Opportunities for Interaction and the Role of Brokers[1]

In the previous chapter, I outlined the development of pro-refugee communities in the four cases: Lauda, Loburg, Altenau, and Neheim. I discussed how the pro-refugee mobilization of 2015/16 unfolded in each case and how, despite similar starting points, pro-refugee communities developed only in Loburg and Lauda. In the remainder of the book, including this chapter, I examine specific factors and conditions that help explain these outcomes. These chapters aim to provide a more comprehensive understanding of when local civic action communities emerge and what factors and conditions are conducive to their development and sustainability.

In this chapter, I explore one of the driving forces behind pro-refugee communities in Lauda and Loburg: the role of local brokers in sustaining interaction in a pro-refugee community by continually creating diverse interaction opportunities. I conceptualize local brokers as active agents who create opportunities for interaction and thus continually bring people together in their locality. This understanding of brokers builds on recent innovations in organizational sociology by David Obstfeld, Stephen P. Borgatti, and Jason Davis (2014).

In the literature on social movements, scholars have highlighted the significance of maintaining interaction during periods of low mobilization through community events, rituals, and the institutionalization of groups (Corrigall-Brown, 2022; Staggenborg, 1996, 2020; Taylor, 1989). However, there is limited research on which types of actors facilitate interaction and how. To shed light on how specific actors intentionally create opportunities for continued inter-

1 This chapter is based on the following article: van den Berg, C. & Hutter, S. (in press): How Local Brokers Keep Interaction Going: Pro-refugee Communities after Heightened Mobilization. *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*.

action, in this chapter, I draw on recent innovations in organizational sociology that focus on the behavior of brokers.

With this more nuanced conceptualization of brokerage, I innovate the current understanding of brokers and bridge the literature of social movement studies with recent concepts in organizational sociology. Through this unique lens, I explore how local brokers emerge and what kinds of strategies they employ to keep interaction and networking alive. Most brokerage studies define brokers as actors who can connect with others because of their structural position in the network (Burt, 2007; Gould & Fernandez, 1989). I draw on recent studies by Obstfeld et al. (2014) and Small and Gose (2020) to focus on the behavior of brokers and the process of brokerage itself. According to these authors, brokers are characterized by their "bridging" behavior and how they bring other actors together. Thus, rather than being determined by their structural position, individuals and organizations become brokers once they are actively involved in the brokerage process, making them a "matchmaker" or a "catalyst" for interaction (Stovel & Shaw, 2012, p. 146).

Overall, Chapter 4 shows that individuals and organizations continued to interact in Lauda and Loburg. Focusing on these two cases, I first demonstrate how actors built trust and recognition within the communities by tackling the challenges volunteers, activists, and employees of community organizations and small groups encountered when dealing with local state actors. Developing this trust and recognition had significant implications for their role as active brokers because this created the opportunity to foster interaction in the first place. In the second step, I show how brokers adopted a diversified approach to create interaction opportunities. This diversification included three types of interaction opportunities involving non-contentious and contentious actions: (i) maintaining the core work, (ii) policy advocacy on asylum and migration, and (iii) broadening the issue by organizing events beyond the issue of local refugee support (including connecting the pro-refugee community with activists combating far-right extremism).

The paper is divided into four sections. First, we outline the theoretical framework, linking social movement studies with advances in brokerage theory from organizational sociology. Second, we provide an overview of our cases and present our data collection and analysis strategies. Third, we present the findings in the two steps outlined above, from identifying how specific individuals and organizations became local brokers to analyzing how these brokers sustained interaction through diversifying interaction opportunities. In the final section, we summarize our results and conclusions.

The chapter is divided into three sections. First, I outline the theoretical framework, linking social movement studies with advances in brokerage theory from organizational sociology. Second, I present the findings in the two steps outlined above, from identifying how specific individuals and organizations became local brokers to analyzing how these brokers sustained interaction through diversifying interaction opportunities. In the final section, I summarize the results and conclusions.

Theoretical Framework: Local Brokers and Sustained Interaction

As I have already discussed in the literature discussion in Chapter 2, periods of heightened mobilization provide a tremendous opportunity for individuals and organizations to interact and build networks (della Porta, 2020b; della Porta & Mosca, 2005; McAdam et al., 1996; Staggenborg, 2020; Staggenborg & Lecomte, 2009). Staggenborg and Lecomte (2009), for example, found in a study of the Montreal Women's Movement that social movement campaigns positively affect organizational ties. Relatedly, della Porta (2020b) suggests that events like the demonstrations in Gezi Park in 2013 alter interaction routines and intensify network potential. These mobilizations

> "have emergent relational impacts by intensifying and transforming interactions among different actors. Rather than being spontaneous, they are produced through a convergence of preexisting nets and contribute to building new ones at great speed" (della Porta, 2020b, p. 7).

When mobilization declines, these ties can survive and evolve even though continuous interaction and networking may be more complex during low mobilization.

A number of scholars have highlighted that continued interaction and networking promoted by specific actors such as entrepreneurs, leaders, or social movement organizations are critical factors in shaping the fate of social movements post-heightened mobilization (Corrigall-Brown, 2022; Krinsky & Crossley, 2014; McAdam, 1988; Obach, 2004; Robnett, 1997; Staggenborg, 1996; Taylor, 1989; Whittier, 1997). A classic study in this regard is Verta Taylor's (1989) article where she highlighted the significant role of individuals and organizations in sustaining interaction beyond peaks of mobilization. She indicated that longtime activists and a centralized leadership foster the maintenance and rein-

forcement of networks that may be used for future mobilization efforts. Her seminal work on abeyance structures has laid essential groundwork to better understand the long-term continuity of movements. She emphasized how the women's movement endured over decades when opportunities for mass mobilization were low. Taylor (1989, p. 762) highlighted three core aspects of how abeyance structures contribute to movement continuity over the long term: "through promoting the survival of activist networks, sustaining a repertoire of goals and tactics, and promoting a collective identity that offers participants a sense of mission and moral purpose". According to Taylor (1989), the continued existence of a movement depends on whether activists and organizations continue to network and interact, what decisions they make concerning their action repertoire, and whether they foster a collective identity and memory about their core vision of society.

Regarding movements' action repertoire, recent studies of the Women's March and environ-mental movement emphasized that grassroots groups often rely on a mix of more and less contentious events to promote interaction in their movement community (Corrigall-Brown, 2022; Staggenborg, 2022). Catherine Corrigall-Brown (2022) highlighted in her study of 35 feminist groups founded after the first Women's March in 2017 that a key factor explaining the survival of these groups were their diversity of tactics. When tactics varied like "hosting talks at the local library, social events, and postcard campaigns", groups could "engage a diversity of members who often have varying interests and levels of comfort with different tactics" (Corrigall-Brown, 2022, p. 145). Similarly, Suzanne Staggenborg (2022, p. 6) showed that some social movement entrepreneurs created events "outside the boundaries of movement organizations and campaigns" and established routine interaction spaces like a "sustainability salon". These spaces, although less contentious, created opportunities for relationships to form and "provided opportunities for involvement in new events and organizations" (Staggenborg, 2022, p. 6). Both studies highlight that non-contentious activities in addition to contentious activities are an essential puzzle piece in explaining movement survival.

The literature cited above has provided crucial insights into the internal dynamics of movements, emphasizing the importance of experienced activists, leaders, and organizations to better understand why and how some movements fade away and others do not. However, I believe it is crucial to further examine the specific actors that keep the interaction going, who they are, how they emerge, and what kinds of strategies they employ to sustain

interaction among a diverse set of actors involved in the cause. There are a few notable studies that are not working with the term "brokerage" but mean a similar notion. Instead of referring to brokers, they refer to "local movement centers" (Morris, 1984, p. 40), "movement halfway houses" (Morris, 1984, p. 139), "bridge builders" (Rose, 2000, p. 176), or "bridge organizations" and "bridge leaders" (Robnett, 1997, p. 25f.). For instance, Rose (2000, p. 176ff.) highlighted bridge builders as people who advanced coalition building between the labor and environmental communities by creating dialogue and developing a shared vision. In their studies of the civil rights movement, Robnett (1997) and Morris (1984) showed how bridge leaders, movement centers and movement halfway houses played an important role in linking the movement's diverse constituencies. They emphasized that these actors not only initiated contact or created dialogue but also provided essential resources to skilled leaders, such as workshops and knowledge, to bring the different groups together and coordinate collective action.

To better understand how individuals and organizations maintain interaction and networking over multiple years, I draw on recent advances in conceptualizing brokerage from organizational sociology. The role of brokerage has received considerable attention in social movement studies. In "Dynamics of Contention," McAdam et al. (2001, p. 142) see brokerage as a primary mechanism in mobilization. The authors define brokerage as "the linking of two or more currently unconnected social sites by a unit that mediates their relations with each other and/or with yet another site.". According to them, units and sites exist as individuals and as organizations, cliques, and programs. They outline various strategies brokers employ, from actively merging connections to keeping actors apart. Empirical studies have used the concept of brokerage to explain different phenomena, such as diffusion processes, power inequalities, coalition and alliance building, and the formation of interorganizational networks (Abul-Fottouh, 2018; Bassoli et al., 2014; Crossley & Diani, 2018; Diani, 2003; Hoffmann et al., 2022; McAdam et al., 2008; Obach, 2004; Romanos, 2016; Tarrow, 2005; von Bülow, 2011).

While the majority of social movement scholars have traditionally adopted a structuralist reading of brokerage, defining brokers as a distinct element of the network structure while placing less emphasis on the active role of brokers in facilitating interaction (notably Burt, 2007; Diani, 2003; Gould & Fernandez, 1989), some studies deviate from this trend (McAdam et al., 2001; Obach, 2004; Romanos, 2016; von Bülow, 2011). For instance, von Bülow (2011) discussed the role of brokers in building durable transnational coalitions in the

context of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) negotiations. She examined transnational civil society efforts to influence trade negotiations in the context of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) negotiations. Reviewing the successful and unsuccessful broker roles over time, she emphasized that enduring coalitions require "institutionalized brokerage roles" (von Bülow, 2011, p. 166) for the predefined areas of action, i.e., more formalized roles that the other coalition members accept. Another deviation from this trend is a study by Obach (2004). Obach (2004, p. 206) emphasized the significant contributions of "coalition brokers" in activists' efforts to bring the labor and environmental movements together. He showed how coalition brokers bridged frames across movements by highlighting values shared by members of both movements (on frame alignment, see Snow et al., 1986)

Based on these insights and further studies by organizational sociologists Smith (S. S. Smith, 2005, p. 8f.) and Obstfeld et al. (2014), whether actors engage in brokerage, that is, facilitate or hinder the formation of ties between others in their networks, depends on their behavior. More specifically, Obstfeld et al. (2014) began to contribute to a reconceptualization of brokerage as a process. They pointed to the importance of differentiating between "strictly structural patterns (such as structural holes) that Burt and others have associated with broker-age and the social behavior of brokering" (Obstfeld et al., 2014, p. 139). Based on this critique, they expanded the understanding of what it means to be a broker as someone who "influences, manages, or facilitates interaction between two actors" (Obstfeld et al., 2014, p. 141).

Instead of seeing brokers as transactional agents, they focus on the process of "coordinative action" (Obstfeld et al., 2014, p. 138) where brokerage influences interaction between different triads. In contrast to structural holes theory that considers the absence of ties as an integral condition for brokerage, Obstfeld et al. (2014) argue that brokerage can also involve the connection of two alters who are already connected but the broker alters the way they interact. Three possible triadic scenarios are conduit brokerage, gaudens brokerage and iungens brokerage. Conduit brokerage involves the passing of information between one alter to another alter without wanting to impact their relationship. Gaudens brokerage is happening when a broker upholds or profits from competition or conflict between two alters. Lastly, iugens brokerage involves a broker introducing two alters or facilitating their interaction (Obstfeld et al., 2014, p. 141f.).

In this chapter, I highlight the last type of brokerage – iungens brokerage – since I want to better understand how brokers actually facilitate interaction in

a social movement setting. Following Obstfeld et al.'s (2014, p. 147) conceptualization, a broker can either conduct brief iungens brokerage where the broker simply introduces two parties or sustained iungens where the broker engages in continued facilitation of interaction between two or more alters/parties. As I will later outline, keeping interaction going once heightened mobilization is over, likely involves a more sustained form of iugens brokerage. How the local brokers in this study sustained interaction will be part of the empirical analysis.

Understanding brokerage as a process is essential when exploring network change over a longer time span. For my study, I argue that when the mobilization period is over, and organizations may disperse, brokers become crucial to holding a movement community to-gether. In this vein, Small and Gose (2020) have emphasized the significant role brokers can play in what they call the post-contact stage, which I take as an equivalence of the post-mobilization period. In their study of routine organizations such as childcare centers, businesses, or churches, Small and Gose (2020) theorize the role of these organizations in addressing poverty through encouraging the increase of beneficial social ties between people like clients of childcare centers or members of churches. In their paper, they argue that such routine organization (e.g., childcare center or church) successfully facilitates interaction amongst people (e.g., clients or members) when the organization enable frequent and long-lasting interaction that is outwardly focused or centered on joint tasks (Small & Gose, 2020, p. 14).

An organization that enables people to meet regularly for a more extended period of time and focus on one task or topic can act as a broker. This organization is a broker because it makes this form of interaction between individuals possible in the first place. It creates the opportunity for interaction, and not just briefly, but sustainably. Obstfeld (Obstfeld, 2005, p. 104) originally made this distinction between brief and sustained facilitation of interaction to emphasize that in the case of the latter the broker takes on an "essential coordinative role over time".

To conceptualize which type of actors contribute to sustaining interaction and networking in the pro-refugee community, I want to build on this recent reconceptualization of brokers. The stronger focus on the brokering behavior instead of on brokers' structural position allows me to show *how* actors in the pro-refugee community use their network contacts to create opportunities for interaction during the post-mobilization period. The local brokers make interaction available during low mobilization when interaction and networking are less likely.

Two key features I need to consider in order to understand how brokers make this happen is what Obstfeld et al. (2014) call multiplexity and heterogeneity. First, I need to consider multiplexity, meaning the "nature and patterns of existing ties and their subsequent alteration" (Obstfeld et al., 2014, p. 150). More specifically, they underscore the importance of a "trusted broker" someone who "facilitate[s] sufficiently increased trust to make collaboration possible." (Obstfeld et al., 2014, p. 151). In other words, a broker must be trusted by the actors s/he wants to bring together. Otherwise, facilitating interaction will be a complex undertaking. The second feature is heterogeneity. Brokers need to consider the heterogeneity of the actors they want to bring together. To assess this heterogeneity, Obstfeld et al. (2014, p. 152f.) suggested accounting for the identity, the size, and the relationship between the actors.

Considering multiplexity and heterogeneity in brokerage is highly relevant for social movements in their post-mobilization phase for two reasons. First, due to the multiplexity of the relationships in a social movement (see Crossley & Diani, 2018, p. 158), the brokers who want to facilitate interaction need to instill a certain level of trust so that actors are willing to engage in coordinated action. Second, the heterogeneity of actors in social movements, for instance in size or political claims, means that brokers need to consider this heterogeneity when planning and facilitating interaction.

I believe that both multiplexity and heterogeneity are particularly important in today's diverse civic landscape and specifically in the pro-refugee movement. As emphasized in the introductory chapter, the pro-refugee mobilization of 2015/16 studied here involved a wide range of actors, from highly politicized actors involved in more contentious activities, such as protest alliances and activist groups, to actors primarily involved in non-contentious activities, such as church congregations and welfare organizations. In addition, their relationships with each other are multiplex, with some actors knowing and trusting each other well and others not, and perhaps more importantly, the trust they have in each broker. Based on Obstfeld et al. (2014) and Small and Gose (2020), I suggest that how brokers emerge and what types of ongoing interaction opportunities they need to create is highly influenced by this complex and dynamic environment. Thus, in my empirical analysis, I consider the different types of actors found in my case studies and their relationships and levels of trust in the brokers.

Empirical Analysis

In the following, I first introduce the three local brokers I identified in the evaluation of the interviews in Lauda and Loburg. I briefly show the kinds of relationships they have developed and then assess *how* they built trusting relationships within their communities. Second, I discuss *how* they sustained interaction within their communities and therefore significantly contributed to the survival of pro-refugee communities in the two cities.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the pro-refugee mobilization of 2015/16 led to the development of pro-refugee communities in Lauda and Loburg but not in Altenau and Neheim. Please recall that I measure the development of these communities by examining whether networks between organizations and groups were sustained and evolved until 2020/21. Further evaluation of the interviews and documents highlighted that the strong presence and activities of three major actors in Lauda and Loburg was a significant factor in the development of the pro-refugee communities in both cities.

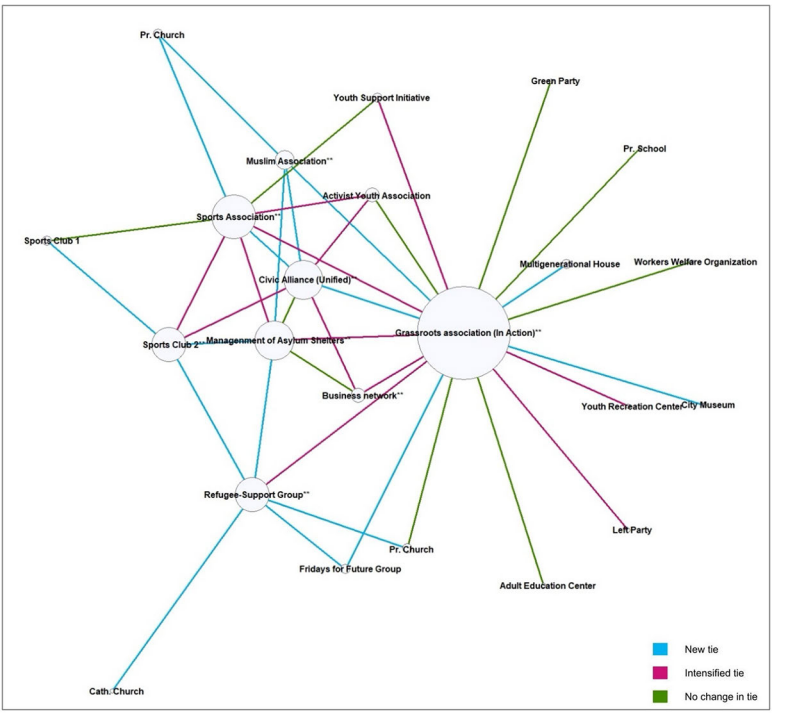
Why these three actors? These actors initiated most interaction opportunities in the cities between 2015 and 2022. They were instrumental in ensuring that the interaction continued. More specifically, the three actors that I identified as brokers were key figures in two community organizations and one civic alliance, having been active in refugee support and advocacy for years.

To visualize the central role of the brokers in each community, I created network maps. I showed similar maps in the previous chapter. The two network maps in Figure 9 and Figure 10 reflect the brokers' central position in the pro-refugee communities. In Lauda, the broker is the volunteer-network *Asylum with Us*. In Loburg, the brokers are the Grassroots association *In Action* and the Civic Alliance *Unified*. To illustrate the extent to which relationships change as a result of actors' involvement in the pro-refugee mobilization of 2015/16, I use different categories – new ties, intensified ties, and no effect – in my network maps. These categories were systematically applied to code all interviews, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of changes in interorganizational and intergroup relationships.

The network maps are labeled accordingly to indicate the nature of the relationship change. When a new relationship is formed between two organizations as a direct result of their engagement during the pro-refugee mobilization of 2015/16 and the post-mobilization period, I labeled the connecting lines as new ties (blue). This highlights the emergence of a new relationship due to their involvement. If an existing relationship was deepened or strength-

ened due to their participation, I labeled the connecting line as intensified ties (pink). This indicates that a pre-existing relationship became more robust and substantial due to their involvement in the pro-refugee mobilization of 2015/16. Conversely, if participation in the pro-refugee mobilization had no significant effect on the relationship between the two organizations, I labeled this connecting line as no effect (green). This indicates that the relationship remains unchanged despite their involvement in the cause.

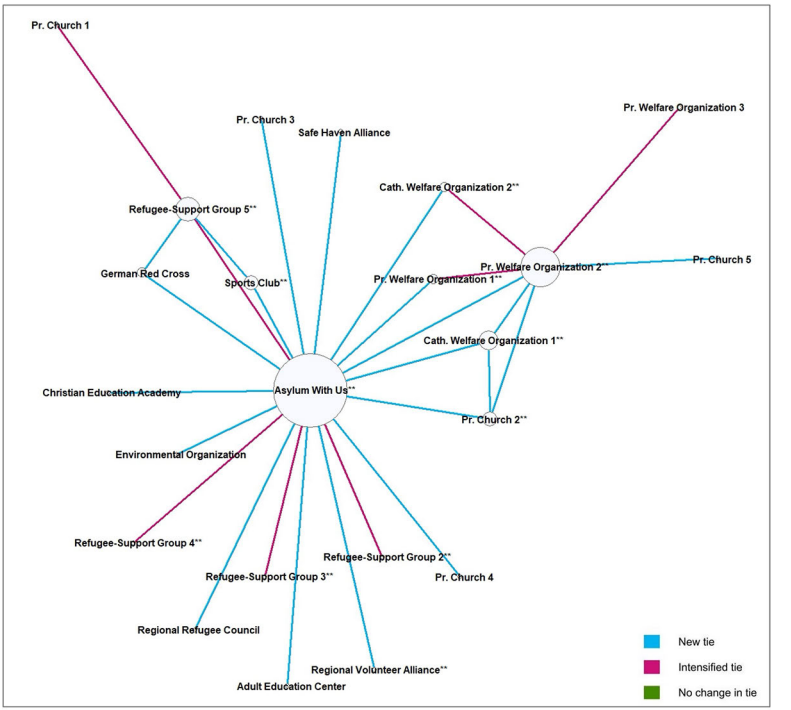
Figure 9: Network changes in Loburg with a focus on brokers



During the mobilization period, many organizations and groups in the four cases interacted with one another. As noted above, not all of these interactions resulted in long-term changes in interorganizational and intergroup relations. Overall, the maps show that the majority of actors in Loburg and

Lauda either intensified pre-existing ties or established new ones during the heightened mobilization and post-mobilization periods.

Figure 10: Network changes in Lauda with a focus on brokers



Since this chapter is not about the structural position of brokers but about their active role in connecting third parties, I will now introduce the three local brokers in Lauda and Loburg and show how the people involved in refugee support and advocacy developed immense trust in them. In this brief analysis, I will also briefly discuss the reasons why local brokers may not have emerged in Altenau and Neheim. I will then examine in detail the strategies of the brokers in Lauda and Neheim to bring the different actors together by creating various opportunities for interaction between 2015/16 and 2020/2021.

Broker 1: Asylum with Us (Lauda)

In Lauda, I identified one broker, the volunteer-network *Asylum with Us*. A small group of volunteers and activists founded *Asylum with Us* in 2015. The group created the network to connect all twenty refugee-support groups developed throughout the district in the previous months. Because all refugee-support groups faced immense challenges from local state agencies, they wanted to exchange experiences and share resources like knowledge and existing social networks. In the eyes of many volunteers, the work in refugee support was precious but also frustrating because refugees lived under highly precarious conditions. The groups often put every ounce of energy into improving the lives of the refugees who lived in the local refugee shelters close to them. However, they were frequently confronted with the restrictive asylum laws and realities that made the lives of many refugees unbelievably tricky.

Two challenges were particularly difficult for the volunteers and activists. First, the deportations of refugees were very depressing. In an interview, Marion told us: "I experienced my low when a man from Pakistan whom I had guided for a long time was deported overnight". The deportation took place although she and other volunteers in the refugee-support group had agreed with officials at their local government only a few days earlier that he could stay in their town for a few more months to work. In Marion's words:

> "They made fools of us. They built trust and promised he could work here for a few more months. But then he was taken away and we couldn't even say goodbye. This experience destroyed our motivation".

Second, volunteers witnessed the poor treatment of refugees who remained in the district, the lack of public funds for housing and food, and the lack of work permits. Maria, a long-term volunteer and activist for refugee rights, recalled how all of these conditions affected the refugees' psyches. She thought she was ministering to the dying: "It's almost like I was watching people die. Because they see no future here." During this time, the rifts between local state agencies and civil society groups became apparent. In Maria's words:

> "the sides became very divided, because from our point of view, people working for the local government always interpreted the laws to the disadvantage of the refugees we tried to assist".

These severe challenges prompted some volunteers and activists to create the volunteer-network *Asylum with Us* and to organize the first political Asylum Summits. These first local and then region-wide Asylum Summits soon received considerable visibility across the pro-refugee community. The Asylum Summits, discussed in more detail in the second part of the analysis, were workshop weekends for everyone involved in refugee support. As the volunteer-network invited local politicians to these Asylum Summits, they soon attracted public attention and even reached the state secretary of the interior. My interviewee Luisa, a long-term activist at *Asylum with Us*, remembered this time well:

> "Finally politicians noticed us! And then we even got an invitation by the state secretary who invited Stephan and some other activists to speak to him in person. They basically told him about the work we are doing on the ground and the challenges we face. So yes, that's when the network became more and more known".

The interviewees reported that they felt relief when their work and the struggles of the refugees finally got more attention. They really wanted to "*report from below*" and refused to feel like the "h*enchmen*" of their local governments.

In contrast, the key figures (volunteers and activists) at *Asylum with Us* gained incredible recognition and trust from various actors involved in refugee support and advocacy. In light of the challenges that the people active in the pro-refugee communities faced, the core group at *Asylum with Us* were always responsive and protective of the people active in the pro-refugee community. When asked about the role of *Asylum with Us*, Bettina, volunteer in one of the refugee-support groups responded:

> "They are essential to the work we do! Because Asylum with Us has put so much work into building a network, we now know who in the region is working on this issue. They have also helped to politicize the issue of migration here".

In another interview, the chair of a local sports club recognized the distinctive role of the network's informal leader, Pastor Stephan: "We would not have managed without him. The state was completely overwhelmed". One interviewee, Max, a migration counselor working for the local branch of a Catholic welfare

organization, reported that he was often at his limits, on the verge of exhaustion:

> "It's a constant battle for the refugees' interests. We [the pro-refugee community] are really struggling [...]. And of course, we always try to fight back against our local government."

In this challenging situation, he expresses gratitude to the volunteers and activists at *Asylum with Us*:

> "They are always ready to help us with any problem we may have. So, they are really great because you can always rely on them. You know when you need something, you always call them first".

In addition, Daniel, an employee of a local charity that I interviewed argued that the crucial importance of *Asylum with Us* was that of the intermediary between the pro-refugee community and local state actors:

> "Asylum with Us is so important because the volunteers and activists have a central point of contact. And the representatives of the different state agencies also have a central point of contact".

Although the volunteers and activists at *Asylum with Us* naturally emerged from and felt part of the grassroots community, they established communication channels with local state agencies and government representatives.

Brokers 2 and 3: Unified and In Action (Loburg)

In Loburg, I identified two brokers within the pro-refugee community. One of these brokers was the Civic Alliance *Unified*. The second broker was the Grassroots association *In Action*. While the Civic Alliance *Unified* is made up of local activists, the Grassroots association *In Action* consists of paid employees and some volunteers. In contrast to the volunteer-network *Asylum with Us* that emerged in the context of increasing migration in 2013, the two brokers in Loburg already existed long before the pro-refugee mobilization of 2015/16. *Unified* and *In Action* emerged in the 2000s when the region dealt with high unemployment rates and rising far-right marches. The Civic Alliance *Unified* was founded to combat rising far-right groups by organizing demonstrations and

rallies. The Grassroots association *In Action* was established a few years earlier with a similar mission to combating far-right tendencies and children's and youth poverty. In contrast to *Unified*'s entirely volunteer-run Civic Alliance, the Grassroots association *In Action* had a small paid staff.

In Action's chairwomen, Lisa, a trained Protestant pastor with close ties to various civil society organizations, and Thomas, the spokesperson of *Unified*, were well-known in the local civic landscape even before the pro-refugee mobilization of 2015/16. However, around 2015, they got heavily involved in refugee support and became critical focal points for the city's newly emerging pro-refugee community.

They gained enormous recognition by facing challenges experienced by many refugees, volunteers, and activists engaged in refugee support and advocacy. In doing so, they dealt with representatives of state agencies and their local government, raised public awareness for the cause of refugees, and combated far-right sentiments. Their efforts gave others active in the community the strength to continue supporting refugee rights and other topics.

Like in Lauda, volunteers and activists often felt overwhelmed and frustrated. From their perspective, the scope of the activities and, thus, the personal burden was enormous. They often felt abandoned by their local government. Lukas, a volunteer in a business network, said: "When Merkel said 'we can handle this' […] it went a bit in the direction of 'you will handle this'". Another interviewee, Christian, a sports club board shares a similar impression: "In the end, politics shifted a lot of the burden onto the volunteers and let them do the work". Both volunteers were involved in refugee support and advocacy, but expected the state to shoulder more of the burden.

Amidst these struggles, *In Action* and *Unified*, stood out as particular representatives of this community. Volunteers and employees at *In Action* and activists at *Unified* started to bring the issues volunteers were facing to the attention of the local government. One of the reasons *Unified* gained such a position was because Thomas, *Unified*'s speaker, assumed a double role in the city. On the one hand, he was an activist. In his professional life, on the other hand, he had just become the manager of the refugee shelters a year prior to the refugee reception crisis in 2015. He was employed by a regional company that managed the refugee shelters in the district. Johannes, an employee of a regional association against racism expressed amazement about Thomas' double function: "It is really special that the speaker of Unified, an activist, also had the role of the refugee shelter manager. This was perfect". As one of the leading activists at *Unified* and the professional refugee shelter manager, he could medi-

ate between civil society and state actors. He told me about one of the meetings between him and other people active in the pro-refugee community and public officials working for the local government. These meetings were sometimes complicated but, in his eyes, vital:

> "[…] we met with the local government once a week for two to three hours. That wasn't always amicable. Sometimes the discussions got very heated. Sometimes, during the week, in a stressful situation over the phone, we would say some rude things to each other, and next Friday, at the meeting, I had to straighten things out".

Many actors credit him for taking on this intermediary role. For example, Herbert, a refugee-support group volunteer, shared his unique role:

> "Everyone active in this new refugee support and advocacy space knew that he was an advocate for the issue. It's like, we [volunteers and activists] are finally being heard. Not everything works like we want it to, but at least we communicate and talk about the issue".

Similar to *Unified*, the Grassroots association *In Action* became also very recognized throughout the pro-refugee community. Securing permanent housing for refugees was one of the issues for which *In Action* received much credit. Around 2016, volunteers involved in the local refugee-support group, along with refugees themselves, felt alone in dealing with discrimination against refugees in the housing market. Christian, the chair of a local sports club expressed his frustration with how slow state agencies reacted to this problem:

> "[…] the agencies reacted so slowly, and the paperwork took so long. For us, it was not about some governmental act, but about very intimate personal fates of real people [deep breath]." Another interviewee, Anna, would have expected much more support from state agencies: "housing has always been an issue. We would have needed more support in communicating with the local housing associations".

Although *In Action* could not solve the housing problem in Loburg, employees of *In Action* worked hard to provide refugees with more access to housing. Daniela, a volunteer from the local refugee-support group remembered how the chairwoman, Lisa, tackled the issue by applying for state funding, buying apartments, and renting them out to refugees: "Lisa has achieved so much con-

cerning housing. In Action simply started to buy a few apartments and rent them out, because it was so difficult to find apartments for refugees at that time".

Concerning housing, *In Action* also supported a new Muslim prayer association in Loburg that people who primarily fled from Syria to Germany created in 2018. This young association encountered similar discrimination in the housing market. Following the formation of the association, landlords twice terminated their leases at short notice. After these setbacks, *In Action* leased the association some of its facilities for the association's activities. Johannes, a staff member of a regional anti-racism initiative remembered how the new Muslim prayer association finally got a permanent lease by *In Action*:

> "It was amazing how In Action built a nest for the association. That is something special. It is especially remarkable when you consider how many other new Muslim prayer association in our region have gone bankrupt because they were ripped off by landlords".

The two brokers, *In Action and Unified*, overcame some complex challenges facing Loburg's pro-refugee community. First, they found ways to communicate with representatives of the local state agencies and government. This way, they gave the various people active in the pro-refugee community a stronger sense of agency. Second, they tackled the problem of discrimination in the housing market which was a daunting issue for many refugees and people involved in supporting them. With the tremendous commitment that both these actors put into this issue of refugee support, they proved to the pro-refugee community that they were reliable and trustworthy.

In summary, the three actors, *Asylum with Us* in Lauda and *In Action* and *Unified* in Loburg gained their unique position by building a strong sense of trust and recognition within their pro-refugee community. They built this trust and recognition by creating a strong position towards the state and becoming strong advocates of the people active in refugee support. However, *Asylum with Us* was founded amidst the struggles and as a representative of all refugee-support groups in Lauda's district. In contrast, *In Action* and *Unified*, existed before the pro-refugee community emerged in Lauda. They were not created through the community's struggles but nonetheless became brokers in the process of being active in refugee support.

While *Unified*, *In Action*, and *Asylum with Us* became local broker and made the community feel more heard, the situation was different in other cities. In

Altenau and Neheim, the two 'unsuccessful' cases, there were two welfare organizations that had the potential to assume the role of brokers. However, despite their engagement in refugee support, they did not gain the same recognition and trust among grassroots actors in their communities. These organizations were heavily engaged in refugee support efforts between 2015 and 2016 and interacted with various grassroots actors during that period. However, the welfare organizations were not successful in gaining recognition and trust among the pro-refugee communities. One of the main reasons for this may have been that both organizations received state funding and were hesitant to engage with their local governments in a highly controversial manner. Instead, they maintained a positive and non-controversial relationship with representatives of state institutions, which made it difficult for them to be seen as effective advocates for the pro-refugee community. Thus, despite their engagement in refugee support, these welfare organizations were unable to gain a strong foothold within their communities. Their reluctance to engage in more confrontational tactics, coupled with their dependence on state funding, limited their ability to act as brokers for the community.

Diversifying interaction opportunities

In the second part of the analysis, I want to demonstrate the strategies employed by the identified brokers to keep interaction going. Specifically, I show how they facilitated interactions by offering three different types of events, diversifying the opportunities for interaction. In both cases, opportunities for interaction were oriented towards (i) maintaining the core work, (ii) policy advocacy on asylum and migration, and (iii) broadening the issue by organizing events beyond the issue of local refugee support. Table 8 provides an overview of concrete events that the brokers organized.

Table 8: Diversification of interaction opportunities

	MAINTAINING THE CORE WORK	POLICY ADVOCACY ON ASYLUM & MIGRATION	BROADENING THE ISSUE
	Non-contentious	**Contentious**	**Contentious**
LAUDA	**Community café** Informal community place for volunteers and refugees (e.g., language tandems, women's group, afternoon coffee, parties)	**Asylum Summits** Biannual summits that bring together grassroots groups working on refugee support (workshops, presentations, development of policy recommendations)	**Protests against European border politics** Protests and rallies against conditions of refugees on Greek islands; involvement in Save haven initiative ("Sichere Häfen") and in regional initiative for human rights ("humanity alliance")
	Intercultural party Party for everyone involved in refugee support	**Expert groups** Seven groups made up of representatives of civil society organizations. Development of new integration strategy for the district.	**Protests against far-right extremism** Rally against racism, bike rally to Hanau (against NSU murder)
			Public debates Public debates and joint readings on issues like human rights and democracy more broadly

	MAINTAINING THE CORE WORK	POLICY ADVOCACY ON ASYLUM & MIGRATION	BROADENING THE ISSUE
	Non-contentious	Contentious	Contentious
LOBURG	**Community café** Informal community place for refugees and volunteers (e.g., support meetings, dinners, dance parties)	**Civic Council on Migration** Regular meeting format for people in pro-refugee community that want to influence local politics; also serves as exchange format between civil society and local state representatives	**Protests against European border politics** Protests and rallies against burning refugee camp in Moria; rallies against inhumane living conditions in European refugee camps
	Summer parties Volunteers from a refugee-support group organized yearly summer party at local refugee shelter (stopped in 2019)		**Protests against far-right groups** Protests against far-right groups and parties, marches against far-right on national remembrance days
	Intercultural party Yearly party for people who are involved in the pro-refugee community		**Public debates about far-right voting** Public talks about rise of far-right party in 2017 and 2018

The main goal of the first type of interaction opportunity, 'maintaining the core work,' was to bring the volunteers and activists together who still worked on everyday refugee support. Events under 'maintaining the core work' were non-contentious activities such as informal meetings, language classes, or celebrations at the community cafés but also summer parties and celebrations at the refugee shelters. With the second type, 'policy advocacy on asylum and migration,' the brokers addressed people who wanted to be politically more involved and influence local policies concerning asylum and migration. These events include more contentious activities such as the so-called Asylum Summits, expert groups on integration, and meetings at the Civic Council on Migration. The goal of the third type of interaction opportunity, 'broadening the

issue,' was to bring together people from the pro-refugee community and people involved in other forms of political activism, such as racism or combating far-right extremism. These events were usually protests and rallies and, thus, the most contentious activities covered by my research.

As follows, I will discuss in more detail the different events the brokers organized and how they could connect different groups of the pro-refugee communities throughout the years.

Maintaining the core community

The first type of interaction opportunities concerns the core work in refugee support. This means, the brokers organized events to promote interaction among the volunteers who still maintained the core work in refugee support. These volunteers continued to support refugees who had appointments with state agencies and doctors or help them find housing and jobs. To maintain this core group, the brokers created, for example, community cafés, where they and other volunteers organized afternoon coffee, dinners, parties, or language tandems. These cafés took place in the community spaces, rented free of charge by the city council (Lauda) and the Protestant church (Loburg).

In Lauda, this café was founded around 2015 to create a space for refugees and volunteers to meet outside the refugee shelters. Ellen, who worked for *Asylum with Us* when I interviewed her, but started to participate in refugee support as a volunteer in 2015 reported that the café was a space for various activities: "The voluntary German courses take place at the café. There is also a women's group, and there are the language tandems" (A language tandem is a pairing of people who regularly meet up to learn a language). She and other interviewees were very frustrated when the café could not open during its regular hours for over a year when the COVID pandemic was at the peak. In particular, they missed the sense of togetherness created through celebrations. When I interviewed Ellen in 2021, she was really excited about the reopening party of the café: "[…] we are planning an opening party that should finally revive the activities at the café. We have a Syrian woman who will open on Saturdays now." Ellen believed the café was more than a weekly meeting spot. In her eyes, the café was "like a community center." She and other volunteers already looked forward to serving coffee and tea and playing games with everyone once the café opened again. She remembered joyfully how various volunteers and refugees regularly visited "to play games or just to talk to each other."

Employees of the Grassroots association *In Action* created a similar community café in Loburg. This café was located in a space owned by the Protestant

church and shared with the Protestant youth group. The community café was volunteer-run from the beginning and became a key location to hang out and meet refugees and volunteers. Over the years, the volunteers at the café hosted various events, from dances, and potluck dinners, to talks and discussions centered on the German asylum law.

The interactions that the volunteer-network *Asylum with Us* in Lauda and the Grassroots association *In Action* facilitated through these cafés were essential for the core group of volunteers. These cafés provided opportunities for volunteers and refugees to socialize and participate in various activities, such as German language courses, women's groups, and language tandems. The non-contentious gatherings allowed for more intimate relationships, such as friendships, to be forged. For example, interviewees talked about how they experienced a strong sense of joy and togetherness when participating in celebrations and informal dinners. However, they also shared the severe frustrations of working within a restrictive asylum and migration system that they viewed as unbearable for many refugees. Similar events that the brokers repeatedly organized concerning maintaining the core work were summer parties and intercultural parties.

Policy advocacy on migration and asylum issues

Another type of interaction opportunity that the three brokers organized were more contentious and more policy- and social change oriented. Events that fell under policy advocacy brought people in the community together who wanted to influence policy changes and actively influence local politics. These events drew on the communities' desires to bring about social and political change. On the one hand, they created a shared vision for the future by discussing new ideas on how immigration should look (e.g., increasing refugee admission quotas or faster issuing of work permits). On the other hand, participants in the events practically engaged in policy-making by developing demands addressed to the local government or by contributing to the new local integration strategy.

To offer interaction opportunities to civil society actors that wanted to be more active in policy-making, the three brokers organized region-wide Asylum Summits, expert groups on integration, and the Civic Council on Migration. In the following, I outline three institutionalized interaction events that the brokers in Loburg and Lauda organized.

The volunteer-network *Asylum with Us* in Lauda initiated two regular events oriented towards policy work on migration and asylum over the years:

the twice-yearly Asylum Summits and the expert groups on integration. Both events brought together a broad range of actors who wanted to improve the current state of asylum law and the situation of refugees.

The Asylum Summits were first initiated by *Asylum with Us* but later organized by different refugee-support groups in the region. In 2015, volunteers of *Asylum with Us* organized the first Asylum Summit as a two-day workshop with around 30 people. They invited the volunteers of all refugee-support groups from Lauda and the surrounding towns and villages and organized discussion sessions and small presentations. The Asylum Summits became an institution attracting significantly more participants in the following years. Because supporting refugees on the ground was an ongoing struggle for volunteers and activists, the region-wide Asylum Summits also became a space where people share experiences and receive support beyond their local refugee-support groups. As Pastor Stephan from *Asylum with Us* recalled, the Asylum Summits became an indispensable interaction format with around 200 people in the following years:

> "You see, I'm a real networker! The first asylum summits attracted about 30 people and then I asked the refugee-support groups in my neighboring districts 'don't you want to come to the summits, too?' Then there were 200 people at some point."

Between 2015 and 2022, hundreds of members of the various refugee-support groups met regularly for the annual or biannual Asylum Summits. The main goal of these Asylum Summits was to develop policy proposals and keep local groups motivated. As the Asylum Summits grew more prominent and spread across the district, participants could also attract the attention of politicians. This development went so far that a minister of state met with the three volunteers and activists from *Asylum with Us*. This initial meeting evolved into regular meetings where the volunteers and activists reported on the problems with refugee reception at the local level and called for far-reaching improvements. Maria, one of the participants reported that she was initially astonished about the reach and public awareness they created with the Asylum Summits: "Finally politicians noticed us! […] That's when the network became more and more known."

Besides these Asylum Summits, the volunteer-network *Asylum with Us* initiated expert groups on integration in 2019. Volunteers and activists at *Asylum with Us* wanted to develop an integration strategy for the district because no

such strategy existed then. Although state actors usually develop an official integration strategy for the district, *Asylum with Us* convinced the local government that civil society actors would collaborate in creating the strategy. In the three years that followed, many different people worked on the strategy. Pastor Stephan from *Asylum with Us* talked about the significance of these groups:

> "Overall, a few hundred people worked on the strategy, even though there was a smaller core group that kept everything going. Still, a few hundred people participated and gave their input."

The expert groups covered many action areas and developed specific measures to improve the integration of immigrants and refugees in the future. Max, an employee of a Catholic welfare organization who was also active in one of the expert groups, reported that the members of the groups were quite diverse:

> "Many different people developed the integration strategy. Those involved ranged from volunteers and activists, employees of welfare organizations and the local government to refugees and citizens with migration histories".

There were seven expert groups on various topics, such as society, religion, mobility, education, or health. Pastor Stephan, who coordinated the expert group on society and religion gave me some insights into what his group discussed:

> "At the moment, our discussions revolve around Muslim funerals. I have called all the imams and pastors together and we meet quite regularly. Why do Muslims in our district still send their deceased people to Turkey? Why can't they be buried here? In the expert groups, I learned that there is only one cemetery in the whole district where Muslims can be buried according to Muslim law."

He then told me that his expert group would try incorporating a policy recommendation about more Muslim cemeteries into the new integration strategy. The integration strategy was completed in 2022. The members of the seven expert groups then started the process of setting up an integration advisory board to ensure that the policy recommendations were implemented in the coming years.

The Civic Alliance *Unified* and the Grassroots association *In Action* also regularly facilitated interaction concerning social and political changes in migra-

tion and asylum. They founded and organized the Civic Council on Migration, regularly bringing together a broad spectrum of civic actors. When Thomas, the spokesperson of *Unified*, launched the Civic Council on Migration, he initiated the first weekly meetings of a wide range of actors involved in refugee support. After a few years, Lisa, the chairwoman of *In Action,* took over the council meetings' leadership. In his dual position as spokesperson of *Unified* and manager of the refugee shelters, Thomas founded the council in the fall of 2015 to improve communication among all civil society and government actors working on asylum and migration issues. He also wanted to create a space where civil society actors could influence refugee policy at the local level.

By inviting a wide range of actors, he brought together volunteers and small refugee-support groups, professional welfare organizations, and public officials representing the local government to attend council meetings. Anna, a former social worker and volunteer told me that the council was a very open circle where everyone active in refugee support and advocacy could voice their opinion:

> "Everyone is invited to the monthly council meetings. Associations, companies [that employ refugees], volunteers from our local refugee-support group, [welfare organizations] – everyone was welcome from the beginning and it has remained that way. It's a really open round where everyone can say what they think."

In the following years, the council developed into a recognized meeting format for many actors who had first become active in refugee support in 2015. Initially, the council met weekly to coordinate the work of the various actors active in refugee support. After the level of activities in refugee support declined, they continued to meeting every month. Actors used the council to address complex problems of individual refugees and conflicts with state agencies, such as the job center and immigration agency. Johannes, a staff member from a regional anti-racism initiative emphasized that the crucial function of the council was to empower civil society actors to continue their work: "I believe that people in the council, although very overworked, also realized that their involvement has a political significance and can make a tremendous difference."

As the example of these events demonstrates, the three brokers also connected their pro-refugee communities by organizing more contentious events. Between 2015 and 2022, they initiated interaction formats that go far beyond the original task of providing concrete everyday support for refugees. In addi-

tion, they brought together very different civil society actors in the context of the Asylum Summits, expert groups, and the Civic Council on Migration.

Broadening the issue

The third and final strategic dimension of the more contentious interaction opportunities is broadening the issue. Events included citizen talks, panel discussions, and demonstrations against restrictive European border politics and right-wing extremism.

Working in refugee support and advocacy raised many people's awareness of local challenges related to migration but much broader and even beyond. Working with refugees shed light on these challenges. Drawing on a more contentious strategic repertoire again, the volunteer-network *Asylum with Us* organized protest events and public debates beyond local refugee support. One of these events was the protest march against racism through Lauda, which took place every few years. Interviewees particularly remembered that at one of the protests during the city's intercultural week, activists of *Asylum with Us* set up a lifeboat in the middle of the city to commemorate the rescue operations in the European Mediterranean.

In addition to these protests, a group of volunteers and activists and the two employees at *Asylum with Us* started to organize public lectures and debates that went beyond the issue of migration. Ellen, a staff member at *Asylum with Us* talked about how they linked problems refugees faced in the district with other community challenges such as poverty:

> "We talked about poverty, which is not only a topic for refugees and migrants. [...] we wanted to draw attention to the fact that [poverty and child poverty] also affects many other people – not only migrants but also many Germans."

With this strategy of broadening the issue focus to human rights, *Asylum with Us* also tried to reach a broader audience and include parts of civil society that were not part of the pro-refugee community.

Like the pro-refugee community in Lauda, the Civic Alliance *Unified* and the Grassroots association *In Action* were trying to expand the focus of their activities. These include, on the one hand, events dealing with the issue of precarious refugee camps in Europe. On the other hand, they were concerned with far-right extremist groups and attitudes spreading in the district.

Jacob, a local activist and employee of *In Action*, was very proud of how quickly he and others could mobilize for a protest: "Most of the time, it is on

relatively short notice. There is the classic setting. Either the speaker from Unified calls or we [In Action] do something. Or an activist from the Greens [local branch of the Green party]." When, for example, the Moria refugee camp on Lesbos burned down in 2020, these actors spontaneously decided to call for a rally. Herbert, a volunteer from the local refugee-support group, fondly remembered the rally as an event that brought together the whole community:

> "We participated in a spontaneous rally after this fire. The Civic Alliance Unified, the women's group, yes, and In Action organized this very, very nice rally. It was really touching. We felt that there was really a lot of energy. And it's so great that you can always count on so many different people to participate."

Some people participating in these protests were deeply involved in the local pro-refugee community. In contrast, others were less active in the community but were still interested in issues like European border politics.

In addition, *In Action* and *Unified* combined the issue of solidarity with refugees with the issue of creating an opposition to far-right groups in the district. Thus, they organized protest events and public discussions to unite the pro-refugee community and activists against the far-right. Indeed, some of the communities overlapped already because active members of the pro-refugee community engaged in combating far-right groups even before 2015. As mentioned, many right-wing groups have been active in Loburg and the surrounding towns and villages since the 2000s. Around 2015, groups such as Pegida and the emerging right-wing party AfD (Alternative für Deutschland; Engl.: Alternative for Germany) gained considerable popularity there. This rise in popularity occurred parallel with the enormous increase in refugees arriving in the district. *Unified*, *In Action*, and some other groups brought together the people active in refugee-support and anti-far-right activities.

For example, *In Action* and *United* organized several public debates after the 2017 federal elections when the AfD won almost 20 percent of the votes in Loburg. While the AfD did not win the majority of the votes, the election results were still a considerable success for the new party. The public debates aimed to bring together people sympathetic to the AfD and people from the pro-refugee community. Anna, a former social worker and volunteer reported that the organizers wanted to create a platform where people could share fears and concerns:

> "The debates were really just about exchanging ideas within civil society. Simply being open to it. We wanted to discuss what the problems are because we asked ourselves 'Why did the AfD get so many votes?'"

These events also helped the pro-refugee community network with other activists, such as those working to counter far-right extremism. The broader pro-refugee community typically attended these events. Even many of those still involved in the day-to-day support of refugees were often present at these protests. Many participants appreciated these protests precisely because they were moments when all community members came together.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I highlighted the critical role of local brokers in pro-refugee communities, emphasizing how they create diverse interaction opportunities for volunteers, activists, and employees over six years. By examining the contributions of these brokers to sustaining networks and promoting continued interactions within the pro-refugee community, my analysis provides insights into the internal relational dynamics that shape the development and survival of local civic action communities.

Furthermore, this chapter sheds light on the dynamic process of brokerage, going beyond the mere positioning of brokers within a network. It emphasizes their crucial role in bringing together different actors and facilitating ongoing interactions. Understanding this perspective on brokerage is essential for comprehending how networks can be sustained over time. This is particularly true for social movements where long-term goals require continuous interaction. This chapter also contributes to understanding brokers in social movements, drawing on recent advances in organizational sociology (Obstfeld et al., 2014; Small & Gose, 2020). I demonstrate that brokers are present for the initial contact and play a crucial role in fostering further interaction. Consistent with Small and Gose's (2020) findings, the interaction opportunities that brought together volunteers, activists, and representatives of civil society organizations were more frequent, long-lasting, and centered around shared tasks. Over the six years following the pro-refugee mobilization of 2015/16, these brokers consistently created diverse opportunities for interaction. They pursued a "sustained iungens" brokerage (Obstfeld et al., 2014, p. 147) by creating ongoing interaction opportunities. These interaction

opportunities events encompassed non-contentious activities to maintain the core work, contentious activities related to policy advocacy on asylum and migration, and contentious activities events that addressed broader issues such as anti-racism and countering far-right ideologies. These findings align with the perspectives of Corrigall-Brown (2022) and Staggenborg (2022), highlighting the significance of diverse events that bring people together. This diversification of interaction opportunities is particularly relevant in broader civic landscapes like the one I study in this book. Such pro-refugee communities involve various collective actors, including churches, welfare organizations, political groups, volunteer initiatives, and sports clubs.

As shown by Obstfeld et al. (2014), brokers need to consider the heterogeneity of the actors in their strategy to bring them closer together and facilitate interaction. Through the diversification of interaction opportunities, the three brokers observed in Lauda and Loburg exactly considered this heterogeneity.

In addition to considering the heterogeneity of actors in the field, brokers also facilitated interaction between those who already knew each other well (those doing the core work) and those who knew each other little or not at all in the context of events that expanded the scope of refugee support and advocacy. As such, they created bonding and bridging relationships, thus strengthening social capital in the local pro-refugee community. Creating interaction opportunities for volunteers and activists pursuing the core work in refugee support and those seeking political advocacy strengthens the communities' bonding social capital. On the other hand, they strengthened bridging social capital by broadening the scope and contributing to relationship building beyond their communities (see Diani, 1997; Putnam, 2000).

The interaction events designed to broaden the scope beyond the issue of refugee support and advocacy have been shown in other research to be an essential aspect of community building in social movements. Specifically, Gerhards and Rucht's (1992, p. 559) concept of mesomobilization emphasized that "mesomobilization actors" not only connect groups but also bridge frames between movements or develop a shared movement frame to connect different groups across issues and cultures. Thus, issue broadening, as the brokers in Lauda and Loburg did, is also a well-known strategy of actors to connect different actors beyond their main issue.

In the next chapter, I examine collaboration challenges between civil society organizations and more informal groups. The proportion of professionalized and well-established organizations differed between the four cases. In the two cities, Altenau and Neheim, where the pro-refugee mobilization of 2015/16

did not lead to the development of pro-refugee communities, the proportion of these professionalized and well-established organizations active in migration issues was much higher than in Lauda and Loburg. Thus, in Chapter 6, I take advantage of this difference and conduct a deeper analysis and comparison of the civic landscapes in each case, focusing on Altenau and Neheim. Conceptually, I will draw on scholarly discussions in social movement studies and voluntarism and non-profit studies about resource power, networking strategies, and interaction cultures.