Local governance of migration-related diversity in small cities: the case of migrants' integration in El Ejido (Spain)

A study on the relationship between the implementation of integration policies and the lack of social cohesion

Master thesis

Governance of Migration and Diversity

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Abstract

El Ejido (Spain) is a small city whose fruit and vegetables' production industry attracts an ever-increasing number of migrants every year. This has provoked an intense demographic change in a short period of time and, although migrants have been settling in the city for many years now, a lack of social cohesion can be found in the city. This research contributes to the study of governance of migration-diversity in small cities that, as El Ejido, experience economic decline, outmigration of young people and ageing population. It is interesting to observe the dilemma on whether migrants are seen as potential for development or, instead, it is believed that their arrival leads to a lack of social cohesion. To do so, a policy analysis together with interviews with workers from the municipality of El Ejido and migrants themselves was done to understand governance of migrants' integration in the municipality. Through studying the policy framing as well as the relationship dynamics between the municipality and migrants, we can observe how the problem of migrants' integration has been defined and what actions have been taken to realise it.

The study found that, although it is recognized that migrants are needed in terms of labour force, most of the measures taken are temporary ones and they are expected to adapt to the values and norms of the receiving society. The policies do not provide opportunities for interaction between the migrant and non-migrant population, which leads to an increase of negative stereotypes against newcomers. There also exist a difference in perception between higher-rank officials and front-line workers from the municipality: while the former ones focus on the cultural differences, mainly stemming from religion, the front-line workers have hardly experienced any conflict when working with the migrants.

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Introduction

One of the most important regions in Europe for fruit and vegetable production is El Ejido, the so-called "Europe's vegetable garden", a small city in the Southeast of Spain that accommodates around 30,000 migrants. Since the 1990s, growing numbers of migrant workers, mainly coming from Morocco, arrived to El Ejido trying to make a living, mainly working in the agricultural field. Entrena-Duran & Jimenez-Diaz (2016) argue that it exists a clear situation of structural violence where farmers have experienced significant improvements in their socioeconomic levels and quality of life, while migrants endure situations of poverty and exploitation. Added to this, migrants in El Ejido have weak ties with non-migrant groups and there is an absence of common collective representations (Jimenez-Diaz, 2014). Due to the great number of nationalities, El Ejido has experienced some xenophobic tensions resulting from intense and rapid socioeconomic and demographic changes in a short period of time. Despite this, there have been no major conflicts between the citizens, as only one important xenophobic event took place in the early 2000s. This does not mean that there is an absence of social tensions in the city. Migrants are perceived as a threat for jobs and access to services, but also arise compassion for their often-harsh living conditions (Jimenez-Diaz, 2014). These xenophobic feelings, among other reasons, are believed to be a consequence of a failure in the successful integration of migrants in El Ejido (Azurmendi, 2001). In fact, many migrants have remained for years in a situation of socioeconomic and spatial segregation which is a potential source of social tensions (Azurmendi, 2001).

All in all, this situation makes me wonder how have policies addressed this issue; in which way have policymakers realised migrants' integration and how are they perceived. Although the municipality demands labour force due to its characteristics, there is a lack of social cohesion and a problem of xenophobia among the society. Thus, exploring the dynamics of local governance of migration diversity in this concrete city is what makes this research distinctive.

A growing body of research has investigated migrants' integration policies in cities with a high share of migrants, generally, metropoles. Lately, attention has been drawn to local governments as they are considered to be essential integration policy actors since thy can directly influence areas such as education, housing, access to labour market and to social services (Caponio & Borkert, 2010; Penninx *et al*., 2004; Penninx, 2009). Research in mid-sized and small cities is timely and needed due to the lack of information about the factors that shape local migration governance and their impacts on the community (Caponio, 2020). Thus,

my research aims to contribute to the growing number of studies focused on local governance of migration.

Therefore, this thesis aims to understand *how local governance of migration related diversity in the municipality of El Ejido (Almeria, Spain) has influenced migrants' integration.* In view of the lack of social cohesion within the society, I want to understand how the problem of migrants' integration was defined and how this was translated into concrete policies and actions. Observing three dimensions of integration: legal-political; socioeconomic and cultural-religious integration, different policy domains can be analysed to observe how the local government has addressed the needs of migrants. I take a qualitative approach to analyse how migrants' integration policies and actions have taken place. Through an analysis of relevant local documents as well as interviews with officials from the municipality and migrants themselves, this thesis seeks to understand what the underlying assumptions of the problem of migrants' integration are, its causes and the solutions for it. The unique contribution of this research lies in its endeavour to understand the perception of migrants from the municipality actors through the policies of El Ejido.

This study aims to contribute to the literature relating to the governance of migrants' integration in a small city, which is a topic that has been getting increasing attention by both research and policy. Specifically, current research is focusing on small and mid-sized cities with similar characteristics: places experiencing economic decline, outmigration of young people and ageing population. Added to this, previous research highlights the dilemma on whether migrants are seen as potential for development or, instead, it is believed that their arrival leads to a lack of social cohesion.

This thesis is structured as follows: In Chapter 1, I review relevant literature on local integration of migrants and elaborate on the theoretical concepts employed. Chapter 2 outlines the methodology, including a detailed explanation of the main research question and sub-questions as well as the methods applied and expectations. In Chapter 3, the findings of this research are presented. Chapter 4 discusses the findings and relates them to the larger body of literature, acknowledging the main contributions and limitations of this thesis. The final chapter summarises the results and develops research and policy recommendations.

Chapter I: Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, firstly, I review existing scholarship on local integration of migrants. Based on this literature review, I identify the theoretical gaps in literature which this thesis addresses. Furthermore, I outline the theoretical concepts and their definitions that make up the theoretical framework of this research.

1.1.   Literature Review

In this first part of the chapter, the relevance of multi-level governance in accordance with the specific role that the municipality plays in migrant integration is described. The 'local turn' on migrant integration is explained as well as the different actors and dimensions that are involved. Finally, it is outlined what research has found about governance of migration in small cities, with a focus on the existing divergence among the municipalities' approaches towards integration of migrants.

1.1.1.   Multi-level governance and the 'local turn' on migrant integration

During the last decade, scholars have increasingly discussed the role of local governments in the context of multi-level governance (Schiller *et al.*, 2020; Zapata-Barrero *et al.*, 2017; Schiller, 2018; Glick-Schiller and Cağlar, 2009; Van Breugel, 2020). Caponio and Borkert (2010) are critical with the European approach on migrants' integration since it has mainly focused on comparing integration models at a national level and acknowledge that migrants' integration happens locally. Previously, nation-states were seen as the main actors when developing integration policies, so different types of integration models were identified by researchers, such as assimilationism, multiculturalism or pluralism. However, these typologies of integration approaches fail to explain the differences in integration measures between different municipalities of the same country (Caponio and Borkert, 2010). Thus, to elaborate on what explain these differences, Penninx (2009) highlights the relevance of multi-level governance when implementing and developing migrant integration policies. In this way, there has been a growing attention to the local level within this field, the so-called 'local turn' (Zapata-Barrero *et al.*, 2017; Scholten, 2013). This local turn is often framed within the area of migrant integration since cities have become prominent agents in the accommodation of diverse people and cultures (Zapata-Barrero *et al.,* 2017; Scholten and Penninx, 2016; Gauci, 2020; Bamberg *et al.,* 2020). In fact, the specific characteristics of each city; the municipality's historical experience with migration; the resources available for policymakers to steer integration processes with regards to housing and labour market integration; and the local

political environment are factors that influence the governance of integration of newcomers (Memişoğlu and Yavçan, 2022). Thus, to understand the variance of local migrants' integration policymaking, it is relevant to go beyond national models and observe the ways in which cities have taken initiative in developing their own integration philosophies, which is later translated into policies (Scholten and Penninx, 2016).

For the chosen municipal case study, this thesis draws on literature on the local level of governance to analyse the relationship between local governance and migrants' integration. Campomori and Caponio (2017) outline different arrangements of multi-level governance involving the interaction of public and non-public actors. They build on literature by Bache and Flinders (2004) to define two dimensions for studying, on the one hand, interactions between governmental levels (vertical dimension) and, on the other, between the state and society (horizontal dimension). The horizontal dimension refers to the level of collaboration with NGOs and other private actors in the governmental decision-making process (Campomori & Caponio, 2017). On the contrary, the vertical dimension defines the relationship between levels of government and can either adopt a top-down or bottom-up approach (Scholten & Penninx, 2016). The *top-down,* or *centralist,* type is characterised by the implementation of national migration and integration policies at a local level. In the same line, this approach states that local government are restricted when developing their own regulations (Scholten, 2013). On the other hand, the *bottom-up, or localist,* perspective is based on the principle of subsidiarity, as it awards more competencies to the local level apart from policy implementation, including the formulation of these (Scholten & Penninx, 2016). Additionally, Scholten (2013) outlines two more types of configurations: multi-level and decoupled. *Multi-level governance* reflects a coordination between the different levels without a clear dominance of one of them. On the contrary, *decoupled* relations between governmental levels involve an absence of coordination between levels.

For this research, the vertical dimension is relevant and close attention will be paid to the bottom-up and the top-down approaches. Based on the research by Scholten and Penninx (2016), the top-down approach in practice has become less applicable than the bottom-up one in integration policymaking. Some scholars argue that this is due to the tendency of local policies to be driven by pragmatic problem-solving (Poppelaars and Scholten, 2008) and their predisposition to better accommodate diversity because of their closeness to migrant organizations (Borkers and Bosswick, 2007; Vermeulen and Stotijn, 2010). This means that

cities have become primary actors when addressing the matter of migrant integration, therefore, it is relevant to observe how this process has taken place in a small municipality.

1.1.2. Governance of migration in small cities

There is divergence between the ways in which policies are developed and implemented at national and local levels, but differences also exist among municipalities (Jorgesen, 2012). The academia has widely criticized the narrow focus on the nation-state level, but simultaneously most attention is given to large European cities and capitals (e.g., Dekker *et al.*, 2015; Jorgesen, 2012; Hepburn and Zapata-Barrero, 2014; Popelaars and Scholten, 2008). Since the 1990s, an increasing number of immigrants has been settling in small and mid-sized cities across European countries, however, little is known about how these towns manage policy issues of migration and integration (Jorgesen, 2012). Pisarevskaya *et al.* (2021), on their analysis on a large number of European cities conclude that, although several clusters of cities can be identified, their complexity is difficult to be captured. This means that the many differences regarding migration-related diversity among the cities cannot be fully explained based on one specific local model. However, economic position of the cities or history of migration are important factors shaping migration-related diversities.

A study by Wulff *et al.* (2008) in Australia, Canada and New Zealand highlights the importance of attracting migrants to small and rural cities in these three countries. Many small towns and regions experience economic decline, population ageing and outmigration of younger people seeking employment opportunities in larger cities. These areas face labour shortages, more concretely of skilled workers, workers for the agricultural sector, and seasonal workers. Their study is relevant for my research, as El Ejido has similar characteristics to those that I have just outlined, as it will be explained in the case selection section. The authors conclude that migrants could be seen as a potential for development when integration policies are focused on meeting the needs of employers, host community and new arrivals and when collaboration with civil society takes place to facilitate inclusion of immigrants. Additionally, a strong integration policy should include opportunities for interaction between migrant and non-migrant population to create positive community relations and social inclusion (Wulff *et al.*, 2008). Driel & Verkuyten's (2019) study of the town of Riace (Italy) is an example of a welcoming reception of newcomers by the local inhabitants, not only based on the town's history of migration, but also because it helps to stop its socioeconomic decline. It shows the importance of the local institutions to promote a pro-social identity so as for the citizens to

have a welcoming attitude. This involves offering opportunities and stimulating the locals' participation to the refugee integration programs aimed at socio-economic inclusion.

On the contrary, other studies suggest that migrants may face greater restrictions and discrimination in small towns due to the homogeneity of the local community, resulting on a lack of social cohesion (Nicholls and Uitermark, 2016; Valenta, 2007). It is usual to find a strong social control by the established community that might impede the development of institutions and organizations by migrants, handicapping their integration in the society (Nicholls and Uitermark, 2016). A more systematic study on social integration of immigrants in Norwegian small towns by Valenta (2007), suggests that, in general, smaller places are characterized by having a strong social network that rejects change and cultural diversity. In fact, these towns might seem harmonious in the surface, but in reality, there is antipathy and resentment towards immigrants (Valenta, 2007). Hubbard (2005) similarly argues that those rejecting the welcoming of newcomers usually refer to a lack of appropriate infrastructure and other services at a local level to support their opposition, but, behind this formal expression there were deeper racialized and stereotyped arguments against migrants. Added to this, there is a risk of policies isolating immigrants from the host community rather than bringing them together when these are not oriented towards meeting the needs and predispositions of the different communities (Valenta, 2007). This could lead to marginalization and increased feelings of non-belonging (Valenta, 2007).

Similarly, a study by Glorius *et al*. (2020), reveals that in rural areas a faster social integration for refugees takes place due to greater closeness among the citizens, however, there are important obstacles due to a higher homogeneity and few everyday contact experiences among migrant and non-migrant population. This lack of contact might prevent the development of a tolerant attitude and an increase of negative stereotypes against migrants. In some cases, the acceptance of migrants is connected to the so-called 'conditioned receptiveness', meaning that their reception is linked to particular economical and societal expectations of the host community (Soholt *et al*., 2018).

All in all, it is important for my investigation to consider previous research on policymaking at a city level, especially small and mid-sized ones because they show the diverging logics of integration among municipalities. Previous research highlights the ongoing debate on how and why migrants are either seen as potential for development or, on the contrary, it is believed that the arrival of migrants to a community might lead to a lack of social cohesion.

1.1.3. Gaps in literature

This thesis aims to add to the following gaps in the literature. Firstly, there is an extensive literature on migration-related diversity frameworks focused on big cities, such as Amsterdam, London or New York (Sassen, 2001; Foner *et al.,* 2014). However, since a quota system for redistribution was established in Europe due to the arrival of asylum seekers and refugees in 2015, many of them were allocated in small cities (Glorius *et al.*, 2021). As a result, the Academia has increased its interest on the integration of migrants in small cities and rural regions (Glorius *et al.*, 2021). There are many smaller and mid-sized cities that host a wide number of different nationalities, being many of their citizens refugees or migrants, so attention has recently shifted towards a focus on a broader range of towns and rural zones (Van Breugel, 2020; Martinez-Arino *et al.,* 2019; Glorius *et al.,* 2021; Arora-Jonsson and Larsson, 2021; Weidinger and Kordel, 2020). Examples of the shift of the study of integration of migrants to the local level lens are projects such as Eurocities, which study how cities integrate migrants in Europe. Their report highlights the importance of looking at policymaking and policy implementation in small and mid-sized cities while restrictive migration policies are being adopted at a national level (Bamberg *et al.,* 2020). This context influences the public debate towards migration and has an influence on how different groups in society perceive migrants' integration matters (Bamberg *et al.,* 2020). However, most of the literature on migrant integration has focused on large cities, leaving aside the experiences of small, medium and rural towns. In the same way, projects in this topic have taken place in metropoles, although there is an increasing inclusion of small cities (Gauci, 2020). Hereby, there is a need to take a closer look at how small and mid-sized towns translate their definition of migrant integration into policies, the factors that influence it and their effects in the community (Caponio, 2020). Building on these previous efforts, this study aims at contributing to the different understandings that local governments have towards migration-related diversity, particularly, migrant integration.

Another element that this thesis seeks to address is the divergence on the approaches towards migrants' integration among cities. It is clear that policy approaches to migrant integration are different at a national and at a local level, however, increasing attention is being paid to the different ways in which cities address the issue of migrants' integration (Van Breugel, 2020; Martinez-Arino *et al.,* 2019; Glorius *et al.,* 2021). In fact, the little research that has been done in small cities unfolds the following debate: although it is in the cities where migrants' life experiences take place and the arrival of newcomers can be beneficial for the

urban development, there is another stream of literature that shows that small homogenous cities have a tendency to reject change and cultural diversity. Thus, by analysing how local integration policies were developed in the chosen municipality and the effects on migrants' integration, this thesis also contributes to research on the consequences that migration has for small cities.

1.2. Theoretical Concepts

1.2.1. Migrants' integration

Although being a highly contested concept within the academic literature, integration is still at the centre of many debates and policy documents to refer to the settlement of foreigners into a community (Penninx and Garces-Mascareñas, 2016). Other terms have been coined, such as 'assimilation' described as a social process of learning the way of life of the home community in order to obtain its acceptance (Alba & Nee, 1997; Portes & Zhou, 1993; Alba, 2005); 'acculturation', referring to the adoption by newcomers of cultural patters of the host community (Roder, 2015; Alba & Nee, 1997); or 'inclusion' of migrants into various areas of the society (Esser, 2003). In the same line, Favell (2019) when reviewing Schinkel's (2018) text 'Against "immigrant integration", argues that the term immigrant "integration" is a deeply problematic concept as it is embedded in methodological nationalism. This perspective reproduces a nation-state centred vision of society and the tendency to view a state's community as ethnically homogenous. Indeed, Favell (2019) in his article claims the necessity to operationalise this debate and critical perspective of the term "into the heartland of applied comparative empirical work" (Favell, 2019, p. 1).

One of the first scholars to build an analytical framework to understand local policy reactions to the settlement of migrants was Alexander (2003), differentiating between four different domains: socio-economic; cultural-religious; legal-political and spatial. However, this model was criticized for its lack of focus on policymaking and implementation (Caponio, 2010). Therefore, Penninx and Garces-Mascareñas (2016) propose a model that takes into account policy development, concrete policy measures and horizontal and vertical features of integration policymaking to allow for a more systematic analysis. In this way, they argue that the three main factors that shape integration processes are legal-political, socio-economic and cultural religious aspects. Therefore, since this thesis aims to study migrants' integration policies, the regulations implemented within these dimensions should be studied.

A more recent study by Spencer and Charsley (2021) review the empirical and theoretical insights from the academic literature on integration. In their study, they address five core critiques of the concept, and they coincide with Penninx and Garces-Mascareñas (2016) on the fact that conceptualizing integration as a normative term should be avoided. This critique lies on the argument that a normative definition of integration prescribes what ought to happen and establishes the degree of (or requirements for) the acceptance of newcomers. They suggest that integration should be seen as a process of settlement and of interaction between migrants, receiving society, organizations, and institutions, rather than as something that should be ruled. Therefore, 'the study of policies is fundamentally different from the study of integration processes' (Penninx and Garces-Mascareñas, 2016, pp. 19). The role of policy is to change those processes, therefore, studying policies implies analysing the normative part, namely, how integration is framed as a problem together with the objectives set to solve it. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily match with the empirical reality, with how integration is actually taking place. Thus, to study integration processes it is necessary to look at the process of settlement and interaction between different actors and levels. In the same line, Spencer and Charsley (2021) conclude their article giving a definition of integration that describes it strictly as a process, without an end-product to achieve. the critiques that the authors make to the normative conception of integration, are striking this perspective cannot be completely left aside within my study, as the aim is to analyse integration policies. Likewise, the study by these authors could help me understand if there is any relation with the lack of social cohesion in El Ejido and the fact that integration policies see integration through a normative lens (if so).

In this way, in my thesis Penninx's (2019) definition of integration will be used as well as the theoretical model proposed by Penninx and Garces-Mascareñas (2016) as they allow a systematic and analytical approach to integration policies. This is because policy development, concrete policy measures and horizontal and vertical features of integration policymaking are considered. According to Penninx (2019), when studying integration processes, this can be defined as "the process of settlement of newcomers in a given society, to the integration of these newcomers in the host society, and to the social change that follows immigration". Thus, this is a two-way process in which not only the migrant population changes and adapts, but also the host society experiences some changes. The author distinguishes three integration dimensions: legal-political; socioeconomic; and cultural-religious. First, the *legal-political* dimension is related to the extent to which migrants are perceived as members of the community as well as the civic status and political rights of migrants. In this way, this depends

on under what conditions foreigners can have access to citizenship, whether they have access to local voting rights or their participation and representation in the political spheres. Second, the *socioeconomic* dimension refers mainly to the participation in the labour market and their social and economic position. This is analysed by looking at the access and use of institutional facilities for finding work and housing or accessing the educational system. Lastly, the *cultural-religious* dimension involves the perceptions and sense of belonging of both migrants and the host society. Cultural and religious diversity can be observed in how the culture of the migrant population is represented as in language support to migrants, availability of cultural places and the regulation regarding the culture of the migrants. The analysis of migrants' integration policies for the municipality chosen will be analysed in these three integration dimensions.

Additionally, Penninx *et al.* (2014) also argue that migrants' integration processes can also be measured at three different levels. The first one is that of *individuals*, including both migrants and non-migrant population of the receiving society. The second level refer to the *organizations*, which can be migrants' organizations or that of the receiving society. Finally, the third level is that of *institutions* and these could either be general institutions, namely, created by the receiving society for all citizens or institutions of and for migrant groups (Penninx *et al.* 2014). Since my study analyses the integration policies' framing from the municipality's perspective, the third level will be the most relevant one, however, individual migrants' perspectives will also be considered to have a better understanding of how their integration has taken place.

1.2.2. *Migration-related diversity*

One of the first authors that analysed the transformations that take place within the population's configuration stemming from global migratory flows was Vertovec (2007) and coined the term super-diversity to define it. This concept encapsulates the changing in societies involving not only more national, ethnic, linguistic, and religious variety, but also including different legal statuses (and therefore different rights and restrictions); different patterns of age and gender; and divergence in migrants' human capital. In fact, many studies about migration-related diversity in cities, take as a starting point ethnic or racial diversity like, for instance, considering 'migrant' as everyone with a migrant background *(e.g.* Meissner, 2015; Wessendorf, 2010; Aptekar, 2019). In this way, super-diversity underlines the necessity to shift from an ethnic-diversity focus to a migration-related diversity to pay greater attention to other relevant categories, such as, as noted before, different immigration statuses, gender and age profiles or education and work skills (Vertovec, 2007).

Some examples of super-diverse cities include London, Rotterdam, or Munich. In fact, most of the scholarly attention regarding diversity has been put on major cities and metropoles (Pisarevskaya *et al.*, 2021). However, there are other minor cities experiencing migration and diversity that are less represented in academic literature. In this way, a recent study by Pisarevskaya *et al.* (2021) offers an innovative classification of migration-driven diversities, including super-diversity as one of the different types. Building on cross-country comparative data, they differentiate five clusters of urban diversities based on the *volume* of newcomers; the *variety* of nationalities; and on the *segregation* in the city. More concretely, El Ejido fits within the description of the second cluster, the so-called Migrant-Minority Cities. These smaller cities are characterized by having many migrants from few backgrounds, namely, the volume of diversity is relatively high as more than 30% of El Ejido's population is foreign-born or of a different nationality (Acien, 2021). The number of different backgrounds is high but is fewer than in a super-diverse city (around 80 different origins) (INE, 2021). Additionally, the work available in this city is mainly in the agricultural sector, meaning as well that the city has a lower economic position as it provides a narrow range of economic opportunities. In fact, in line with Glick-Schiller and Çağlar's 'comparative theory of locality' high levels of migration and diversity can go together with a rather weak economic position.

To sum up, classifying the chosen municipality case is useful to investigate the relationship between a cluster of urban diversity and the way in which migrants' integration polices are made. In general, this can contribute to research regarding the type of governance approaches that better fit with a specific cluster of urban diversity.

1.2.3. *Studying local policymaking*

Since my research focuses on studying policies that steer integration processes of migrants, and not the processes themselves, a normative definition of integration, as explained above, needs to be used as policies are part of a political process of normative nature (Penninx *et al.*, 2014). In this political process integration is formulated as a problem and then, is given a normative framing outlining what the expected outcome is. Finally, concrete policy interventions are carried out to achieve the desired outcome. Therefore, what Penninx *et al.* (2014) argue is that in order to study policies, it is necessary to, first, analyse the framing and normative elements and then, its practice and the relation of these elements with the actual process of integration. Another important aspect they highlight is that integration policies are developed within a system of institutional arrangements in society within a concrete political context and this should be taken into consideration when analysing the policies. I believe this

is relevant for the chosen case as the municipality of El Ejido is governed by a right-wing party (PP), together with an extreme right-wing one (VOX). Thus, the policies might reflect certain expectations within this ideology, or even marginalize migrants' voices from the political spheres.

Similarly, a recent study by Van Breugel (2020) also considers these three main elements for policy analysis: policy frames, problem definition and aims, and target groups. This framework involves a systematic analysis of policy documents to observe how migrants' integration has been defined as a problem to show how integration and diversity are perceived by the government. This also allows to observe what solutions are proposed and who are the responsible of carrying it out. She holds that different types of local governance approaches exist, rather than a unique framing of local-level policy making. Therefore, she distinguishes four policy approaches: 'proactive pluralist', 'proactive monist', 'reactive embedded' and 'reactive one-domain'. Although the different types of local governance approaches are not relevant for the objective of my study, the guidelines on how to study the substance of the policies are useful.

Firstly, it is necessary to look at the policy frames, this is, a reconstruction of how the problem of integration has been defined, including the assumptions that could be present and the solutions that are expected. Secondly, there should be an analysis of this assumptions as well as of the aims and the domains of action. Finally, target groups (if any) should be identified. The aspect of targeting is an essential element in policy making when analysing governments' problem definitions and policy measures (Van Breugel, 2021). Targeting means classifying and categorizing people in categories which are relevant o policy and, therefore, to the redistribution of goods and services (De Zwart, 2005). Observing how a local government targets the migrant population gives an understanding on who the municipality identifies as responsible for the problem and the rationale behind the policies (Sniderman *et al.,* 1996). Moreover, targeting policies can have the effect of reducing inequalities, but could also promote ethnic conflict due to the group distinctions (De Zwart, 2005). Van Breugel (2020) distinguished three targeting approaches: non-targeting; universal targeting, meaning that integration policies are addressed to a wider audience and specific targeting, that explicitly address migrants as a target group.

Additionally, a second part when doing policy analysis, as pointed by Penninx *et al.* (2014) also involves governance aspects. This includes observing who oversees the implementation and coordination the policies and whether these actors are all political ones. It

is useful as well to see the extent to which migrant integration is decentralized, namely, if those in charge of doing so are closer to the mayor or if there is a specific department in charge (Penninx *et al.,* 2014). In this part, it is also observed the relationship between the local policies and the regional and national integration guidelines. With regards to the civil society, including civil-society organizations, previous literature regarding migration policy making in Europe suggests that civil society has a limited role for various reasons (Spencer, 2018). One of them is that civil society organisation might lack prompt information about policy processes or even have the inadequate skills or knowledge about policy processes (Spencer, 2018).

1.3. Chapter conclusion

This chapter reviewed the literature and identified gaps regarding governance of migration, more concretely, at a local level. It explained the importance of the 'local turn' towards studying migrants' integration at a local level as cities have become primary actors when dealing with this process. However, most of the literature has been focused on large cities and it is increasingly paying attention to the different approaches that cities take. This has resulted in two opposite standpoints that are at the centre of this research: on the one hand, migrants can be seen as potentials for the development of the city and, on the other, their arrival can be considered as harmful for the cohesion of the society. Moreover, the main theoretical concepts and how they are applied in this thesis were discussed. The study of migrants' integration policies will use the definition and as the three-dimensions theoretical model used by Penninx and Garces-Mascareñas (2016). This will be done through examining the municipality's policy framing and implementation. This is relevant since there might be a relation between the policy rationale, the type of city, in this case in accordance with the research by Pisarevskaya *et al*., (2021) it's a Migrant-Minority City. In the next chapter, I will describe the operationalization that depicts how I will apply the theoretical principles that guide this research empirically.

Chapter II: Methodology

This chapter elaborates on the research questions posed and the empirical research conducted in order to answer them. First, it states the research question and the relevant sub-questions. Second, the variables upon which this research rests are operationalised into indicators useful for this empirical research. Thirdly, the methods and the case study of the city of El Ejido are outlined. Lastly, the expectations based on the academic literature and the ethical considerations are discussed. My research question follows an explanatory approach to understand local governance of migration in El Ejido.

2.1.   Research question and sub-questions

This thesis aims to answer the following research question: *How has local governance of migration-related diversity in the municipality of El Ejido (Almeria, Spain) influenced migrants' integration?* To answer this question the following sub-questions are posed:

1. How has the municipality defined the problem of migrant integration within the policymaking field?

2. How does the way the problem of migrants' integration is defined translates into concrete policies?

3. How have these policies targeted migrants as a sub-group of the population?

4. What has been the influence of the policies in the relationship between migrants and the municipality?

5. What has been the perception of migrants from the local government's perspective?

2.2.   Case selection

El Ejido is a Spanish city located in the province of Almeria, within the region of Andalucía. Its population is around 80,000 inhabitants and almost 30% of the total population are immigrants. This city has been chosen for several reasons. Firstly, El Ejido offers only limited economic opportunities, mainly based on the agricultural sector. Although the unemployment levels are low and the agricultural sector produces very high benefits, El Ejido is one of the Spanish municipalities with lower annual average income (Reviejo, 2021). Additionally, more than 60% of the workers in the agricultural sector are migrants, mainly Moroccan (Junta de Andalucia, 2019). Thirdly, El Ejido is experiencing a population decline: the number of emigrations surpasses the immigration numbers and it's one of the municipalities in Spain that

lost more inhabitants in 2020. In short, due to the population decline and the ever-growing situation of the agricultural sector, migrants fill the gaps of the ageing population and the city's economic needs.

All in all, studying the city of El Ejido can provide relevant information regarding the relationship between the social cohesion practices of the municipality and the need for migrant population (Muus, 2003; Matusz-Protasiewicz, 2014). Apart from contributing to research about migrant integration policymaking in small and mid-sized cities, it can also contribute to the debate on whether migrants are seen as a potential for development or if their arrival is considered to lead to a lack of social cohesion.

With regards to the structure of governance of migration in this case, Spain is characterised by a high degree of decentralisation. The Constitution (Article 149.1.2 CE) grants the State exclusive jurisdiction over matters of nationality, migration and the right to asylum and the most relevant social policies for migration take place at a central level. However, the Autonomous Communities acquire important powers in sectors such as education, health, culture and, to some extent, social policies, including employment and housing (Trinidad Requena *et al.*, 2010). Since the Autonomous Communities are the ones in charge of taking measures to influence the social and economic integration of migrants as well as their participation, they create different integration plans at a provincial level (Trinidad Requena *et al.*, 2010). In relation to the case of this study, it is important to explain that the municipality of El Ejido, belongs to the province of Almeria which belongs to the Autonomous Community of Andalucía. In this way, the Andalusian Plan related to migrants' integration establishes that the municipalities hold as their own competences the management of social services and the execution of immigrant integration policies.

2.3. Data Collection

A deductive case study strategy has been used to attain an in-depth knowledge of the main question (Yamasaki and Spreitzer, 2006). Firstly, data has been collected through a policy document analysis. These were gathered mainly through contacting people from the municipality, since in the web portal of El Ejido there were almost no documents available. The documents that were provided consisted of memoranda from the years 2019 and 2020 and, although they were not structurally analysed using a codebook, reviewing them allowed for relevant contextual knowledge and guidelines for the interview questions.

Secondly, qualitative interviews were a key part of this case study research, as they are essential for understanding the perspectives of the municipality, beyond what is obtained from

paper. Specifically, semi-structured qualitative interviews were held because these give place to the respondents' voices and analysis of the situation. There are several arguments for this method's appropriateness. Firstly, since the documents provided are not much extensive and I was also missing data from the year 2021, interviews allow me to understand the policymakers' views on integration policies and how these measures have been materialised. Secondly, I aim to observe how the policies provide real life integration for migrants, thus, I am interested on the migrants' perspectives. Interviews with migrants provide data about their lived experiences and opinions, giving them voice and carving space for their analysis of the situation (Fedyuk and Zentai, 2018).

Finally, there are some limitations that can be found in using this approach. First, the case study design makes it difficult to generalise my findings as we are dealing with a case study of small sample size (Yamasaki and Spreitzer, 2006). Secondly, it is important to note that interviews are not neutral nor free from biases, they cannot collect "hard facts". Nevertheless, they offer the richness of experience and allow flexibility to capture new information and discoveries (Fedyuk and Zentai, 2018).

2.4.   Sampling

For the interviews, I will use a purposive sampling approach (Barglowski, 2018). The logic of using this method lies in the central purpose of this research, which is learning about migrants' integration policymaking in small cities through the selection of the concrete case of El Ejido. The interviews were conducted with local policymakers of El Ejido; with front-line municipality workers; and with migrants that have been residing legally in the town for more than three years. For selecting the interviewees, I will use a purposive sampling in combination with a snowball sampling (Babbie, 2016; Barglowki, 2018). Namely, I contacted two policymakers working for the municipality who later provided information on how to locate other local policymakers.

2.5.   Operationalisation

The operationalisation of this research contains two main variables: local governance of integration as the independent variable and integration as the dependent one. These variables are operationalised with indicators to measure the research observations. The operationalisation is guided by the review of academic literature as laid out in the theoretical framework.

Variables	Broad definition	Theoretical concepts	Conceptual definition	Attributes	Operational definition	Indicators	Sources
Local governance of integration (IV)	Political process of normative nature in which the topic of integration is framed as a problem and concrete actions are taken to reach a concrete desired outcome (Penninx *et al.*, 2014)	Policy framing	"A frame is (a reconstruction of) the problem definition of a policy issue, including the underlying assumptions of its causes and the remedies for it." (Penninx *et al.*, 2014)	Problem definition and aims	"An explicit formulation of a perceived problem and of the desired outcome of the specific efforts that are taken by policies" (Penninx *et al*, 2014)	What are the general assumptions on the causes of the problem? What are the general objectives of the policies? Does one of the three dimensions of integration prevail in the policies/ Is one of the three dimensions of integration addressed primarily?	Official documents and interviews with officials
				Targeting	"Element of policymaking intended for a particular group of people" (Van Breugel, 2020)	Are migrants categorized as a separate group? Are policies addressed at a concrete group in the society? If so, to whom? Are migrant integration aspects part of the general policies that are meant for all residents?	Official documents Official documents Official documents
		Integration strategy	It refers to the implementation of the policy; to the actual actions and practices carried out by the municipality (Penninx *et al.*, 2014)	Implementation		Do the perceptions of officials influence on the implementation of the policies? Is there a specific department decentrally located in charge of coordinating the policies?	Interviews with officials Official documents
				Local policies in relation to other		What concrete responsibilities of the	

				Indicator	Question	Operationalization	Source
				levels of government		integration of migrants are delegated to the municipal governments?	Official documents and interviews with officials
						How is the coordination between the national, regional and local government in terms of budget?	Official documents and interviews with officials
				Access to citizenship	Under what conditions may migrants acquire national citizenship? (Caponio, 2014)	Years of residence whereafter migrants can apply for citizenship	Official documents
						Does the municipality of El Ejido promote actions for fostering access to citizenship?	Official documents/ Interviews with officials
Integration (DV)		Legal-political integration (Penninx & Garces-Mascareñas, 2016)	"[…] Residence and political rights and statuses. The basic question is whether and to what extent are immigrants regarded as fully-fledged members of the political community" (Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016, p. 14).	Direct political inclusion	Do immigrants have local voting rights? (Caponio, 2014)	Years of residence whereafter migrants obtain the right to vote	Official documents
						Which nationalities can access local voting rights?	Official documents
						Does the municipality of El Ejido stimulate migrants to participate in the local political institutions?	Interviews with officials/ Interviews with migrants
				Indirect political inclusion	How are immigrants politically represented? (Caponio, 2014)	Use of consultative committees/immigrant councils	Official documents/interviews with officials
						Are migrants involved in the organization of local policymaking?	Interviews with officials/ Interviews with migrants
				Health care	What are the efforts of the municipality to guarantee the equal access and equal use of	Is the equal access to health services addressed by policies?	Official documents
						Are migrants provided with information about health services?	Interviews with migrants

					these services?	Does the municipality facilitate services to overcome linguistic, cultural and administrative barriers at the public health providers?	Interview with policymakers
			Socio-economic integration (Penninx & Garces-Mascareñas, 2016)	"The social and economic position of residents, irrespective of their national citizenship. Within this dimension the position of immigrants can be analyzed by looking at their access to and participation in domains that are crucial for any resident" (Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016a, p. 15).	Housing	What are the efforts of the municipality to guarantee the equal access and equal use of these services?	What measures are taken to ensure migrants' access to housing? What measures (explicitly/implicitly) are taken to reduce social/ethnic segregation?	Official documents/Interviews with officials Official documents/ Interviews with officials
					Education		Does the municipality of El Ejido allocate additional resources for migrant children at risk of underachieving? Are there concrete initiatives to support migrants at public schools (language, reception classes)?	Official documents Official documents/ Interviews with migrants
					Labour market		What initiatives are taken to help the migrant population at the job centers? Does the government promote diversity within their own workforce? Programs to support the existing education of migrants to increase their suitability for the labour market	Official documents Interviews with officials Official documents
					Language (of the receiving community and of migrants)		Availability of language courses	Official documents

						Language support for migrants in institutional contexts	Official documents/ Interviews with officials
		Cultural-religious integration (Penninx & Garces-Mascareñas, 2016)	"[…] The domain of perception and practices of immigrants and the receiving society as well as their reciprocal reactions to difference and diversity. […] [T]he receiving society may or may not accept cultural or religious diversity." (Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016, p. 15).	Religion (of migrants)		Possibility of migrants to practice their religion	Interview with migrants
						Formal possibility of obtaining religious holidays	Official documents/ Interview with migrants
						Public subsidies to create temples	Official documents
						Religious education at public schools	Official documents
				Symbolic culture (of the receiving society)		Recognition of diplomas by the Spanish government	Official documents
						Availability of "cultural mediators", so that migrants can access official institutions	Official documents/ Interview with migrants
				Preserving and transmitting cultural patterns (of the sending countries)		Does the municipality offer activities to promote the culture of the sending country?	Official documents
						Is there a possibility of learning ethnic languages at school?	Official documents/ Interview with officials

2.6. Data Analysis

For this thesis, a theory-driven analysis will be used in which an elaborated theoretical framework leads to a list of indicators and concepts that will be used to analyse the collected data. However, not only a deductive approach will be used. A combination with an abductive analysis will allow to include data that does not form part of the initial theoretical framework. In this way, the weaknesses of purely inductive and deductive approaches will be overcome, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of theory and empirical data (Meyer and Flinders, 2013).

The interview transcripts will be coded using the software programme Atlas.ti. As this thesis follows and abductive approach, initially, the interviews will be examined in accordance

with a code book that has been developed based on the theoretical framework. Later, open coding will be used to categorise the data and identify the main themes beyond the data that is covered by the coding book.

2.7. Expectations

Based on the theoretical framework, several expectations have been formulated. Firstly, based on Zapata-Barrero *et al*. (2017) it is expected that the municipality of El Ejido takes a bottom-up approach to the integration of migrants since cities have become the main agents confronted with integration challenges that demand local responses.

Secondly, the migrant population could be considered as a potential for development when integration policies are focused on offering opportunities for interaction between the immigrants and the host community in order to create social inclusion (Wulff *et al*., 2008). This becomes even more important in homogenous societies since they tend to reject change and cultural diversity (Valenta, 2007). As stated in the introduction, El Ejido is characterised by a lack of social cohesion according to municipal authorities. Therefore, it is expected that policies have not explicitly included activities to promote interaction between migrant and non-migrant population. In fact, this might be related with a normative conceptualisation of migrants' integration, which frames integration as a problem that needs to be solved (Penninx and Garces-Mascareñas, 2016).

Thirdly, most cities do not separately address integration but, rather migration diversity is part of other policy domains (Scholten and van Breugel, 2018). More concretely, based on van Breugel's (2020) study on local migration diversity governance in several Dutch cities, at the cities with similar characteristics as El Ejido (in terms of population and percentage of inhabitant with migrant background) there is a trend of generic, non-targeted policies, where social inclusion policies have an orientation on all citizens. Thus, it is expected that measures on migrant integration are mainstreamed across different policy domains.

2.8. Ethical Considerations

During the development of this study, several ethical challenges may arise before and during the fieldwork. However, first of all it is necessary to clarify where the researcher stands in this study. As this paper will deal with questions related to (cultural/religious) diversity and, in some way, race, I find it relevant to highlight that I am a white, western, middle-class and female student, thus, my own biases will inevitably be reflected in the analysis.

As for the ethical challenges before the fieldwork, I am studying how migrant integration policies have been developed in El Ejido, where the two main parties governing at the local government are right-wing and extreme-right-wing parties, PP and VOX. Therefore, conducting this type of research, which involves interviewing policy makers within the government, might be (mis)used by organisations with anti-migrant agendas (Zapata-Barrero & Yalaz, 2020). Furthermore, according to Glick-Schiller (2008) ethnic groups are perceived as the unit of analysis, therefore, group differences among migrants and non-migrants are normalised, viewing such differences as inherent and problematic. However, categorization and classification in research is necessary to highlight inequalities and discriminatory processes, thus, one must take a critical stance and self-conscious process to conclude rigorous analyses (Zapara-Barrero & Yalaz, 2020). During the fieldwork, according to Zapata-Barrero and Yalaz (2020), one of the main ethical issues is the lack of participation of disadvantaged groups in the research. Since I will do interviews with migrants themselves, attention should be paid to the protection of participants from potential harms. Additionally, migrants must be well informed about the study and the implications of their participation. In this way, their participation should be voluntary and with informed consent. Confidentiality and anonymity will always be an option if the participant desires it.

Chapter III: Analysis

3.1. Policy framing

3.1.1. Definition of migrants' integration and objectives

In order to understand how the municipality of El Ejido defined migrants' integration as a policy issue, I observed the general assumptions of the causes of this problem as well as the general objectives of the policies. The documents analysed as well as the interviews with the

municipality's officials reveal that the main problem stems from the fact that El Ejido is a small city with a high volume of migrant population.

> 'It is not the same having a 10% of immigrant population than to have, as we do, more than 30%, right? This results in a tendency for some groups to coexist, but not being in contact with the rest of the citizens.'[1] (O1).

Additionally, document D4, the one establishing the newly *Consejo Municipal de Integracion y Convivencia de El Ejido* (Municipal Council of Integration and Coexistence of El Ejido), states that the high volume of migrants in the city, that even in come townships exceed 50% of the total population, is the main reason why it is necessary to establish this Council.

Another problem that results from the high share of migrants is what interviewee O2 denominated as "centrifuging of the autochthonous population". This means that in the parts of the city where there is a higher share of migrants an exodus of the Spanish population is taking place to other townships, such as Almerimar, where the share of migrants is notably less. He explains that the cause of this problem is the culture clash between migrant and non-migrant populations and the changes that take place in the urban environment. Another official from the local government considered that as the share of migrants increased, the less disposition they had to integrate (O3). It was repeatedly stated in the interviews that there are buildings in which only migrants live and an increasing number of shops owned by them, which, from their perspective, resulted in more segregation between the migrant and non-migrant population (O3; O2).

> 'They have their own businesses, so the possibility of speaking Spanish is less, and it is something that we need to change' [2] (O2).

In fact, according to interviewee O2, the problem lies on the remittances that migrants send to their countries of origin, since these are conditioning their way of life in the city. He believed that these remittances are preventing migrants from accessing, for example, a more decent housing and puts them at risk of exclusion. From this affirmation it can be observed that the responsibility of accessing some services as well as their overall well-being within the municipality lies on migrants.

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[1] Spanish original: No es igual tener por ejemplo un 10% de población inmigrante a tener como tenemos nosotros, una cifra que supera el 30 por ciento no? Eso hace que haya colectivos que tiendan, a convivir entre ellos, pero no a relacionarse con el resto de la población.

[2] Tienen sus propios negocios pues la posibilidad de hablar español es menos y es algo que tenemos que cambiar.

With regards to the general objectives as established in the documents (documents D1; D2; D4), there are almost no activities that include the participation of the receiving society, The objectives are oriented towards the migrants themselves. The aims do not mention any interaction between the receiving society and the migrants. The main objectives are related to incrementing the capacities of the migrants to set up their lives in the city of El Ejido. This includes, among others, reduce the obstacles posed by the language barrier, provide skills to favour their inclusion in the labour market or provide migrant families the necessary knowledge about the Spanish legislation.

3.1.2. Targeting

To determine what type of targeting the municipality carried out, the main source of analysis were the documents sent by the Head of Social Services, the department in charge of migratory matters. In this way, we can first observe that migrants are categorised as a separate group in the society since they are regarded as being in a disadvantaged position and of vulnerability (D1, pp. 12). Therefore, this group deserves special attention.

Secondly, the analysed reports from the years 2019 and 2020 reveal that the objectives and actions of the policies are intended at the migrant population. They also state that the services of the Department of Social Services are open to all citizens, or in some cases to citizens at risk of social exclusion, however the actions taken in the policies are addressed at the migrant population:

> 'The project "Support for integration and management of cultural diversity in El Ejido" has been developed, consisting of several actions addressed to the foreign population residing in the city of El Ejido.'[3] (D2)

Lastly, in the document D4, which is the only one available from the year 2022, we observe that the objectives and actions are oriented towards all citizens. They refer to an equal treatment of citizens and the promotion of interculturality. Therefore, a generic, universal policy can be identified as all citizens are addressed for social inclusion practices and there is barely a mention to migrant people as a separate group.

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[3] Se ha desarrollado el proyecto de "Apoyo a la integración y gestión de la diversidad cultural en El Ejido" consistente en el desarrollo de una serie de actuaciones dirigidas a la población extranjera residente en el municipio de El Ejido.

'The participation of citizens in the social, political, economic, cultural and social life of the country in conditions of freedom and equality are established as fundamental pillars of the democratic system.'[4] (D4)

'Achieve social cohesion and a real and effective intercultural coexistence.'[5] (D4)

In fact, when we observe the objectives of the policies almost all of them involve the participation of only migrants. For instance, document D2, reveals that the participants of the activities were only migrants.

'During the period that has included the development of this program, the users participating in it have been a total of 121, 105 women and 16 men, all of Moroccan nationality with ages between 20 and 40 years old.'[6] (D2)

The data does not reveal any activity aimed at promoting the interaction between the migrant and non-migrant population. Therefore, as expected, it can be concluded that El Ejido's policy framing of migrants' integration tends to use a generic targeting strategy because the activities for social inclusion are oriented towards the society as a whole while clearly differentiating the particular conditions of the migrant groups.

3.2. Integration strategy

3.2.1. Implementation

What stands out from the document analysis is that the municipality only addresses migration diversity indirectly. As it will be observed, the integration domain that is given more attention is the socio-economic one. From the document analysis little action can be observed, therefore, to understand what and how solutions to the problem of migrant integration were implemented, we need to rely in interviews. Interestingly, there is a clear difference between how higher-rank officials and front-line workers of the municipality perceive the problem.

Interviewee O1 mentioned that they had a several programs to support the migrant community in terms of education, sports and leisure. However, in the documents there was no trace of programs within these fields, nor they were mentioned by any of the workers from the

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[4] Se establecen como pilares fundamentals del Sistema democratico la participación de las ciudadanas y de los ciudadanos en la vida social, política, eocnomica, cultural y social del país en condiciones de libertad y de igualdad.

[5] Conseguir la cohesion social y una convivencia intercultural real y efectiva.

[6] Durante el período que ha comprendido el desarrollo de este programa las personas usuarias participantes en el mismo han sido un total de 121, 105 mujeres y 16 hombres, todos de nacionalidad marroquí con edades comprendidas mayoritariamente entre los 20 y los 40 años.

municipality that were interviewed. In fact, interviewee O4 said that during her time working at the municipality, she did not see a clear concrete policy to help them in education and culture.

> 'Nothing was done. That is the problem, this is, it is adorned, but in reality, there is no specific policy made, nothing was done. In education, *la Junta* [the regional government] had some mediators in places with a higher share of migrants, but it was only to help with the language temporarily. Nothing else was done at an official level.'[7]

Interviewee O2 explicitly highlighted the importance of the Program of Urban Regeneration and Renewal Areas. This program's main objective is to create awareness of the importance of eliminating antisocial and insalubrious behaviours through visiting the citizens' houses in some areas of the town and explain the importance of removing antennas, blankets, clothes lines, and junk from the exteriors in order to improve the image of these buildings (Servicios Sociales, 2022). The Social Services' councillor believes that this would lead to "greater cohesion, social sustainability and a real and effective intercultural coexistence". The program forms part of another local program called '*Cuidando El Ejido*' that promotes the fulfilment of the norms under the *Ordenanza de la Convivencia Ciudadana y Prevencion de Actos Incivicos* to eliminate irresponsible and antisocial behaviours. As a result, these programmes relate to the perception of migrants as different in terms of values and culture.

> 'The cultural differences and, above all social and economic ones, make them have different priorities, that in many cases they do not take care of the facades of the houses; in the cases in which they come from a situation of extreme poverty, they are not used to live together in a community of neighbours.'[8] (O1)

Both higher-rank officials made reference to the cultural differences to explain the necessity of this urban renewal programs. They relate to the intergration of migrants as in they consider that the foreign population has other ideas about the maintenance of the buildings, and this created a "shock" among the non-migrant population.

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[7] No se hacía nada. Ese es el problema, o sea que se adorna, pero en realidad no se hace una política concreta, no se hacía nada. Vamos a ver, en educación la Junta, tenía algunos mediadores, pero muy poquitos, uno o dos mediadores que estaban entre las norias y las de ella, que es donde hay mayor concentración. Pero desde educación, lo que se hacía con los profesores era una actuación temporal de lenguaje que eso sí que funciona. Y es que no se hace nada más a nivel oficial.

[8] Las diferencias culturales y sobre todo sociales y económicas, hacen que ellos tengan otras prioridades, que no cuiden en muchos casos las fachadas de las viviendas; que no estén habituados cuando vienen de una situación de extrema pobreza, a convivir en una comunidad de vecinos…

In short, the focus of the higher-rank officials from the municipality is on the relation between the cultural differences that are between the migrant and non-migrant population and how they are projected on the urban areas. The responsibility of the deterioration of the buildings in some areas is put on the migrants, therefore, they believe that showing them how according to the municipality's regulation should be done is going to result in more integration. As it can be observed, a differentiation between 'them' and 'us' based on cultural and socioeconomic differences prevails.

On the other hand, the perceptions of front-line are more positive. They explain that they have not experienced strong conflicts in terms of cultural or religious differences with the migrants that participated in the projects. In fact, they are very satisfied with how the programs are developing and their focus more on empowering and offering people with migrant origins more opportunities within the labour market.

> 'Among the boys they understand each other better but no, we have not experienced any big conflict.'[9] (O5)

Additionally, the interviews with the people that work for the municipality revealed that the actions aimed at migrants' integration address migration diversity indirectly and they are not permanent – it works through temporary projects. The actual program that the Social Services area has in place is called ERACIS and it is addressed at people who live at disadvantaged areas where migrants and other minorities are the main participants. This is the main action that is being taken place at the moment more closely related to migrants' integration in the city.

> 'This program has had many names, to say so, previously it was called Zone Program, but they have never been established. They have always functioned, they have always been set up, but it is always through programs of X amount of time.'[10] (O5)

> 'If these [programs] were continuous it would be great, of course, because now things are going to be on stand-by… When we leave, job counsellors, advisors, colleagues from communitarian services, the service it's going to be a bit on stand-by.'[11] (O6)

As it can be observed, the front-line workers acknowledge that the programs for social integration are only temporary, there is not a permanent action taken. This results, not only

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[9] Entre los chicos se entienden un poco más pero no, no hemos tenido un conflicto grande.

[10] El programa éste ha tenido, como muchos nombres, por así decirlo, siempre ha sido programa de zonas, pero nunca se ha quedado instaurado como tal como otro. Siempre ha funcionado, siempre se ha instaurado, pero siempre es con programas de X tiempo.

[11] Si esto fuera continuo seria genial claro, porque ahora se va a quedar un poco la cosa en stand-by, porque ahora cuando nos vayamos entre compañeros de comunitarios, compañeros, orientadores laborales, pues el servicio se va a quedar un poco ahí en stand-by..

in a situation of job instability for the front-line workers who are hired on this basis, but also might affect the way migrants take part in the society.

3.2.2. Multi-level governance

Although in Spain migration and asylum matters are competences of the national level, the regions, the Autonomous Communities, have acquired important competences in sectors such as social policy matters (labour market integration, housing, social services…). Therefore, the Autonomous Communities create their integration plans according to their socioeconomic realities. In Andalucía, there is the *Estrategia Andaluza para la Inmigracion* (Andalusian Strategy for Immigration), a tool that is renewed every four years and recognizes local entities as the point of entry to the system of social protection, as the ones in charge of creating an *intercultural* coexistence and promoting local political participation. Although the local integration policies should be in line with what is provided in the regional plan, the regional level should drive and help local entities, through guiding and resources, to define and execute their own lines of action.

In this way, availability of resources and budgetary restrictions can be one of the obstacles that the municipality must deal with when governing migration-related diversity. In the interview, the mayor explained that a problem was that, as the migrant population arrives to El Ejido, investments in health, education and other services must take place for the non-migrant population to feel like the migrant person is cutting short their access to public services.

> 'When the services are insufficient, there is a risk of creating a feeling of rejection in the native population, because they think that the immigrant is taking away and cutting off rights that you cannot access in certain public services. For example, a daycare place, a dining room place, an unreasonable waiting time in the emergency room of the hospital or a health center… So, that objective is fundamental.'[12] (O1)

Likewise, he highlighted the importance of the cooperation with the regional government, la *Junta de Andalucia*, to reinforce such public services, more concretely, through economic resources.

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[12] Cuando los servicios son insuficientes se corre el riesgo de crear un sentimiento de rechazo en la población autóctona porque piensa que el inmigrante le está restando y le está cercenando derechos a los cuales no puedes acceder en determinados servicios públicos. Por ejemplo, una plaza de guardería, una plaza de comedor, una espera poco razonable en las urgencias del hospital o de un centro de salud, entonces ese objetivo es fundamental

'The truth is that we are taking very important steps, we do now have very good collaboration with the *Junta de Andalucía*; important investments are being made at the health level, at the educational level and that is key for me.'[13] (O1)

Moreover, the documents also reflected the issue of a lack of resources. In document D1, one of the reports, the municipality requests around 119,000 euros to carry out the project. The regional government authorizes a budget of 71,000 euros, but they only award 15,000 euros. The rest is financed by the local government. In the other memory, D2, the local government requests 90,000 euros for the realization of the project; the regional government accepts a budget of around 73,000 euros and they finance around 15,000 euros. This means that the municipality has financed around 80% of the programs and projects that they have carried out. Interviewee O2 stated that they lack resources to do activities such as promoting the culture of the sending countries or preventing segregation in El Ejido. In the interview with another worker, she explained she was the only one working at the Immigrant Service Office since the year 2000 and the only one doing the reports for the processes of both family reunification and obtaining the legal residence.

Additionally, interviews with other workers showed that many programs were financed by the regional government or by the European Union. This might not allow the local government to offer a permanent service since the budget largely depends on what other levels of government decide to finance.

'Our contract finishes in August and since it is a subsidy from the European Social Fund and the *Junta de Andalucía*, in principle they have told us that it will be launched again, but it is not known if under the same subsidy, with the same amount…'[14] (O6)

In short, it can be concluded that one of the main weaknesses that the municipality has with regards to governance of migration-related diversity is the lack of resources. Although the documents show that they finance the totality of the programs in question, the interviews with the officials reveal that more budget would be necessary to achieve a more integrated society. In fact, this might be the reason why the municipality cannot offer the activities for migrants' integration in a permanent basis, and it largely depends on temporary programs, such as ERACIS, that is financed by other higher levels of government.

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[13] La verdad que estamos dando pasos muy importantes, no tenemos ahora muy buena colaboración con la Junta de Andalucía, se están haciendo inversiones importantes a nivel sanitario, a nivel educativo y eso para mí es clave

[14] Se nos acaba el contrato en agosto y como es una subvención del Fondo Social Europeo y de la Junta de Andalucía en principio nos han comentado que volverá a salir, pero que no se sabe si la misma subvención, con la misma cuantía …

Most of the migrants in the interviews state that they did not obtain any help or assistance from the municipality during their settlement and that they had to be very autonomous. Some of them affirmed that if they are the ones coming to a new country, they cannot expect any help from the institutions since it was their decision to migrate.

'I have come on my own. So, what am I going to ask? To be maintained? Well, no, you fend for yourself and that's it.'[15] (M4)

'The truth is that they never helped me [at the municipality]. The Romanians among us, well, we helped each other […] But no, the truth is that I have never asked for help either because, thank God, I have always found a job easily, so I have not needed it. Maybe, if I can't find a job and I don't have anything to eat, I will resort to that, but no, not really.'[16] (M1)

3.2.3. Relationship between migrants and the municipality

Most of the migrants, explained that whenever they needed help with something it was not the municipality, but other migrants the one to help and assist them when needed, especially when looking for jobs or when accessing services such as health and housing.

'Well, it wasn't the people from the municipality, it was some colleagues from work and from the [football] team that helped me integrate a little bit here and that's it.'[17] (M5)

'When I did the health documents, I was guided by other colleagues who were already here, the truth is that the municipality has not approached me. And to find a flat, there are people who don't want to rent it to immigrants. […] So, we help each other, and it is what it is.'[18] (M6)

In short, the migrants interviewed have never been approached by the municipality to facilitate and inform about the access to services and other activities related to their integration. They have not participated in any of the activities that have been analysed in the documents or that were mentioned by the workers of the municipality. Therefore, there is a gap between the access to these activities and the real participation of migrants, the actors to which they are aimed.

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[15] Yo he venido por mi cuenta. Entonces, ¿qué voy a pedir, que me mantengan? Pues no te buscas tu vida y ya está.

[16] La verdad que nunca me ayudaron [en el Ayuntamiento]. Los rumanos entre nosotros, pues nos ayudábamos […] Pero no, la verdad que yo nunca tampoco he pedido ayuda porque gracias a Dios, siempre he buscado fácil el trabajo así que no me ha hecho falta. A lo mejor, si no encuentro trabajo y no tengo nada que comer, sí recurro a eso, pero no, la verdad que no. (M1)

[17] Bueno, no fue la gente del Ayuntamiento, fueron unos compañeros del trabajo ahí y bueno y también del equipo [de futbol] que me ayudaron a integrarme un poquito aquí y ya está. (M5)

[18] Cuando yo hice los papeles del médico me guie por otras compañeras que estaban ya aquí, yo la verdad que el Ayuntamiento no me lo ha acercado. Y para ver un piso, hay gente que a los inmigrantes no quiere dar un alquiler. […] Así que bueno, nos ayudamos entre nosotros y es lo que hay.

On the other hand, to analyse the receiving society's relevance, I focused on the role of the individuals and the local government itself. Firstly, what can be observed is that the individuals from the receiving society are regarded as main actors only to some extent in the policy action. In the documents, the objectives and actions do not involve them.

> 'Actions aimed at the foreign population residing at the town of El Ejido, so that they can develop both personally, socially and at work, facilitating their integration into the community and at the same time perceive themselves as citizens with rights and obligations, always taking into account cultural diversity and origins.'[19] (D2)

With regards to the interviews, it is especially relevant how interviewee O1 exemplifies that the receiving society has adapted to the cultural costumes of the migrant population. In the interviews with higher-rank officials there are no mentions of the opposite, on how migrants have also adapted to the values and traditions of the host society, in fact, it seems to be a constant problem that is not solved. The cultural-religious differences are something that come up usually during the interviews.

> 'At a private level, the farmers themselves are the ones who are best regulating the matter of Ramadan. In other words, the farmers regulate themselves, they know perfectly well that while they [migrants] are in Ramadan, their way of working is completely different and it is them, the farmers who adapt. They don't tell them to not do Ramadan... They adapt the entire schedule.'[20] (O2)

On the other hand, the role of the municipality is not considered to be crucial or determinant, although important. With regards to solving the main challenges that the matter of migrants' integration poses, migrants are considered to be key.

> 'The municipality has an important role, but it is not the determining one, that is, it is everyone's job. For example, one thing that is needed from the foreign population, especially with the Moroccan population, is for their migratory project to change.'[21] (O2)

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[19] Actuaciones dirigidas a la población extranjera residente en el municipio de El Ejido, para que puedan desarrollarse tanto en el plano personal, social como laboral, facilitando su integración en la comunidad y al mismo tiempo se perciban como ciudadanos y ciudadanas con derechos y obligaciones, siempre teniendo en cuenta la diversidad cultural y de orígenes.

[20] A nivel privado, son los propios agricultores los que mejor están regulando el tema del Ramadán. O sea, se auto-regulan los propios agricultores, saben perfectamente que mientras están en Ramadán la forma de trabajo de la gente que tienen es completamente diferente y son los agricultores los que se adaptan. No les dicen "aquí Ramadán no..." Adaptan todo el horario.

[21] El Ayuntamiento tiene un papel importante, pero no es el determinante, es decir, es un trabajo de todos. Por ejemplo, una cosa que se necesita es que en materia de población extranjera, sobre todo con población marroquí, es que el proyecto migratorio cambie.

The mayor explained that the local institutions are the ones who need to ensure that public services can be accessible to everyone. Also, he highlighted that the municipality needs to offer a personalized action towards migrants' integration and work closely with families.

> 'In the end, Administrations are service providers, and we must have sufficient capacity to cover educational, health and social, coexistence, sports, cultural needs in all facets.'[22] (O1)

Therefore, we can say that for El Ejido the role of the receiving society at an individual level is rather passive; they adapt to the customs of the foreign population and although it is said that integration of migrants is everyone's job, there are no activities involving them. The municipality plays an important level since they are the ones in charge of ensuring public services availability to all citizens, but there is a lack of communication among migrants and the municipality. In fact, the data shows that migrants have had self-reliance when settling in El Ejido.

3.3. Integration dimensions

3.3.1. Socioeconomic integration

Health care

With regards to the equal access to health care services, the regulation in Spain includes universal and free medical care to everyone. However, the equal access to health services for migrant people was not explicitly addressed by the policies and the interviewed migrants said that they were not provided with information about health services by the municipality. So as to learn about how the health system works in Spain, they asked other people or, in some cases, asked help to the Red Cross. Additionally, the documents and the interviews show that the municipality does not, in general facilitate services to overcome linguistic, cultural and administrative barriers. The only mention to this was done by interviewee O5 referring to a part of the program ERACIS:

> 'About the topic of feminine hygiene and care, gynaecologists, they [Moroccan women from a township called Tarambana] have no idea. In fact, there have been a lot of seminars together with [the] Health [departments]'[23] (O5).

Although this activity has the objective of overcoming one of the cultural barriers that Moroccan women may face, only one of the interviewees mentioned this and as explained

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[22] Las administraciones al final somos prestadoras de servicios y tenemos que tener la capacidad suficiente de cubrir las necesidades educativas, sanitarias y sociales, de convivencia, deportivas, culturales en todas las facetas.

[23] El tema de salud femenina, ginecologo, no tienen ni idea. De hecho, se han hecho un montón de charlas en conjunto con salud.

before, it is not a permanent measure that the municipality offers, but it depends on the program set up each time. This means that cultural and linguistic barriers are not addressed to ensure the access to healthcare in El Ejido equally to Spanish citizens.

Housing

In relation to access to housing both the official documents and the interviews reveal that there is no mechanism in place from the municipality to ensure migrants' access to housing. However, interview with official O3 revealed several interesting points about the housing situation of migrants in the city. One of the things she highlights is that increasingly migrant people own more houses rather than just renting them, meaning that people are expected to settle, to not go back to the country of origin.

The issue of housing is something that also concern migrants, who also explain that none of them was assisted by the municipality when looking for one. In fact, two of the interviewees highlight an issue: the non-migrant population in El Ejido is reluctant to rent a room to migrant people.

> 'I got here and started looking for a room on social media, but people don't answer you... Now I
> have a friend who is looking for a room and it's still the same, people don't pick up our calls and
> if you visit it in person, the tell you that the room is rented. I don't know if it's because we're black,
> I don't know… […] I don't want to say it, but people don't want to rent their room to immigrants,
> and even less so if you are black'[24] (M5).

As it will be seen in the next section, the matters of education and housing are closely related since the schools to which children attend depends on the area where they live. There are some places in El Ejido that have a higher share of migrants, as it has been stated previously, however, one of the higher-rank officials argues that El Ejido "does not have the means to prevent [segregation]".

Education

The key aspect regarding migrants' integration is education. Since El Ejido is a city that has been attracting migrants since the 1990s, there is a strong focus on the second generation of migrants. For policymakers, education is crucial to overcome the lack of social cohesion in the municipality.

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[24] Yo llegué aquí y me puse a buscar habitación en las redes sociales, pero la gente no te responde... Ahora tengo un amigo que está buscando habitación todo el día y seguimos igual, la gente no nos coge el móvil y si luego quedas con la gente, en persona te dicen que no, que la habitación esta alquilada, no sé si es porque somos negros, no se… […] Yo no lo quiero decir, pero la gente no quiere alquilar su habitación a inmigrantes y menos aún si eres negro.

'For me the key is that the education system really attends to the real needs [migrants] have.'[25]
(O1)

'I think that the task that is done in educational centres with children, with teenagers, is making the family integrate somehow. Little by little.'[26] (O1)

Despite this, the former Head of the Education Unit at the municipality was very disappointed with the action that the local government was taking in the educational field. She argued that the main focus was on teaching the Spanish language, but no other activities to support children of migrants at public schools were held. However, she explains, as noted before, that every activity held in this regard worked through programs rather than being a continuous service.

When talking about how the municipality of El Ejido help reduce migrants' children's concentration in underperforming schools she said that nothing was done and highlighted that there even were some tricks that non-migrant population did when registering at the municipality to avoid taking their kids to certain schools.

'There is not a policy radically against it, [migrants' integration], but for example at the Tierno Galvan and Jose Salazar schools, which are in the same area, the first one has 20% of foreign students and the other 90%. Why is this happening? [...] When the schools are in the same area and there is such a difference, there is some "cheating"'[27] (O4).

In El Ejido to register the children at school, the person needs to be registered at the municipality. In case this person is not registered, probably because they don't have a passport, a report was done from the Education to Unit to allow the children to go to school. Depending on the area where it's stated where you live, a certain school corresponds to the children. Interviewee O4 state that she was aware that non-migrant citizens and some people working at the municipality exchanged favours so as to appeared registered in an area with a school that has fewer migrant children, so that their own children would go to that school. Lately, she explains, this has been done with Almerimar. I previously mentioned that Almerimar is a township that has a considerably a smaller number of migrants than the rest of the municipality. Interviewee O4 explained that people are being allowed to register in Almerimar, even though

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[25] Para mí la gran clave es que el sistema educativo atienda realmente las necesidades reales que [los migrantes] tienen.

[26] Yo creo que esa esa tarea que se hace en los centros educativos con los niños, con los adolescentes, va haciendo que la familia de alguna manera vaya integrándose.

[27] No se hace una política radicalmente en contra, pero por ejemplo en el colegio Tierno Galvan y el Jose Salazar, que están en la misma zona. El primero tiene el 20% de alumnos extranjeros y el otro 90%. ¿Por qué pasa esto? […] Entonces cuando están los institutos en la misma zona y hay tanta diferencia, ahí hay trampa.

they live in another place, with the objective of taking the kids to a school where there is a lower share of migrants.

With regards to migrants, when being asked about the level of education there are two of them, M2 and M4, who had university degrees and explained the difficulties of recognizing their diplomas in Spain. In the case of M2, she was graduated in International Relations and was not able to validate it, so she has been working in many different things, but none on her field of study.

> 'I have finished high school and studied International Relations, I was studying English. Then,
> I came and started working in an insurance company. I have changed jobs a lot. At shops,
> replacing maternity leaves, as a secretary at schools… But everything was temporary contracts'
> [28] (M2).

Another issue that was highlighted by one of the interviewees, M3, was that when she arrived to El Ejido she did not find any help from the municipality to continue with her education. She has always worked in the sports field but was not able to find any useful course or program to continue with her training.

> 'At the moment if I looked for something, I did not find anything interesting. If I wanted to
> focus on some training or something that interested me, I had to do everything on my own' [29]
> (M3).

Thus, a clear problem can be observed as some non-migrant citizens try to prevent their children to go to schools that have a higher share of migrant children. Additionally, the municipality does not offer training opportunities for migrants who want to continue studying or facilities for those who have already obtained a diploma in non-EU countries and want to recognise it.

Labour market

For the municipality of El Ejido, integration of migrants in the labour market is essential. The main tool to do so it's the previously mentioned ERACIS program that is not directly targeted at migrants but at citizens living in disadvantaged zones of El Ejido and a big part of participants are migrants. This program's main objective is to offer labour guidance and promote activities for labour market inclusion with the objective of enhancing the living

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[28] Yo había terminado Bachiller y estudie Relaciones Internacionales, estaba estudiando inglés. Y luego empecé a trabajar en una empresa de seguros. Pues es que he cambiado muchísimo de trabajo. En tiendas, cubriendo bajas por maternidad, secretaria en colegios… Pero todo eran contratos temporales.

[29] En esos momentos si busqué algo, no encontré nada interesante. Yo si queria enfocame en alguna formacion o algo que me interesase, todo lo tenia que hacer por mi cuenta. Con respecto al deporte, a yoga y todo eso era casi no eran cursos que lo tenía que pagar yo o que tenía que hacerlo por mi cuenta.

conditions of the participants (Interviewee O5). After a first intervention with the social workers, the characteristics of each person are recognised as well as the most suitable way to help them. Then, the social mediator is in charge of giving the courses and activities of accompaniment with the person.

The situation of women is especially difficult as, generally, they are not used to work because their husbands do so. Therefore, in these cases, a training is carried out based on learning the Spanish language, teaching them how to do simple things within the city such as registering at the municipality, opening a bank account, explaining where the public services and institutions are located as well as creating a curriculum. In short, everything that is necessary before entering the labour market.

> 'Mainly women are more uprooted from the world of work […] so my role is that those women who live in scattered areas, who are immigrants, learn to read and the language, in general. We call it job training'[30] (O5)

In relation to young migrants the program focuses on doing more dynamic activities to guide them and explain the educational and training offer that exist, since most of them are not aware or do not know how to look for alternatives for studying after high school.

> 'There is a high percentage of immigrants and they all have more or less the same profile […] we do employment workshops, we accompany them, for example, in training guidance, employment guidance.' (O5).[31]

With regards to the migrants interviewed none of them has had the assistance of the municipality when looking for a job, they have always done it on their own or through the help of other migrants. Therefore, it is positive that the municipality sets up these kinds of projects that, although not directly addressed at the migrant population, a high percentage of the participants is of migrant origin.

3.3.2. Legal-political integration

Access to citizenship

In Spain, the Civil Code establishes that the procedure to apply for the citizenship can be initiated after having resided legally in the country for 10 years. Out of the migrants interviewed only one had the Spanish nationality and the rest was planning to apply for it or was in the

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[30] Sobre todo las mujeres estan como más desarraigadas del mundo laboral […] entonces mi función es que esas mujeres que viven en diseminados, que son inmigrantes, aprendan a leer y el idioma, en general. Nosotros lo llamamos capacitación para el empleo.

[31] Hay un alto porcentaje de inmigrantes y todos tienen más o menos el mismo perfil. […] Nosotros hacemos talleres de empleo, les acompañamos, por ejemplo, en orientación académica y laboral.

process of doing so. Their main reason to apply for it was their intention to stay in Spain, so they do not want to continue dealing with the bureaucratic procedure of renewing the residence permit.

> 'It makes things easier, not because they reject me for being a foreigner, it's rather because I don't have to go through the process of renewing my residence, do you understand? […] It's more for that, but the bureaucratic issue, renewing the DNI (Spanish ID) is easier'[32] (M2).
>
> 'We plan to request it for our daughter, she can keep the dual nationality and then when she turns 18, she has to choose, but my husband wants to [have the Spanish one] because we've been 20 years. We are not going back…'[33] (M1).

None of the interviewees expressed the desire to obtain the citizenship with the intention to being able to vote, however, two of them highlighted that her main reason was to have the same rights as a Spanish citizen and to be able to do access the examinations to become a civil servant.

> 'I would like to do it for a question of stability. I do not have the same rights as a family member of a community member, than as a citizen. For example, access to free public education, civil servants' exams... I can do some of them, but not all. Especially for education matters I would like to have it'[34] (M3).

Political inclusion

Migrants who do not have the Spanish nationality cannot vote at the municipal nor regional elections, only national ones. Therefore, there is no direct political representation of migrants in the local political institutions. In this regard, it is interesting to observe how one of the high-rank officials felt about the political participation of people with migrant origin. He explained he felt some "resentment" because migrants were not assuming the local political and social structure anymore.

> 'Now they form their own parties, they have a specific ideology, in some cases very well supported on the issue of religion, and that complicates the issue. This implies passing by the instrumental part and the rules of the political game, we have jumped to the subject of religious

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[32] Facilita más las cosas, no porque a mí me rechacen por ser extranjera, es más bien por no tener que estar haciendo el trámite de renovar la residencia, ¿entiendes? […]Es más por eso, pero el tema burocrático, renovar el DNI es más fácil.

[33] Tenemos pensado pedirla para la niña, ella puede quedarse con la doble nacionalidad y luego cuando cumpla los 18 años, pues tiene que elegir, pero mi marido si quiere pasarse porque llevamos 20 años. Volver no vamos a volver…

[34] Me gustaría hacerla por una cuestión de estabilidad, digamos. No tengo lo mismo derechos como familiar de comunitaria, a como ciudadana. Por ejemplo, acceder a la educación pública gratuita, oposiciones... Algunas puedo hacerlas, pero no todas. Sobre todo, por el tema de educación sí que me gustaría.

values. In the moment in which we jump to the subject of values religious we are changing the

rules of the game, because both national and regional parties are secular' [35] (O2).

Looking at the actual political parties in Spain at all levels there is a small political party called PRUNE which has only run for election in three Spanish municipalities, but it has never participated in any electoral process.

With regards to the indirect political inclusion the only resource available is the previously mentioned *Consejo Municipal de Integracion y Convivencia de El Ejido* that has been established this year. Therefore, the migrants interviewed did not participate in it nor have been participated in any similar in the previous years. It must be noted, however, that this Council is not exclusively targeted towards migrants' integration, but rather at integration in general. According to the official documents, the Council aims to offer a space for participation and assistance.

The Municipal Council for Integration and Coexistence is a collegiate body of participatory nature

and of a consultative and advisory nature.[36] (D4)

Additionally, some associations are represented at the Council, including CEPAIM Integral Action with Migrants, the Red Cross, CODENAF (*Cooperacion y Desarrollo con el Norte de Africa*), which closely work with migrants.

To sum up, it could be said that integration in legal and political terms is weak. The access to citizenship is difficult and, although this is regulated at a national level, the municipality does not have any mechanism in place to assist the migrants on the application procedure. Among the main reasons why migrants want to obtain the citizenship is to avoid having to go through the bureaucratic process that entails renewing the residence permit, which is also related with the fact that none of them have obtained any assistance or accompaniment from the municipality in such procedures. With regards to political inclusion, it is positive that the new *Consejo Municipal de Integracion y Convivencia de El Ejido* has been established as it represents associations that work with migrants. On the contrary, we can see that for direct

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[35] Ahora forman sus propios partidos, tienen una ideología concreta, en algunos casos muy soportada en el tema de la religión y eso complica la cuestión. Porque con esto ya pasamos de la parte instrumental, de las reglas del juego político, económico, laboral, ya saltamos al tema de los valores religiosos. En el momento en el que saltamos al tema de los valores religiosos estamos cambiando las reglas del juego, porque los partidos tanto nacionales como regionales son laicos.

[36] El Consejo Municipal de Integración y Convivencia es un órgano colegiado de naturaleza participativa y de carácter consultivo y asesor.

political inclusion, people of migrant origin are expected to assimilate within the existing political and social structures and that it is viewed with resentment that they go beyond the established order.

3.3.3. Cultural-religious integration

Language

Learning the Spanish language is one of the most important things for the municipality of El Ejido with regards to migrants' integration. The higher-rank officials argued that it is crucial for migrants to learn the language to participate in the society and considers family reunifications an obstacle to achieve an integrated society, since they don't know the language.

Interviewee O4 explained that the way in which language support was given at schools was through programmes. However, currently migrant children at schools are mainly second-generation so there is no longer a need to focus on the language.

'A few years ago, there was a problem of linguistic adaptation, but not anymore'[37] (O4)

With regards to the language support offered at the public institutions, the only department that has translators available is Social Services. They were available two men and two women of Moroccan origin helping with Arabic-Spanish translating. When trying to look for Spanish language courses at the municipality, there is not set up a permanent and continuous course. At the moment, Social Services was offering a course given by a Moroccan man that was hired through a program. Therefore, the language support for migrants in institutional contexts is rather weak because it works through temporary programs, and they are not easily searchable.

Religion

Most of the migrant population in El Ejido is Moroccan, therefore, there is a relatively high number of Muslim people in the city. There are several mosques in the different townships, however, the interviewees who considered themselves Muslims said that they don't usually go to the mosque, and that they pray at home, in the case they do. Additionally, El Ejido does not have a place available for Muslims burials.

Interviewee O2 argued that when the Muslim population needs a public space to celebrate the Eid al-Adha, a place for this is granted, although with a rather negative tone. Nevertheless, he argued that it is necessary to "tell them off for slaughtering lambs as it creates a conflict" between the receiving society and the migrants.

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[37] hace unos años habia el problema de adaptacion lingüística pero ahora ya no.

With regards to the religious holidays, at a national level there is a cooperation agreement between Spain and the Spanish Islamic Commission (Law 26/1992) where it is allowed to take vacation days to assist to several Muslim celebrations, as far as there is an agreement between the worker and the enterprise. It is relevant to note that none of the interviewees had taken a day off to enjoy a Muslim religious holiday. One of them explained that when she has tried, the enterprise did not allow them.

> I remember that they were very close, they told us that that day we had to work. Obviously, there were people who did not come to work, but they got scolded afterwards [...] There are working places that understand it, but others where they tell you directly that if it's not on the official calendar, you are not allowed'[38] (M8).

Finally, with regards to the religious education at schools explained that mainly, the religion that is studied at schools is the Catholic one, although there are sometimes in which events are held where they bring people representative of the Islamic religion.

> 'Mainly, the religion that is studied is Catholic, but they are already organising things with Imams, for example [...] But basically yes, it is Catholic' (O4)[39].

Cultural patterns

Most of the officials from the municipality were very concerned with the necessity of explaining migrants "their norms of coexistence and their ordinances" as well as the "democratic and constitutional values".

> 'First, what must be clearly understood is the system of rights and obligations that our Spanish legal system imposes on anyone who is here, whether they are from here or not. Therefore, there you have to let the issue of cultural relativism pass…[40]' (O2).

This includes, as explained before, things such as not having clothing lines or blankets on the outside part of the house or understanding the equality between men and women.

> 'The democratic principles should be understood. All, all of them, including equality between men and women. Then, when that is clear and it's assumed, although I have many doubts that this

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[38] Recuerdo que nos lo dejaron bien claro que no, que ese día había que trabajar. Obviamente faltaron gente que luego les echaron la regañina […] Hay sitios que lo entienden, pero otros en los que te dicen directamente que, 0si no está en el calendario oficial, no te dejan.

[39] Principalmente la religion que se estudia es la Catolica, pero se están organizando cosas con imanes, por ejemplo […] pero básicamente si, es Catolica.

[40] Primero, lo que hay que entender claramente es el régimen de derechos y obligaciones que nuestro ordenamiento jurídico español impone a cualquiera esté aquí, sea de aquí o no. Con lo cual, ahí tienes que pasar muy por alto el tema del relativismo cultural…

is the case, then we can propose a "one on one" relationship. A configuration of a political space like anywhere. But right now, this offers me many doubts that this will happen'[41] (O2).

According to the interviews with officials from the municipality, there are several mediators available at the Social Services department. Some of them are hired, as explained previously, through programs, and some others have been hired given the increasing number of citizens of migrant origin (D1). Mediators are "indispensable" since they mediate conflicts between the migrant and non-migrant populations. However, none of the migrants interviewed has had contact with any mediator. This means that there might be a gap between the services available and the actual usage of these.

With regards to promoting the culture of migrants' sending country, the municipality does not offer any activity to do so.

'Is there any work done to promote their culture? No. Among other things, because we don't have the resources to do it either'[42] (O2).

One of the interviewees explained that there exists the possibility of studying the Moroccan culture as an extracurricular activity where children of migrants learned to write in Arabic and studied the Moroccan culture.

'At school, I remember that in the afternoons there was a teacher to teach Arabic writing to the children of Moroccan immigrants born here who have not had the opportunity to learn it'[43] (M8).

3.4. Chapter conclusion

This chapter illustrated the findings regarding the relationship between local governance of migration-related diversity and migrants' integration. Although the municipality recognises that migrants are needed, mainly as labour force, they are not perceived as permanent members of the society, but as foreigners. There is a strong differentiation between the native citizens and those of migrant origin in terms of cultural values and income and educational levels. Therefore, even if migrants have been settling and participating in society since the early 2000s,

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[41] Se tienen que entender todos los principios democráticos. Todos, todos, la igualdad entre mujeres y hombres. Entonces cuando eso se asiente y se tenga claro, que tengo muchas dudas de que eso sea así, entonces podemos plantear un "tú a tú". Una configuración de un espacio político como en cualquier sitio. Pero ahora mismo, a mí me ofrece dudas, muchas dudas de que eso sea así.

[42] ¿Se hace una labor de fomento de su cultura? No. Entre otras cosas, porque tampoco tenemos recursos para hacerlo.

[43] En el colegio recuerdo que por las tardes había un profesor para ensenar la escritura árabe para los hijos de inmigrantes marroquíes nacidos aquí que no hemos tenido la oportunidad de aprenderlo.

the differences stemming from their migrant background are presented as a problem, and even sometimes as a conflict.

The targeting strategy followed by the municipality tends to be a generic one, while differentiating the particular conditions of the migrant citizens. The activities and measures for migrants' integration are only oriented to migrants. Therefore, the expected solution to this problem is solved by the adaptation and learning of migrants, without making significant changes in the institutional structures of the society. In fact, the burden of integration and fitting into the municipality's system is put on migrants' shoulders. The municipality is regarded as an important but not determinant actor and the receiving society, the non-migrant citizens, has a more passive role.

The measures that can be found to promote migrants' integration are mainly through programs. These programs include language courses and activities to the labour market, but they are temporary and do not exclusively address migrants. Although some action is being taken, it is not reaching the migrant population, probably due to a lack of resources.

It is interesting also to observe the difference between how high-rank officials and workers from the municipality perceive the matter of migrants' integration. While the high-rank officials mainly focus on the conflict that can cause the cultural and educational differences among citizens, workers from the municipality have rarely experienced any conflict in this regard while working with them.

Chapter IV: Discussion

In the following chapter, a reflection on the research finding is done in connection with the existing body of literature. Additionally, it outlines the main contributions and limitations of this research as well as a review on policymaking in small cities and the different perception of migrants in El Ejido.

4.1. Reviewing policymaking in small cities

Although migrants have been settling in El Ejido since the early 2000s, there is still a lack of social cohesion within the community. As discussed in the previous chapter, migrants are mostly seen as a problem and the burden of integrating into the municipality's system is put on their shoulders. Previous research has highlighted that a bottom-up approach prevails in local policies of integration and highlights the predisposition to better accommodate diversity due to their closeness to migrants (Scholten and Penninx, 2016; Poppelaars and Scholten, 2008). The case study analysed adopts an approach in line with this: officials from the municipality view positively being in direct contact with migrants due to being in a small city. In fact, although the municipality follows the national general guidelines on migration matters, integration strategies are implemented at a local level and, in the case of El Ejido, they have their own municipal programmes. This confirms the expectation that the municipality would take a bottom up-approach. However, the city does not consider diversity a strong asset. As argued by the Academia, this tendency takes place in bigger cities rather than smaller ones. Indeed, the analysis of the policy framing and migrants' integration strategy in El Ejido reveals that there is a strong focus on sociocultural differences between the migrant and the non-migrant population. In this way, it is expected that migrants adapt to the working of the city of El Ejido, while small changes in the institutional structures of the society are done.

The complexities of local policymaking cannot be captured within a unique framing (Van Breugel, 2020). In her study, Van Breugel (2020) differentiated four types of policy approaches based on a policy framing analysis, problem definition and target groups. Since I followed a similar method of analysis, I believe that El Ejido could fit within the 'proactive monist' type for several reasons. Firstly, the municipality is proactive as it develops their own

municipal programs and, secondly, it is monist because the targeting is generic, and measures are temporary. Although it was expected that a generic targeting was being followed, the analysis did not confirm that measures on migrant integration are mainstreamed across different policy domains.

This thesis contributes to the emerging stream of literature that studies migrants' integration in small cities that host a wide number of different nationalities. More concretely, what makes my research a special contribution to this stream of literature, is the specific characteristics of El Ejido: a city that has an increasing number of migrants and demands labour force due to the ageing population and outmigration of young people. As highlighted by Caponio (2020), my study contributed to the need to take a closer look at how small towns translate their definition of migrant integration into policies, the factors that influence it and their implementation. In this sense, it is relevant to highlight the difference between the higher-official ranks' perception of migrants and workers of the municipality who closely work with them, which could be a possible avenue for future research.

4.2. Perception of migrants in the city

El Ejido is a city that fits within the category of towns that requires labour force due to the out-migration of younger people and ageing population. Therefore, this study contributes to understanding the relationship between the need for migrant population and the relationship between the social cohesion practices of the municipality through the study of migrants' integration policies.

Previous research points out the importance of integration policies to meet the needs of all members of the community. In this case, it is not clear how integration policies meet the needs of the migrants, beyond offering language courses; translation services at the Department of Social Services and other activities that do not reach much of the migrant population. Additionally, the collaboration with civil society takes place in a very limited way: a space to cooperate with NGOs and other associations has been set up this year. As it could be observed in the case of Riace in the study by Driel & Verkuyten, 2019, offering opportunities for interaction and stimulating the locals' participation in the social integration of migrants is crucial to create positive community relations. This was in great part related to the fact that Riace has a long history of migration. Related to this, Pisarevskaya et al. (2021) highlight that the historical background on migration is an important element shaping migration-related diversities. In the case of El Ejido, migration is a rather recent phenomenon as migrants started

arriving in the 1990s (Entrena-Duran & Jimenez-Diaz, 2016). This could be a factor explaining the flaws of migration governance of the municipal government.

On the contrary, we can find a strong social control by the established community as Nicholls and Uitermark (2016) identify in their study about migrants in small towns. In El Ejido, migrants are hardly politically represented, and they are expected to assume the local political and social structure. This means that the municipality feels resentment towards the fact supposition that some migrants, mostly in the case who follow the Islamic religion, start creating political parties in accordance with these beliefs. In fact, from the higher-rank officials the cultural differences, mainly stemming from religion, are one of the main problems that the municipality faces when dealing with migrants' integration. Although there are some activities to promote the culture of the most populated migrant group, the Moroccan one, they are very few.

Additionally, migrants are also expected to assume and learn Spanish values and norms. The officials from the municipality considered it very important to learn the democratic values to learn to coexist in the city's community. In fact, as Valenta (2007) argues, smaller places are characterized by rejecting change and cultural diversity and this is what can be observed in El Ejido. From the municipality, as stated before, there are no activities aimed at the promotion of cultural diversity. This can be also seen in the difficulty that migrants have in recognising the university diplomas from their country of origin that, although it is a matter of the national level of government, the municipality does not offer education or training courses for migrants who might want to continue with their academic career. As well, there are limited religious spaces, other than Christian ones.

As a result, some resentment and antipathy towards migrants can be grasped from the findings. In the interviews, some migrants explained how they have been rejected when looking for a house because they were black. Others explained that, in general, it is very difficult to get religious holidays other than the ones established in the official calendar. This is related to the study by Glorius *et al.* (2020) that concludes that the lack of contact leads to an increase of negative stereotypes. As expected, El Ejido's policies have not aimed for the interaction among migrant and non-migrant population and the responsibility of integrating into the local community has been put mostly on migrants.

In fact, a feeling of non-belonging can be observed throughout the interviews, especially when it comes to the matter of obtaining Spanish citizenship. Only one of the participants said to 'feel Spanish' as a reason to obtain the citizenship, the rest wanted to apply for it with the objective of avoiding the bureaucratic procedure of having to renew the residence

permit; of obtaining the same rights as a Spanish citizen; or simply because they are settled in Spain and do not have prospects of going back to their countries of origin.

All in all, this research contributed to the debate regarding whether migrants are seen as a potential for development or, on the contrary, it is believed that the arrival of migrants might lead to conflicts within the community. In the case of El Ejido, although it is a city that faces labour shortages of skilled workers and workers for the agricultural sector, the policies do not properly address this.

4.3. Limitations

A main limitation of this research is that there were not many policy documents available to analyse. In fact, there were very little ones available in the public site of the municipality. This meant that I had to rely on the interviews, which results in a risk of producing a biased narrative. Particularly, I was unsuccessful in recruiting more officials from the municipality, both higher-rank officials and workers focused on implementation. The lack of documents made very difficult finding the most suitable person to interview regarding the topic of my research. Therefore, this research sheds a light on the question about how local governance of migrant's integration in a small city like El Ejido from a limited perspective.

Another limitation lies in the use of the three-dimensions' framework to study migrants' integration is that, since El Ejido migrants' integration policies are done in a transversal way, sometimes it is difficult to classify them in one of the dimensions, as it may influence another one as well. For instance, the recognition of diplomas from non-EU countries was an indicator on the acceptance of the receiving society. However, this is also related to education, and how the municipality assist migrants on continuing with their academic training, which falls under the socioeconomic dimension. Additionally, the socioeconomic dimension has many different domains that due to the time limit to do this research could not be done in depth. Interviews with officials who worked in the different domains, such as education, were done, but I failed to obtain interviews from people working in other domains. This is also because there were no people explicitly working on this – as explained before, integration policies in El Ejido are transversal. Thus, one of the main difficulties found during the research was to link the transversal policies with the different dimensions, when I mainly relied on interviews and there were little documents to analyse.

Conclusion

This thesis addresses as its central research question: *how has local governance of migration related diversity in the municipality of El Ejido (Almeria, Spain) influenced migrants' integration?* A qualitative approach was selected to analyse migrants' integration policies in the municipality through a three-dimensions analysis of integration. A document analysis combined with in-depth interviews with officials from the municipality and migrants are the main body of sources. They were selected as integration is understood as a two-way process involving the receiving society and migrants themselves.

The first sub-question asked how the municipality defined their policy framing regarding integration of migrants. Attention was paid to the problem definition and the integration strategy, including the actions taken to realise the implementation of the policy. I observed that the problem of migrants' integration was defined based on cultural, economic and educational differences. There is a constant differentiation by officials, especially by higher-rank officials, to make this distinction. In fact, the interviews reveal that there is a "cultural shock" between migrant and non-migrant population. One of the reasons is migrants' lower level of education or lower income. In this way, it is expected for migrants to learn the values and norms of the receiving society and the burden of integration is put on their shoulders.

The second sub-question addressed the way the problem of migrants' integration is translated into concrete policies, namely the strategy. In this regard, there is no policy per se aiming at migrants' integration. However, although the higher-ranks officials claim that actions to assist migrants are done in a transversal way, the analysis reveals that there are almost no activities to assist migrants in the different policy domains such as housing, or education. Most of the action related to integration took place in the form of programs, mostly form the head of Social Services. The programs were aimed at the migrant population and to other groups, such as people who lived in disadvantaged areas, and had as its objective mainly offering Spanish language classes and other basic knowledge to access the labour market. These programs were temporary and hardly reach the migrant community – indeed, none of the migrants interviewed in this study had participated in any activity by the municipality.

To answer the third sub-question regarding targeting, the analysis illustrates that a generic one is followed by the municipality. This is because the measures and activities aimed at social inclusion are oriented towards the society as a whole or, also, to citizens at risk of exclusion. Measures are temporary and migrants are identified as a group with particular needs.

Fourthly, the relationship between the municipality and the migrants is marked by a gap between the access to the few activities that are set up for migrants' integration and the real participation of migrants.

To answer the last sub-question the most engaging observation was the difference in the perception of migrants between high-rank officials and front-line workers from the municipality. While the high-rank officials mainly focus on the conflict that can cause the cultural and educational differences between migrant and non-migrant populations, workers from the municipality have rarely experienced any conflict in this regard while working with them.

Research recommendations

As it has been discussed throughout this research, the case of the municipality of El Ejido was worth observing due to the specific characteristics of the city. It is a small town that demands workforce for its industry due to the ageing of the population and outmigration of young people. As it has been highlighted by previous literature, there is a need to continue investigating how governance of migration diversity is being done in cities with these characteristics to learn from it. In fact, a comparative approach among cities with similar characteristics would further enrich the field. Examples of this, include initiatives such as the project Welcoming Spaces, funded by the Horizon 2020 research programs that observes the initiatives to revitalise shrinking regions while offering non-EU migrants a space to live.

While this research looked at the three dimensions of integration, a more concrete study could be done about each of the dimensions separately to obtain more precise information for policy action. Similarly, the same could be done with the different actions involved in the society: the municipality; the migrants and the civil society. Analysing the perspectives of each actor in-depth could enhance the understanding about how governance has been done in the city and its consequences.

Policy recommendations

Throughout the data collection, I reflected about how governance of migration diversity in El Ejido could be improved and, therefore, cities with similar characteristics could also consider this. The following recommendations are based on what the interviewees considered as challenges or problems.

Firstly, the analysis highlighted the problematic of setting up activities aimed at migrants' integration exclusively through programs. Although these programs, either targeted

at the migrant population or at other bigger vulnerable groups, have always been in place throughout the years, they don't reach the migrant population. As it was observed none of the migrants interviewed had participated in any of these programs. A structural, sustainable solution needs to be given. This means that, for example, Spanish language course should always be available and should be easy to access. In fact, officials from the municipality highlighted several times the importance of learning the language, therefore, it is counterproductive that the offer of language courses depend on temporary courses.

Secondly, a very similar recommendation applies to other courses such as accessing the basic services of the municipality. In the program that is set up now from Social Services they offer women the possibility to learn basic things such as registering at the municipality, opening a bank account or going to the doctor. These are services that should be easily available all the time for all migrants that need it. In fact, throughout the interviews with migrants, it has been observed that they all needed to learn how to access the basic services at the municipality, but they did not have any help. The help was given by colleagues or other migrants themselves. Offering these two basic services in a permanent basis would be a good starting point to allow migrants take part in the society and ensure that their most basic rights are covered.

Thirdly, it has been observed the great difference between the perception about migrants' integration of the higher-rank and lower-rank officials from the municipality. The policies and actions of the municipality are clearly influenced by the perception of the higher-rank officials that, as I have explained previously, are very much focused on a strong differentiation between the migrant and non-migrant population based on cultural, educational and income differences. On the contrary, lower-rank officials did not focus on these differences and, in fact, did not experience any conflict. Strengthening the communication between both officials ensuring two-way feedback can improve the policy action to better meet the needs of the migrant population.

Fourthly, I consider a positive that in the interviews, officials highlighted that migrants' integration was done in a transversal way. However, the analysis shows that there are no actions taking place at the different policy domains to assist migrants, as a more vulnerable groups. Access to housing or education are not facilitated by the municipality and it's something that the migrants interviewed were missing.

To sum up, there must be a shift away from the distinction between migrant and non-migrant population based on cultural differences. Rather than expecting migrants to learn the

values and norms of the receiving society, a space for interaction between migrant and non-migrant population should be offered to not give place to stereotypes or prejudices. This results on migrants being perceived as a problem rather than as a potential for development, which becomes even more important if we consider that El Ejido, due to its characteristics, needs labour force. The municipality needs to support and assist migrants. As one of the interviewees highlighted "there is a part of the link [with the municipality] that is missing, because you realise that we needed to do everything almost by ourselves. There is a part in the chain that is missing, you realise that the system does not assist or advice you".

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview Guide Officials form the Municipality

1. **Introduction**

Thank you for participating in this interview. First of all, I would like to briefly outline what my thesis research consists of and then, we will proceed with the questions. My main interest with this study is to understand how the integration of migrants has been realized in the city of El Ejido. My investigation is focused mainly on migrant workers which are residing in El Ejido in a regular situation. More concretely, I am interested in looking at the different types of integration which will be mentioned later, legal-political, socio-economic, and cultural-religious.

In this case, what I would like from you is your vision about the role that the municipality plays with regards to immigrants' integration and how it relates to your job. I provide you with the consent form, that I would kindly ask you to sign, to reassure that the information in this interview will be treated confidentially. If you have any questions, please ask me at any time of the interview.

2. **General questions about the official's position**
    - What is your current job at the municipality?
    - How long have you been doing this job?
    - How does your work relate to the integration of migrants?

3. **Questions about the local governance of integration:**
    - How does the municipality of El Ejido define "migrants' integration"?
    - How is the coordination between national, regional, and local government regarding information exchange, resources, and tasks?
    - How well is the municipality, in terms of human and financial resources, equipped to deal with the integration of migrants?
    - The number of migrants settling in El Ejido grows every year, what do you think are the main challenges that the municipality faces?

4. **Questions about their perspective on migrants' integration**:

Now, as I mentioned at the beginning of the interview, we will talk about the different dimensions of integration.

Socio-economic integration.

What efforts does the municipality make to guarantee the equal access and equal use of services such as healthcare, housing, education, and labour market access?

*[This question will be asked as a general question so the interviewee can answer freely. Depending on which topic he/she talks about, I have written more concrete questions about different themes such as health care, housing, education and labour market. Not all of them will be asked, just those which are related to what the interviewee is saying]

Health care

- What information about health care is given to facilitate its migrants' access to these services?
- What services does to municipality offer to overcome linguistic, cultural, and administrative barriers at the public health providers?

Housing

- What measures are taken to ensure migrants' access to decent housing?
- What measures are taken by the municipality to reduce segregation in neighborhoods?

Education

- How does the municipality support migrants at public schools?
- Does the municipality of El Ejido allocate additional resources for migrant children at risk of underachieving?
- Does the municipality of El Ejido develop programs to reduce migrant children's concentration in underperforming schools?
- Does the municipality of El Ejido finance extra-curricular activities to support migrants in risk of underachievement?

Labour market

- What initiatives are taken to help the migrant population at the job centers?
- What measures does the municipality of El Ejido take to increase their suitability for the labour market? (For instance, help regarding entrepreneurship, or other types of courses)

Cultural-religious integration.

- What activities does the municipality offer to promote the cultural diversity?
- What resources are there available to facilitate migrants' use of the public institutions? (For instance, cultural mediators, translators…)
- How is the religious education at public schools?

Legal-political integration.

- What activities does the municipality of El Ejido offer to migrants to participate in the political life of the city? (For instance, in the local social networks)

- How are migrants involved in the organization of local policymaking?

5. **Questions about integration policymaking in a small town**
    - What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages for a small city like El Ejido in relation to migrants' integration?

Lastly, feel free to add anything else which has not been mentioned and you would like to express.

Thank you again for your participation.

Appendix 2. Interview Guide Migrants

1. **Introduction**

Thank you for participating in this interview. First of all, I would like to briefly outline what my thesis research consists of and then, we will proceed with the questions. My main interest with this study is to understand how the integration of migrants has been realized in the city of El Ejido. My investigation is focused mainly on migrant workers which are residing in El Ejido in a regular situation. More concretely, I am interested in looking at the different types of integration which will be mentioned later, legal-political, socio-economic, and cultural-religious.

In this case, what I would like from you is your vision about the role that the municipality plays with regards to immigrants' integration and how it relates to your job. I provide you with the consent form, that I would kindly ask you to sign, to reassure that the information in this interview will be treated confidentially. If you have any questions, please ask me at any time of the interview.

2. **General questions**

Firstly, I would like to know a little bit about your background. Everything will be treated anonymously in my study.
    - How old are you?
    - When did you come to El Ejido?
    - Does your family live with you here?
    - What is your country of origin?
    - What is your job/study?

3. **Interactions with El Ejido and its local institutions**
    - When you first came to El Ejido, how did the municipality welcome you?
    - What institutions did you come in contact with and how did they help you in relation with your integration in the society?

4. Dimensions of integration.

Socio-economic integration.

Education

- What is your highest level of education?

→ *Depending on the answer, I would ask how has the municipality helped him/her in his/her academic training.

Labour market

- What is your current job?
- Have you participated in any courses/programs from the municipality that helped you to find a job? (Not only language courses, but also entrepreneurship courses or IT workshops)

Health care

- Did the municipality inform you on how the health care services work in El Ejido?

Housing

- How is the neighborhood you live in?
- In your opinion, how is the housing situation for migrants in El Ejido?

Cultural-religious integration.

Language

- How did you first started learning Spanish?
- Have you participated in any language course offered by the municipality? If so, did you find it helpful?

Religion

- How would you describe your religious orientation?
- How do you practice your religion in El Ejido?

Culture

- Did you have contact with cultural mediators when you arrived to El Ejido? If so, how have they helped you?

Legal-political integration.

- Did you acquire Spanish nationality? If not, do you plan to do so? Why (not)?
- How does the municipality help you with regards to the bureaucratic proceedings you need to go through to update your permits?
- How does the municipality help you in participating in the city's social network? For instance, in associations, consultative committees, volunteering activities…)

Lastly, feel free to add anything else which has not been mentioned and you would like to express.

Thank you again for your participation.

Appendix 3. Referenced Policy Documents

Document	Code	
Refuerzo de Personal a los Servicios Sociales Comunitarios por Incremento de la Poblacion Inmigrante	D1	Document related to the Reinforcement of Personnel of Social Services' Department due to the Increase in the Immigrant Population
Apoyo a la Integracion y la Gestion de la Diversidad Cultural en El Ejido	D2	Memory of the program aimed at supporting integration of migration related diversity
Oficina Atencion a Inmigrantes	D3	Memory of the activities of the 'Oficina Atencion a Inmigrantes' (Office for Migrants' Assistance)
Reglamento del Consejo Municipal de Integracion y Convivencia	D4	Regulations of the Conesjo Municipal de Integracion y Convivencia.

Appendix 4. List of Interviews

Municipality Officials	Code	Description

Francisco Gongora	O1	Mayor of the city since 2019
Manuel Ariza	O2	Head of the Department of Social Services since 1995
Elena	O3	Head of the Office for Migrants' Help since 2000
Ines	O4	Former Head of the Education Unit at the municipality
Lorena	O5	Social mediator at the municipality – Department of Social Services
Maria del Mar	O6	Social worker – Department of Social Services
Migrant people	**Code**	**Country of origin**
Antoaneta	M1	Romania.
Aylin	M2	Cuba.
Cintia	M3	Argentina.
Elena	M4	Russia.
Moha	M5	Guinea.
Rocio	M6	Ecuador
Laila	M7	Morocco
Maria	M8	Morocco
Ilham	M9	Morocco