, the LG is not engaged in many horizontal interactions but, under pressure from NGOs, volunteers and other neighbouring municipalities, agreed to open an emergency reception centre to help migrants transiting through the town. The LG of Acate

(Italy), which largely disengaged from integration activities, similarly did not oppose the creation of an informal network of CSOs supporting migrants living in remote rural areas, and participated in consultation tables established by the Prefecture on migrants' exploitation in agriculture.

Conversely, in localities where RRP hold seats within local councils, centre-right LGs tend to have a far less accommodative attitude on immigrant integration. These LGs do not directly engage in supporting immigrant integration and largely outsource integration services to NGOs, but in doing so they are much keener to control the implementation of those measures that are considered particularly sensitive from a political point of view. As an Italian centre-right policymaker in Caltagirone puts it 'we tried to do this [develop relations with CSOs] through control, not to repress but to prevent mismanagement of the reception centres that, after all, are all private, albeit financed by the municipality'. In Horn and Kufstein (Austria), centre-right LGs also closely controlled the activities of NGOs in charge of providing accommodation and integration services to avoid spatial concentrations and protests (for more details see Skrivanek et al., 2022). Similar control dynamics emerge in Dessau and Trelleborg, where centre-right LGs largely disengage from integration policymaking but invest strategically on those more general issues (housing, unemployment or access to social benefits) that are perceived as highly salient for locals (for more details see: Enßle-Reinhardt et al., 2022; Emilsson et al., 2022). An even more radical disengagement from integration policymaking emerges in Novara, the only case-locality where RRP are in local government (for more details see Ponzio et al., 2022).

In centre-left localities, two patterns of relations seem to emerge from our qualitative analysis: a reactive pattern and a proactive pattern. In the reactive pattern, LGs delegate tasks to NGOs and/or support the initiatives autonomously established by these organisations. In the three Spanish centre-left case-localities, for instance, NGOs played a key role in promoting integration activities for asylum seekers that were then supported by LGs (for more details see Schweitzer et al., 2022). In Luchow-Dannenberg (Germany), the LG, in a difficult financial situation, initially provided only basic accommodation support and language courses to asylum seekers, but later responded to pressures from a very lively network of NGOs and volunteers setting up a roundtable to discuss relevant issues and coordinate with local stakeholders.

The proactive pattern is characterised by an even higher centrality of LGs, that not only support initiatives developed or proposed by NGOs but also actively engage in *promoting* specific policy actions *together with* civil society. This pattern characterises most of our centre-left case-localities, and in particular those where RRP are represented in local councils. In Gavle (Sweden), for instance, the LG extensively collaborated with CSOs to provide supplementary language training and tuition for refugees, and to organise outreach events in socioeconomically vulnerable areas, therefore linking integration to broader concerns for social sustainability. Nonpublic actors working on integration issues were also included in the planning of the locality's social sustainability programme. In Sankt Pölten (Austria), the municipal Integration Office played a crucial role in coordinating refugee reception: it pushed a local CSO to organise initiatives (called 'Encounter Cafés') to promote encounters between locals and migrants, and collaborated with other public agencies and private welfare organisations offering language courses. In Leuven and Cuneo, LGs were involved in even more far-reaching and institutionalised governance networks. In Cuneo, the LG established a specific municipal office for migrant integration (*Meet Point*). In Leuven, the LG took a very active role in supporting, funding and coordinating local nonpublic actors working on immigrant integration. An institutionalised platform was set up by the town which allows NGOs to exchange information and notify the LG of potential problems they might encounter in their communities.



5 | DISCUSSION

Overall, the analysis conducted in our 26 European SMSLs has shown that local political factors – including not only LGs' ideological stances but also the presence of RRP – decisively shape integration policymaking processes in SMSLs. Our SNA has indeed shown that policy networks in centre-left and centre-right localities have very distinctive features, with a much higher centrality of LGs in the former. Our qualitative analysis has shown that not only LGs' political affiliation but also the presence of RRP in local councils and – to some extent – in regional/national governments contributes to the emergence of different types of vertical and horizontal relations in our SMSLs.

Figure 5 provides a synthetic overview of our findings by positioning the 26 analysed SMSLs on the conceptual space introduced in Section 1. The majority of our localities are located close to the centre of the figure and are therefore characterised by some horizontal networking but scarce (if any) relations with governmental authorities at higher levels.

None of our localities is characterised by an MLG mode of governance, as expected. In particular, regardless of LGs' political affiliation, intergovernmental relations are at best sporadic and usually take a top-down direction: LGs in SMSLs are expected to implement regional/national policy but have no influence in the making of such policies. This clearly reflects the structural weakness of SMSLs, which, even when endowed with some administrative tasks (as for around half of our case-localities), have relationships almost exclusively with regional/district levels

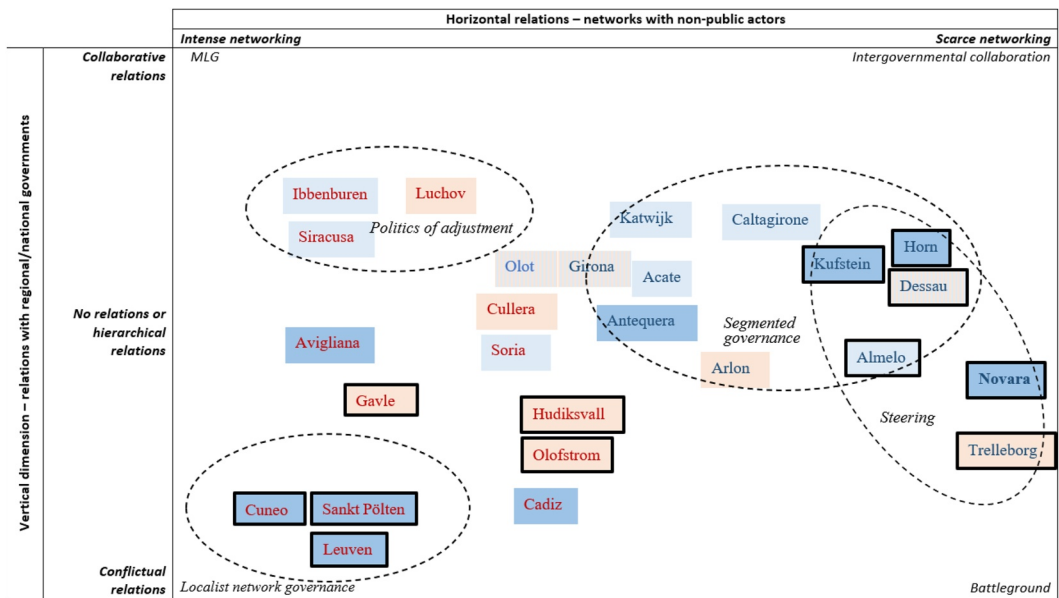


FIGURE 5 Modes of migration policymaking in the selected SMSLs. Names of localities with centre-left LGs are coloured in red, names of localities with centre-right LGs are coloured in blue. Background colours indicate the affiliation of the regional government (for federal or semi-federal countries) or of the national government (for centralised countries): red = progressive; light blue = centre-right without RRP; dark blue = coalition of centre-right and RRP. A black border of the text box indicates the presence of RRP within the local council. Localities' position in the conceptual space was established by analysing quantitative relations data about the frequency and quality of actors' relations collected through the structured survey filled in by interviewees and content analysis of the interview material.

and very limited (if any) access to EU institutions and national governments (Kaufmann & Wittwer, 2022; Kumar & Stenberg, 2022).

The battleground mode, characterised primarily by conflicts on the vertical dimension and ideological fragmentation (and/or conflict) on the horizontal dimension, is also very marginal in our analysis. This mode of policymaking has been so far identified by scholars who looked at the more politicised issues of undocumented migration (Ambrosini, 2018) or asylum-seeker reception (Campomori & Ambrosini, 2020; Caponio, 2021), mostly during the 'asylum crisis'. Integration policymaking, our analysis suggests, is characterised by a lower contestation. This might be due to the fact that it concerns policies that generally imply some acceptance of the migrants' presence (Penninx & Martiniello, 2004). Alternatively, this might be related to the fact that our analysis focuses on the time period that follows the 2015 'asylum crisis', suggesting that a higher level of conflict can be expected when LGs face emergency-like situations.

This does not mean that we do not identify conflicts in integration policymaking processes, but rather that most of our localities are characterised by a mix of collaboration and conflict that reflect more specific modes of governance than the battleground. A localist network governance mode emerges in three centre-left SMsLs (Cuneo, Sankt Pölten and Leuven, bottom-left corner of the figure) characterised by a strong presence of RRP in *both* the local council and the regional/national governments. In these localities, LGs have dense collaborative relations with nonpublic actors and highly conflictual vertical/intergovernmental relations. Local governance is therefore decoupled from regional/national policymaking (Scholten, 2013), and based on a strong centre-left ideological identity: our interview material highlights a sort of 'stronghold syndrome', meaning that policymakers and stakeholders share a sense of belonging to a welcoming community that wants to react to the mounting of anti-immigrant attitudes and restrictive policies.

Conversely, in centre-left localities where RRP are not represented in local councils and are not part of regional/national governments, governance resembles the 'politics of adjustment' mode identified by Haselbacher and Segarra (2022) – implying strong relations between LGs and nongovernmental actors and some mildly collaborative intergovernmental relations aimed at adjusting policies to local conditions. RRP's weakness or absence seems to favour a limited intergovernmental dialogue even when there is incongruence between local and regional governments (e.g., Ibbenburen and Siracusa).

Policymaking processes in our centre-right localities, instead, do not reflect any of the modes of governance identified in the existing literature. Most centre-right SMsLs are characterised by a sort of 'segmented governance mode' which is inductively identified by our analysis. In this additional mode of policymaking vertical relations are absent or limited to compliance, and horizontal relations are marked by selective partnerships with (and delegation of tasks to) a limited number of nonprofit service providers that are contracted to implement specific local or regional/national policies. In four of these SMsLs characterised by the presence of RRP in local councils these segmented horizontal relations are even more top-down and characterised by a prevalence of hierarchy and control: here segmented relations with NGOs also involve a high level of 'steering' (Mayntz, 2016), meaning that LGs keep direct control on issues that are regarded as particularly salient in the local community like housing and access to employment. An even more characterised 'steering mode of policymaking' seems to characterise Trelleborg and Novara, where LGs (which in Novara also includes RRP) have almost no relations with nongovernmental actors and directly provide a few strategic services 'in-house'. This 'control syndrome' suggests that mainstream centre-right parties facing competition on migration from the PRRs primarily aim to demonstrate to the public their capacity to keep the issue under control in order to lower politicisation.

## 6 | CONCLUSION

This paper has addressed the link between governance and politics by focusing on SMSLs – still under-researched by political scientists, especially in Europe – facing a highly complex and politicised issue like migration. The 2015 ‘asylum crisis’ was a watershed for these localities, for the first time confronted with the reception and integration of refugees. Theorists of local governance suggest that, to efficiently deal with these challenges, LGs will seek to establish MLG relations (Agranoff, 2018; Eckersley, 2017; Pierre, 2016), that is collaborative interactions on the vertical/intergovernmental and the horizontal/state-society dimensions. However, the scarce existing scholarship on migration policymaking in SMSLs reveals a very different picture, reporting that LGs are engaging in a ‘politics of adjustment’ to adapt national asylum policies to local conditions (Haselbacher & Segarra, 2022), or pointing to the existence of a local ‘battleground’, characterised by conflict and politicisation (Campomori & Ambrosini, 2020).

While the existing literature is limited to individual case studies, this article has conducted what is, to the best of our knowledge, the first comprehensive cross-country and cross-locality (mixed-method) analysis investigating local migration policymaking in 26 European SMSLs dealing with refugee integration. We conducted this study with the twofold aim of identifying prevailing modes of refugee integration policymaking in the case-localities analysed, and to explore the link between the emergence of these modes of policymaking and local politics. Starting from an understanding of governance as a process of deciding and implementing policies that, while based on the interaction between numerous public and nonpublic actors, clearly implies fundamentally political choices on the collective goals to be pursued (Peters et al., 2022), we have specifically explored the influence of three political factors: LGs’ political affiliation and ideology; the local strength of RRP; and the political (in)congruence between LGs and regional/national governments.

Our analysis leads to three main findings. First, the governance of refugee integration in European SMSLs is overall highly fragmented and does not resemble the MLG mode of policymaking theorised by the local governance scholarship. Despite SMSLs having been defined as ‘key partners in the MLG of migration’ by the EU Urban Agenda (OECD, 2018), this article has shown that SMSLs have very few relations with higher-ranked authorities (irrespective of the governing majority). Second, LGs’ political affiliation seems to decisively influence the development of relations with nonpublic actors: centre-left LGs in our case-localities are involved in more frequent and more collaborative (and less hierarchical) policy interactions with nongovernmental actors compared to centre-right LGs. Third, the presence of RRP in local councils and in governmental coalitions at the regional/national level seems to have a differentiated effect on centre-left and centre-right LGs. In centre-left SMSLs, it contributes to strengthening local networks, leading to a sort of ‘stronghold syndrome’, whereby LGs and nongovernmental actors jointly react to anti-immigrant populism. In the centre-right camp, instead, political (in)congruence with regional or national governments does not make a difference, while the presence of RRP in the city council seems to account for a ‘control syndrome’, meaning that the LG in these localities interact with few service providers (if any), while maintaining some control on particularly sensitive issues like housing and/or employment.

To conclude, our results suggest that the emergence of specific modes of integration policymaking in SMSLs are strictly related to different constellations of political factors. These results have important implications for the theorization of subnational governance facing ‘thorny’ policy challenges. They point to the key importance of considering SMSLs as strategic sites for the governance of globalisation-related issues such as migration, and not simply as subordinated local authorities executing national policies. More research on SMSLs is needed, including on very small rural areas (below 10,000), which are typically described as left-behind from globalisa-

tion. Second, our results suggest the need to go beyond analyses of success stories of good governance (Teles, 2023) and to bring politics back in (Peters et al., 2022), in order to better understand how ideology and political dynamics can influence the configuration of policymaking in different types of localities. More systematic research is particularly needed on localities characterised by a strong presence of RRP, particularly in local government, and on the influence of RRP on migration-related policymaking processes.

Third, the results also show the importance of developing cross-country and cross-locality comparisons, that, going beyond national different institutional frameworks, certainly crucial in the EU context, still enable new insights on the intricacies of subnational politics and governance in contemporary European democracies.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Data used in this paper have been collected by researchers working in the Whole-COMM Consortium, including: Irene Ponzio, Eleonora Milazzo, Orlando De Gregorio, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Reinhard Schweitzer, Elina Jonitz, Louise Hantson, Hakan Kilic, Isabella Skrivaneck, Birgit Glorius, Friederike Enssle-Reinhardt, Hanne Schneider and Henrik Emilsson, Måns Lundstedt and Ingrid Jerve Ramsøy. This research has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101004714.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

No conflict of interest.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The quantitative data that support the social network analysis conducted in this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Derived from Ladner et al., 2016.
- <sup>2</sup> For parties affiliated with RE, unaffiliated policymakers and local parties, we looked at party alliances and checked local party manifestos to understand their position on immigration/integration.
- <sup>3</sup> This was extrapolated through analysis of the literature and local media, and was made uniform across countries to ensure comparability of the results.
- <sup>4</sup> 1 = occasionally (once or once per year); 2 = 2/3 times per year; 3 = monthly/bimonthly; 4 = weekly (or 2/3 times per month); 5 = daily (or 2/3 times per week).
- <sup>5</sup> Initially, we mapped each locality's policy networks, with nodes corresponding to groups of actors of the same type. Interviewees' responses were merged into one single node representing the actors' group (we selected the highest value for the frequency of interaction). Then, we merged the networks created for the 13 centre-left localities and the 13 centre-right localities (we calculated average values for interactions between the same actors' groups in different localities). A space-directed algorithm was applied when creating our networks, which tends to keep closer actors whose interactions are more intense.
- <sup>6</sup> That is, the sum of the value of all the actor's ties in the network.
- <sup>7</sup> That is, the number of shortest paths from all the vertices to all the other vertices in the network that pass through the node in consideration.
- <sup>8</sup> Interviews were conducted by researchers based in each country, coordinated by the authors of this article.

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**How to cite this article:** Caponio, T., & Pettrachin, A. (2023). Neither multilevel governance nor battleground. Understanding the politics of immigrant integration in small and medium European localities. *Governance*, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gove.12833>

## ANNEX

**TABLE A1** Characteristics of the selected case-localities and of the average centre-left and centre-right case-localities.

Localities	Country	Political affiliation of the local government (mayorship, majority in the local council, alderman responsible for integration)	Radical right presence in the local council		Type of locality: 1 = rural areas (7000–30,000, low population density, no administrative function); 2 = small towns: (30,000–80,000); 3 = medium towns (100,000–150,000 + administrative function)
			Number of inhabitants		
Sankt Pölten	Austria	Centre-left	Yes	50454	2
Leuven	Belgium	Centre-left	Yes	102275	3
Ibbenburen	Germany	Centre-left	No	51526	2
Luchow-Dannenberg	Germany	Centre-left	No	9407	1
Avigliana	Italy	Centre-left	No	11768	1
Cuneo	Italy	Centre-left	Yes	53365	2
Siracusa	Italy	Centre-left	No	122120	3
Cadiz	Spain	Centre-left	No	117974	3
Cullera	Spain	Centre-left	No	22461	1
Soria	Spain	Centre-left	No	39516	2
Gavle	Sweden	Centre-left	Yes	98314	3
Hudiksvall	Sweden	Centre-left	Yes	36924	2
Olofstrom	Sweden	Centre-left	Yes	13031	1
<b>Average centre-left locality</b>		<b>Centre-left</b>	<b>0.46</b>	<b>56087</b>	<b>2.00</b>
Horn	Austria	Centre-right	Yes	6450	1
Kramsach/kufstein	Austria	Centre-right	Yes	19600	1
Arlon	Belgium	Centre-right	No	30081	2
Dessau	Germany	Centre-right	Yes	80103	2
Acate	Italy	Centre-right	No	10899	1
Caltagirone	Italy	Centre-right	No	39314	2
Novara	Italy	Centre-right	Yes	101620	3
Almelo	Netherlands	Centre-right	Yes	73107	2
Katwijk	Netherlands	Centre-right	No	65753	2
Antequera	Spain	Centre-right	No	41430	2
Girona	Spain	Centre-right	No	103369	3
Olot	Spain	Centre-right	No	33913	2
Trelleborg	Sweden	Centre-right	Yes	42973	2
<b>Average centre-right locality</b>		<b>Centre-right</b>	<b>0.46</b>	<b>49893</b>	<b>1.92</b>

Note: The lines in bold provide information about average centre-left and average centre-right localities.

Degree of local autonomy	Share of non-EU migrants 2019 (citizenship)	Difference in share of non-EU migrants 2019-2014	Unemployment 2019	Political affiliation of regional government (1 = centre-right; 2 = mixed; 3 = centre-left)	Political affiliation of national government (1 = centre-right; 2 = mixed; 3 = centre-left)
25.17	12.16	2.70	7.10	1	1
21.79	11.11	2.45	3.18	1	2
27.5	8.26	2.93	3.60	1	2
27.5	5.75	1.15	7.30	3	2
25.5	2.1	-0.10	8.54	1	2
25.5	7.67	0.28	4.90	1	2
25.5	3.77	2.77	24.40	1	2
22.06	1.51	-0.01	27.02	1	3
22.06	6.52	0.43	12.03	3	3
22.06	7.12	-0.26	9.46	1	3
28.67	8.85	2.96	8.27	3	3
28.67	5.08	1.70	6.47	3	3
28.67	7.36	2.46	9.62	1	3
<b>25.43</b>	<b>6.71</b>	<b>1.50</b>	<b>10.15</b>	<b>1.62</b>	<b>2.38</b>
25.17	6.01	2.07	3.80	1	1
25.17	2.32	0.36	2.40	1	1
21.79	3.42	0.55	10.30	3	2
27.5	5.68	2.70	7.70	2	2
25.5	14.89	3.12	16.70	1	2
25.5	2.66	1.66	16.20	1	2
25.5	13.26	0.73	8.00	1	2
21.67	4.63	1.25	3.70	2	1
21.67	1.68	0.61	2.50	2	1
22.06	2.77	0.18	18.28	1	3
22.06	12.84	0.64	10.20	2	3
22.06	13.14	0.84	8.15	2	3
28.67	4.25	1.42	6.40	1	3
<b>24.18</b>	<b>6.73</b>	<b>1.24</b>	<b>8.79</b>	<b>1.54</b>	<b>2</b>

**TABLE A2** Overview of interviewees. In parenthesis: number of surveys completed by each interviewee type.

<b>Mayor and/or elected members of LGs responsible for integration</b>	<b>28 (21)</b>
Local municipal officials	42 (33)
Pro-migrant NGOs/associations/groups	48 (35)
Anti-migrant groups	2 (1)
Members of opposition parties (local councillors, local party leaders)	22 (17)
Experts/journalists	18 (7)
Public social services	88 (56)
Private companies	30 (14)
Employers' organizations	25 (18)
Real estate companies/Housing organizations	22 (8)
Non-public services providers	50 (40)
Trade unions	21 (13)
Regional policymakers/officials	29 (survey not used)
National policymakers/officials	11 (survey not used)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>436 (264)</b>

*Note:* The list of actors included in the survey includes all of the above-mentioned actors and the following additional actors: EU officials; Members of European Parliament; National MPs; members of majority parties (local councillors, local party leaders); officials/policymakers from other municipalities in the country; officials/policymakers from foreign municipalities; immigrant organisations.