

Even flows and deferred lives

The logistification of migrant settlement in Sweden

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Abstract

In 2016, rebuilt containers and barracks accommodating so-called ‘newly arrived immigrants’ started to appear in Stockholm, Sweden. People who had been on the move for an extensive time, staying in refugee camps, and transit, reception and asylum centres, found themselves again in a state of deferral, this time within the refuge of the nation-state. This dissertation aims to deepen the understanding of how new thresholds arise and materialise, extending the migration trajectory within the nation-state. To this end, the dissertation attends to conflicting policies, bureaucratic practices and local conditions, focusing primarily on the logic and implementation of the Settlement Act, a Swedish dispersal policy enacted in the wake of the ‘summer of migration’ in 2015. The new law aimed to speed up the transition of ‘newly arrived immigrants’ into the labour market by creating ‘even flows’ between asylum centres and municipal accommodation.

More specifically, this dissertation explores how the practices of deferral are enacted in the implementation of the Settlement Act through three separate empirical domains: 1) calculations of the dispersal and matching system at the state level, 2) municipal management and the dwellers’ experiences of temporary accommodation and resettlement in Stockholm, and 3) the professional and social dimensions of the encounters between street-level bureaucrats and ‘newly arrived immigrants’.

The dissertation builds on nine months of ethnographic fieldwork in Stockholm between 2018 and 2019. It comprises participant observations and interviews with officials and with ‘newly arrived immigrants’ living in temporary housing. The dissertation brings together and analyses the separate empirical domains by drawing on the concept of the logistification of migration. This analytical lens encourages us to dissect the inclusive yet differential mechanisms in the migration apparatus, paying attention to the temporal management of circulation and mobility, on the one hand, and the ensuing friction and contestation, on the other hand.

The dissertation argues that the logistification of migrant settlement management includes several practices that defer the housing shortage to sustain the acceleration from asylum centres to municipal accommodation, which produces a post-asylum threshold and incessant forced mobility. This continuous circulation of people operates as a filtering mechanism between asylum and integration, leading the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ into housing and labour precarity. Hence,

the dissertation points to the linkages between the logistical management of settlement, practices of deferral and differential inclusion.

This dissertation contributes to the growing literature dealing with the logistification of migration by following state policy through its implementation. While large parts of the literature on the logistification of migration have focused on the state level of managing migration and borders, this dissertation pays attention to how the logistification takes shape within the borders of the nation-state.

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List of Abbreviations

CAB	County Administrative Boards (<i>Länsstyrelsen</i>)
SIV	<i>Statens invandrarverk</i> (the predecessor to the SMA)
SNAO	Swedish National Audit Office (<i>Riksrevisionen</i>)
SMA	Swedish Migration Agency (<i>Migrationsverket</i>)
SPES	Swedish Public Employment Service (<i>Arbetsförmedlingen</i>)
SAPM	Swedish Agency for Public Management (<i>Statskontoret</i>)
SHIS	<i>Stiftelsen hotellhem i Stockholm</i> (a municipal foundation that provides transitional homes to the social services in the municipality of Stockholm)

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Prologue

Surrounded by pines and firs, I stood observing a cluster of container dwellings when a young man appeared and asked me promptly if I was looking for him. It was early fall 2018, and I was in the middle of my fieldwork, mapping areas with temporary housing constructions in Stockholm. These so-called temporary modular homes – rebuilt containers and barracks – started to appear in 2016 and housed migrants who had recently obtained residency permits. The young man’s forwardness confused me. Quickly, he clarified that he had been in contact with many people lately, primarily journalists. He had become a sort of spokesperson for the dwellers and their situation in these interim houses. Even though I was not a journalist and not specifically looking for him, his guess was not far off.

I went back the day after for an interview. It was a misty Saturday morning. This time, I found a shortcut on a well-trodden path through a dewy meadow. The container dwellings were located next to an enclosed depot with huge plastic pipes, just at the edge of a forest. The area seemed typical. I had been to several locations with temporary modular housing erected on desolate plots of land next to warehouses, woods and heavily trafficked roads buzzing in the background. The facility consisted of two rows of containers on top of each other. Each container, with a removed front wall replaced by a large window and a door, constituted a dwelling unit. Internally, light green coloured plywood panels covered the walls with integrated shelves and storage, a small kitchenette and the bed fixed to the wall on the opposite sides. The room had a small bathroom with a shower in the back. We sat at his table next to his kitchenette, Alexander facing the window and me on his opposite side.

His journey from Eritrea to Stockholm had all began at the university in Asmara. There, he had become politically active while studying pedagogy. After two years of working as a teacher, he heard that the authorities had arrested a friend from his years at the university. Alexander feared that he would be next. So he left Asmara and his job as quickly as he possibly could, aiming to reach the border with Sudan. Alexander was arrested at the border and imprisoned in Nakfa. Together with other prisoners, he soon managed to escape. From Nakfa, he fled to Keren and then back

to Asmara. Alexander had to walk for about 100 kilometres in one stretch of the route, keeping out of sight of soldiers and militias patrolling the area while also avoiding wild animals. When he reached Asmara, he hid for a week, and then he tried once more, this time through Ethiopia, from where he then fled south to Sudan and then to Libya. From Libya, he crossed the Mediterranean in a shaky dinghy. The Red Cross brought them to the Italian coast. The Italian authorities interviewed them and relocated Alexander to an asylum centre in Boden in the north of Sweden. Shortly after, the Swedish authorities transferred Alexander to what he called a ‘refugee camp’ in Kramfors, where he stayed for two months. From there, he moved to Stockholm, where he now lived in a short-term transitional home. Alexander kept his eyes fixed on the distant treetops behind my back while describing his journey schematically with very few details. Occasionally he looked at me with watery eyes as I asked him questions.

When I met Alexander, his housing contract was due to expire in a few months. He did not complain much about the housing conditions but felt anxious about the rapidly approaching due date. He had applied himself and tried finding a new home but with no success. After the enactment of the Settlement Act, the Swedish Migration Agency dispersed migrants with residency permits still living in asylum centres in Sweden to cities and towns where the municipal administration would provide them homes. Many of the people living in the temporary modular houses thought they would arrive in a proper apartment to start settling down and find a job. Instead, they found themselves in container apartments or barracks, often sharing a small room with a stranger; they found themselves in conditions that reminded them of camps they had experienced on their trajectory to the asylum destination.

The excerpt from my interview with Alexander is an example of the extreme journeys that many of my interlocutors had experienced. It accounts broadly for the vastness of the trajectory itself, spanning long periods of crossing countries and continents. When arriving in Sweden, the journey of crossing visible and tangible borders with the imminent threat of deportation and imprisonment turned into one of navigating more elusive internal borders and exclusionary mechanisms within the housing and labour market. This dissertation focuses on the period after the journey to Sweden and after the asylum procedure. The dwellers I encountered in the temporary modular houses in Stockholm had been through the asylums system and were supposedly in the process of settling down. However, the threat of eviction and the substandard living conditions that many endured suspended this process. Needless to say, the harsh reality of recurrent suspensions and

continuous deferral of life, of being in limbo, is an all-too-familiar experience for many migrants. To broaden the understanding of how this liminality emerges anew within the refuge of the nation-state, this dissertation explores the policies and bureaucratic practices and conditions on the ground that give rise to this reality. Conceptually, I treat the production of thresholds and deferral of life within the supposed refuge of the nation-state as part of the constant liminality inherent to the migration trajectory. I argue that this reality needs to be understood through the lens of an increasing logistification of migration management, regulating rhythms, accelerating and decelerating migrants’ mobility. The container homes and temporary housing solutions that emerged in Stockholm, with equivalents in other parts of Europe, are the materialisations of the management of ‘flows’, as migration increasingly is described.

Introduction

After an open borders approach for a couple of months in the wake of the ‘long summer of migration’ in 2015 (Hess et al., 2017), the Swedish government introduced border controls and stricter asylum rules. According to a statement from the government, the unprecedented numbers of asylum seekers arriving in Sweden during the fall surpassed the country’s reception capacity, which called for restrictions that would limit the number of arrivals.¹ The Settlement Act (SFS 2016:38)² emerged out of this context as a reform to manage the ensuing crisis that unfolded on several public administration levels that fall. In particular, it addressed the resettlement of those who had recently obtained permission to stay. From the state’s perspective, the problem was that asylum centres were becoming bottlenecks in the reception system. Even if the ‘inflow’ to asylum centres had exceeded the ‘outflow’ already prior to 2015 (Riksrevisionen, 2014), the sudden increase in asylum seekers pushed the reception system to the brink of collapse. At the point of arrival, the surge of asylum seekers produced long waiting periods for pending asylum applications, which forced the state to constantly acquire more accommodation facilities. At the other end of the asylum process, those recently granted permission to stay, and were ready to settle down, were stuck in asylum centres due to the limited reception capacity in the municipalities coupled with a widespread housing shortage (Prop. 2015/16:54, 2015, p. 12).³

Until 2016, the settlement of migrants with residency permits still living in asylum centres relied on voluntary agreements between the state and the

¹ The Swedish Government. *Regeringen föreslår åtgärder för att kapa andrum för svenskt flyktingmottagande*. Press release from 24 November 2015. <https://www.regeringen.se/artiklar/2015/11/regeringen-foreslar-atgarder-for-att-skapa-andrum-for-svenskt-flyktingmottagande/>. Accessed 2022-01-24.

² SFS refers to *svensk författningssamling* (Swedish statute). From now on, this law will be referred to as the Settlement Act, without its designation in brackets.

³ Prop. refers to *Regeringens proposition* (government bill).

municipality. The state had tried various forms of financial stimulation to encourage municipalities to take greater responsibility; still, the placements offered did not match the need. Consequently, the drawbacks of the voluntary system led the government to conclude that voluntary agreements could never ensure a reliable and predictable settlement process (Prop. 2015/16:54, 2015, p. 8). A coercive dispersal and settlement policy, by contrast, would potentially produce a more reliable and predictable dispersal and settlement scheme.

The Settlement Act passed parliament in January 2016. Few members of parliament voted against the law. However, some politicians did argue that forcing municipalities to provide housing would not solve the issue of housing availability but merely defer the problem to the municipalities.⁴ Nevertheless, the consensus was that it was urgent to create a more efficient and faster transferral from asylum centres to labour incorporation. Hence, as of March 2016, the state would decide the number of so-called newly arrived immigrants⁵ for which each municipal administration had to provide housing. There would be an annual plan with the number of people arriving at the municipalities each month. The yearly plan would emanate from a calculation based on estimated asylum approvals and metrics regarding population, labour incorporation options and previous reception of migrants in the municipalities. The calculation would structure the ‘outflow’ of ‘newly arrived immigrants’ more equally in the country and towards faster labour incorporation through mathematical predictions matching people with the labour market. A more even dispersal would also enhance the possibilities for better housing conditions (Prop. 2015/16:54, 2015, p. 17). Meanwhile, the housing situation was not improving but rather worsening.⁶ Still, the government was adamant about prioritising an efficient settlement process and not letting the housing shortage inhibit the process. The government bill argued that a better way forward was to allow municipal administrations to offer temporary housing while preparing permanent solutions (Prop. 2015/16:54, 2015, p. 18).

⁴ Riksdagens protokoll 2015/16:59. https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/protokoll/protokoll-20151659-onsdagen-den-27-januari_H30959. Accessed 2020-11-23

⁵ I will return to the term towards the end of this chapter in the section called ‘Terminology’.

⁶ According to the annual survey conducted by The Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, 240 municipalities out of Sweden’s total 290, reported housing deficits in 2016, which was 57 more than the year before (Boverket, 2016, p. 4). In Stockholm County, 26 municipalities reported housing deficits (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2016, p. 10).

To this end, municipal administrations were legally free to solve the housing issue for ‘newly arrived immigrants’ the best way they could. As a result, most municipalities in Stockholm, which will be in focus in this study, ended up offering the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ temporary housing solutions for two years. After two years, the municipalities reckoned that the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ would no longer be ‘newly arrived’ and therefore should find homes on their own without special treatment. The problem was, of course, that with a persistent housing shortage, this was easier said than done. In sum, the state had resolved the logistic bottlenecks by deferring this issue down the hierarchy of public administrative, forcing municipal administration to provide the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ housing. In turn, the municipalities in Stockholm solved the housing issue momentarily by providing temporary homes for two years and thus deferring the problem into the future, allocating the responsibility to the ‘newly arrived immigrants’.

* * *

The above presentation of state policy illuminates a perspective on migration management as an issue of inflows and outflows. The solution on this level entailed moving people from one place to another, merely as a logistical operation familiar to the increasing logistical management of asylum seekers more broadly within the EU (Vianelli, 2021, p. 42). By contrast, Alexander’s story in the prologue offers an account of the migration trajectory as a drawn-out project that includes protracted and recurring periods of liminality. These two juxtaposed perspectives unfold on different scales without conversing with each other. However, as will be clear from the following story, when state policy reaches the level of street bureaucracy, these perspectives collide and confront each other. In what follows, I will reiterate an episode from my fieldnotes that sheds light on the clashing views and the ensuing uncertainty, unclarity and confusion.

I conducted fieldwork in Stockholm, Sweden, between 2018 and 2019, a period when many of the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ soon would have to leave their homes. In some cases, they stayed past the due date and were forcibly removed from their homes. Towards the end of my fieldwork, I joined a meeting regarding the suspended eviction of several families in one of Stockholm’s municipalities. I met the evictees around six an afternoon in early spring 2019 by the entrance to the closed municipal office. Soon, an official greeted us and brought us through the empty premises, past the lofty reception

hall and the portraits of old men on the walls in the corridor, into a room with heavy drapes hanging from the ceiling down to the floor, filtering the late afternoon sun. The tables were arranged in a U-formation. We sat down facing each other. Three local politicians and a couple of officials sat at the front tables facing us, an interpreter between them. One of the politicians welcomed us before starting.

We are here this evening to inform you about why we have stopped the evictions. The process is stopped because we, the local politicians, are discussing the Settlement Act and its implications. For now, you are safe where you live. You can stay in your apartments. However, you may know that the process is only paused; the temporary housing contracts you have will not be transformed into permanent contracts. Thus, in the meantime, we encourage you to keep looking for a new home, whether it is a home with a permanent contract outside of Stockholm County or sublets within the county.

The information did not render the situation any clarity. The dwellers would still be evicted, and it was still uncertain when this would happen. A Q & A followed after the short briefing of the situation. A woman who had come with two of her kids raised her hand and started to talk:

Since we do not have any long-term working contracts or steady income, it is impossible for us to find apartments. And if it is not that the landlords require steady income, the problem is that we have too many children. All of us are applying for work while studying Swedish. When we get a job interview, they ask us if we are not planning to stay in Stockholm since we are not sure about our housing contracts nor have found anything else. Many of us want to study at university for example. But we cannot plan our future, the simplest things...holidays. We cannot buy anything for our apartments, we cannot begin university, we cannot take jobs since we don't know if we will stay here. We have no job and no apartment. We don't feel safe! In short, we don't have the right to anything!

‘When we signed the housing contract, we did not know that it was going to be temporary. The interpreter told us that the contract would be renewed every month and that as long as we could pay, we were safe. Why do you have to put us in this position?’ a man in the crowd chimed in.

‘What about our kids?’ another man said. ‘We have all fled from the war to what? Why do you accept us here just to kick us out? I have tried to find an apartment, also in the outskirts of Stockholm. In Upplands-Bro, the contracts on the black market are 10 000 Euros, in Uppsala, 19 000, in Ekerö 20 000. I

don't have that kind of money! And for regular contracts you need a salary, a steady income, and not seldom, the landlords require high income in addition.’

One of the officials intervened then and said that only matters of general concern would be addressed. This was not the right time nor the right place for sharing individual experiences, the official said, evading the topic.

‘But these issues are not individual, we all have experienced these things, we all have this situation, it concerns us as a group!’ said a woman in the group with a slowly growing buzz of people chattering in the background.

One of the politicians added that it was illegal to pay for contracts in the informal market.

‘So, what are we supposed to do? Stay in our apartments and wait and not pay? Or should we pay? And if we should pay, why don't you send us invoices?’

The municipal representatives hesitated for a second. One of them answered: ‘We cannot advise you to continue paying without an invoice. We will issue a damage claim when you move, which corresponds to the sum you would have paid in rent.’

‘So, should we continue paying?’ The man repeated the question, puzzled by the fuzzy answer.

This time no one answered, and the room got notably quiet. The dwellers would have to pay, just not as regular rent but in a lump sum, which added to the uncertainty regarding how to handle the household economy. For each month they stayed in their homes without paying rent, the damage claim would grow larger. At the same time, the inability to collect social benefits or get a job without a formal housing contract would bring them steadily closer to economic ruination. The meeting continued for a short while with heated and contentious questions. The politicians and officials continued to dodge the questions.

This is a typical example of clashing perspectives, competing objectives and growing confusion that I encountered in the field. On the one hand, dwellers tried to get answers and find a way to resolve the never-ending trajectory imbued with uncertainty and precarity. On the other hand, local politicians and officials tried to cope with the law, which paradoxically intended to optimise

the process of settlement and labour incorporation. Deferring the housing issue for two years was a way of solving the urgent problem while also coping with the law. However, the dwellers would have to solve the housing situation at the end of these two years. Since the dwellers had failed to find other homes, the municipality deferred the issue again by temporarily suspending the eviction order, thereby buying itself some time. In the meantime, the temporary suspension of evictions inflicted even more pressure upon the dwellers because housing without a formal lease worsened their chances of finding jobs or enrolling in education programmes. The constant deferral of housing resulted in continued precarity and uncertainty.

This episode informs the topic of this dissertation in two ways. First, the meeting brings to light a threshold experience, entangled with the labour and housing market, that emerges anew after the asylum process. It shows that migration is a process, not a phenomenon that ends when people arrive at their planned destination or when they have obtained residency permits (Fontanari, 2019, p. 2). Second, by avoiding answering the evictees' questions and creating confusion, the meeting revealed a particular set of evasive moves that the local politicians and officials used to defer the housing issue to an unknown and disturbingly near future. As mentioned above, the parliament had similarly, albeit with other arguments, deferred the Swedish housing condition when the Settlement Act passed parliament. Against this background, deferral seems to be a convenient and intrinsic strategy in problem-solving policy work and the logistification of managing settlement, enacted through various forms of practices and technologies at different levels of governance. This dissertation traces the relationship between these practices and the re-articulations of thresholds and liminality within the nation-state.

Research aim

As the introduction suggests, the implementation of the Settlement Act required a deferral of the housing shortage, which ultimately allocated the responsibility of finding a home to the 'newly arrived immigrants'. This strategy aligns well with a logic inherent in neoliberal states and austerity politics (see e.g. Bhagat, 2020; Dajani, 2021). From this viewpoint, neoliberal democracies welcome asylum seekers and refugees as long as they rapidly become self-reliant. Migrants become either invisible productive elements in capital production or hypervisible scapegoats of a 'migration crisis', a crisis that rather originates from systemic inequalities surrounding shelter and income access inherent to austerity measures affecting more broadly

economically deprived groups (Bhagat, 2020, p. 2). The neoliberal nation-state is, thus, a backdrop throughout this dissertation. However, instead of connecting this strategy directly to a well-known neoliberal encroachment of the welfare state, this dissertation aims primarily to deepen the understanding of how the practices of deferral are enacted in an increasing logistification of migration management (Mezzadra, 2016; Vianelli, 2021) and how they engender spaces and positions of uncertainty and precarity. To this end, with a multi-scalar ethnographic method, this dissertation will dissect the social dimension of policy implementation and the rationality underpinning the practices, which do not always become visible from solely analysing policy documents or interviews.

More specifically, this dissertation explores how the practices of deferral are enacted in the implementation of the Settlement Act through three separate empirical domains: 1) calculations of dispersal and the matching system at the state level, 2) municipal management and the dwellers' experiences of temporary accommodation and resettlement in Stockholm, and 3) the professional and social dimensions of the encounters between street-level bureaucrats and 'newly arrived immigrants'. Furthermore, these empirical domains explore the relationship between the practices of deferral and the logistification of settlement management.

The dissertation builds on nine months of fieldwork in Stockholm County between 2018 and 2019. In terms of population, Stockholm County is the largest among 21 administrative and geographical units in Sweden, consisting of 26 municipalities. I travelled around various municipalities in the county, visiting areas with temporary housing solutions. My fieldwork consisted of participant observation and interviews with the dwellers and the state and municipal officials working on housing and settlement, collecting empirical material from several sites and levels of analysis. To bring together and analyse these separate scales of observation, the dissertation draws on the concept of logistification of migration (e.g. Mezzadra, 2018). I will use this concept as an analytical lens, which should not be confused with an entire theoretical framework. The concept asks us to pay attention to the management of mobility and temporality and the relationship between migration and labour. I will discuss this analytical lens further in the next chapter, but for now, I will condense the utility of the concept into three main points. First, this analytical lens encourages us to dissect the inclusive yet differential mechanisms in the migration apparatus (Feldman, 2012), paying attention to the temporal management of circulation and mobility (Mezzadra, 2017). From this

perspective, the Settlement Act is a law that attempts to accelerate and optimise inclusion through fast labour incorporation. Second, the logistical lens encourages us to consider the implications of the logistics rationality that imbues migration management, which increasingly tends to see migration as a flow of movement. Along similar lines, the Settlement Act intended to channel flows more efficiently into labour and optimal settlement by calculating and creating even flows of movement from asylum to work. Third, the logistical lens prompts us to zoom in on the inevitable friction that logistics, in general, seeks to eradicate. In this regard, transitional homes are examples of the liminal and frictional spaces that emerge from an increasing logistification of migration management.

This dissertation contributes to the logistification of migration-perspective by following state policy through its implementation. An ethnographic focus allows me to explore the tension between the logic of logistics at the state level and the practices of deferral required to implement the policy at the municipal level. While previous literature on the logistification of migration management has focused on a more abstract state or supra-state level, this dissertation extends the analytical scope with an empirical case within the nation-state's borders. It also challenges the logistical lens as it directs attention towards how state policy mutates on its way 'down' to the street level. This endeavour positions this dissertation amid many analytical perspectives and theoretical and thematic traditions, which I will describe in the next section.

Situating the research

This dissertation speaks to various bodies of literature, primarily within the disciplines of social anthropology, sociology and geography and the literature within these fields concerning migration and migration management. Mainly, it engages with the literature on themes from borders, mobility and temporality to camps, policy-work and bureaucracy, and more. Through these various epistemological engagements, the critical migration research pays heed to, on the one hand, the management and discourses which make migrants illegal and/or hamper their mobility rather than to migration as a problem that needs to be prevented (e.g. Anderson, 2019; De Genova & Peutz, 2010; Tazzioli, 2021). In some of this work, migration is seen as a progressive movement in itself, altering structures and challenging power (e.g. Casas-Cortes et al., 2015; De Genova et al., 2018; Scheel, 2013). Thus, on the other hand, this research seeks to deepen the understanding of migration as a mode of being in the world, which also elicits evasive tactics and counter-strategies against management

(e.g. Caglar, 2016; Franck & Vigneswaran, 2021; Khosravi, 2010; Willen, 2007). In a sense, refugeeeness becomes integrated into a phenomenological and existential subjectivity that expands beyond legal categories stemming from the migration apparatus. Over the past two decades, some scholars have explored these themes through the lens of temporality and time. From this viewpoint, scholars have studied uneven temporalities of mobility (e.g. Besteman, 2019; Sheller, 2016), the waiting that border regimes cause (Conlon, 2011; Drangsdland, 2020a; Hage, 2009; Jacobsen et al., 2021), and the spaces of suspended mobility in camps, asylum centres and transit facilities (e.g. Agier, 2002; Bacchetta & Martin, 2018; Fontanari, 2015; Peano, 2021), just to mention a few angles. By paying attention to how migration as a mode of being is shaped in correlation with the continuous production and re-articulation of thresholds and the deferral of life, I situate this dissertation within this research of critical migration.

However, while this literature often studies the management of migrants at the frontier of the nation-state or in-between – in the borderlands – this dissertation offers an analysis of the 'post-arrival' phase of migration (Fontanari, 2019, p. 2), when the subject in question has permission to stay. The logistification of migration as an analytical lens offers a perspective on the continuities and stratifications beyond the scope of the borders of the nation-state, connecting internal borderisation processes to transformations within capitalism. It attends to the logistics rationality which increasingly influences migration management by turning it into an enterprise filtering and channelling movement, accelerating or decelerating the movement of asylum seekers and refugees to deportation or to labour incorporation. This lens proposes a border ontology in which the border is not a device obstructing or blocking movement but rather a parameter that enables the channelling of global flows (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2012, p. 59). This means that the primary function of borders is not keeping people out but to synchronise people's arrival and adapt their rhythms to a capital rhythm of value extraction. In this sense, the 'logistical gaze' (Mezzadra, 2016, p. 39) shifts focus from physical borders to temporal management of migrant mobilities. Through this lens, the role of geographical and physical borders engendering 'illegal' subjectivities is not downplayed but rather is seen as expanding within the nation-state (c.f. Tervonen et al., 2018, p. 139).

Nevertheless, until now, the lion's share of literature applying logistics as an analytical lens stays at the macro level, exploring the management of subjects at the border of the nation-state. A recent example, that in addition empirically

takes on the Swedish case, is Lorenzo Vianelli's comparative analysis of the 'warehousing' of asylum seekers in Sweden and Italy. Vianelli advances a compelling argument about how the distribution and reception of newly arrived asylum seekers is turning into a logistical matter (Vianelli, 2021). Another example is Karin Krifors' work on migrant labour and transnational economies with the case of seasonal workers in the Swedish berry-picking industry (Krifors, 2021). The logistical lens exhorts scholarly attention on the thresholds, the liminal zones (Cowen, 2014; Mezzadra, 2018), that filter mobility between the border regime and citizenship. It carves out a scope of observation that links the internal borderisation with the external border regime. The Settlement Act is particularly thought provoking in this regard. It offers a prism through which we can study the logistical rationality of dispersal and reception and, at the same time, the management of migrants after the approval of their asylum request. I situate this dissertation amidst this space where external borderisation of the migration apparatus shifts into an internal process of differential inclusion within the analytical scope of logistics and migration. It is in relation to this previous research that this dissertation makes its most significant contribution.

Contributions, delimitations and limitations

The materialisation of the Settlement Act offers a space of observation in which we can ask how internal borderisation and differential inclusion (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, p. 159) occurs. Moreover, it opens up a space between asylum and citizenship, where we can dissect how mobility becomes disciplined and stratified on its way to inclusion. Thus, the main contribution of this dissertation lies in the ethnographic analysis of the Settlement Act, which, in turn, enables an empirical and theoretical elaboration of the logistification of migration. The empirical contribution emanates from the focus on migration management after the asylum approval through the Settlement Act. Initially, Sandro Mezzadra introduced the term logistification of migration management to describe an emerging significance of a logistical rationality informing border management in the EU, materialising as hotspots, corridors, platforms and hubs (Mezzadra, 2017, p. 2), predominantly during the 'long summer of migration' in 2015 (Hess et al., 2017). Since then, the logistical lens has gained centrality in critical research on migration management. The scope of this dissertation extends to after the approval of asylum. It thereby contributes empirically to how the logistification of migration management and asylum reception materialises after the asylum process. Also, it contributes with theoretical insights. By exploring the

logistification of migration management through the, at first glance, contradictory practice of deferral, the dissertation explores what has been referred to a 'logistical fantasy' (Altenried et al., 2018, p. 299). I say at first glance because inconsistencies and friction are inherent to the logistification of migration management and logistics in general. They are merely obscured and deferred. For instance, while the Settlement Act intended to accelerate the labour integration of those who had residency permits, the smooth transition was interrupted by conditions on the ground, namely housing availability, which gave rise to spaces of friction and new thresholds. This means that in the case of Stockholm, the smooth and efficient transfer was an illusion. Through this scope of research, this dissertation will contribute to the growing body of literature focusing on migration management through the lens of logistics by zooming in on a particular trait of this management, namely, the implicit friction within the process of acceleration towards labour incorporation and how the friction is temporarily evaded.

The scope of this research required delimitations, which is to say that it has limitations too. Firstly, through the ethnographic scope on the three empirical domains mentioned above, this dissertation cannot convey a thorough critique of the Settlement Act. The ethnographic analysis is delimited to these empirical domains and stems from fieldwork conducted in Stockholm County and its 26 municipalities, seeking to trace the workings of the Settlement Act through various scales. In other words, there are limits to what I can say due to this analytical scope and the geographical delineation. Unsurprisingly, the operationalisation of the Settlement Act unfolded differently across the Swedish municipalities. And in fact, recently, a state audit report asserted that the Settlement Act had succeeded with its objective to reduce waiting in asylum centres (Riksrevisionen, 2021). Hence, although the reader of this dissertation most probably will deem the Settlement Act a failure, this dissertation cannot be taken as an account of a case of failed policy. However, this dissertation is not a study assessing the Settlement Act. Instead, the ethnographic analysis pays heed to the evasion and deferral practices required to comply with the law and its relationship with re-articulation of thresholds, liminality and precarity.

Second, the delimitation to practices of deferral means that the personal accounts of my interlocutors are limited in the dissertation. My empirical material consists of policy documents and laws, interviews with officials and 'newly arrived immigrants', participant observation in political mobilisation and protests. The accounts from the political struggle and the protests formed

a large portion of my material. Although these were informative regarding the deferral of life, ethical considerations have led me to concentrate on the inconsistencies of the management of migrant settlement that elicits the precarious realities in the first place. I will expand on this in the method chapter. Consequently, this has implications for the theoretical and analytical scope. Hence, the dissertation focuses more on the organisational and social dimensions of deferral and less on migrants' subjectivities and theorisations concerning political and migrant struggles.

Finally, the political landscape changed after the summer of migration in 2015. The state introduced regulations that have impaired the situation for both asylum seekers and those with residency permits. For example, one of the government's restrictions was the introduction of a temporary migration law that limited all residency permits to temporary permits. Most of my interlocutors, categorised as 'newly arrived immigrants', were about to run out of time in their transitional homes at the time of my fieldwork. This meant that they had been in the country for several years, passing through various transit and asylum centres and temporary housing. The majority of times, they had obtained their permission to stay before the temporary law entered into force. However, this does not mean that all of them had permanent residency. Still, when I brought up the subject, my interlocutors deferred the problem to focus on more urgent, although related, issues of housing and finding a job. This is an analytical and empirical (de)limitation in the dissertation. While the temporary residency permit significantly reinforces the connection between precarity and labour, incorporating it into the study would require more research. In addition, large parts of the temporary law introduced in 2016 became permanent law in July 2021. According to the new law, only quota refugees qualify for permanent residency at the first adjudication. At the time of my fieldwork, this had not yet come into force. As central as this law might be today, my research's scope and delimitations will not include the consequences of it.

Terminology

As this dissertation centres on the Settlement Act and settlement of the so-called 'newly arrived immigrant', the term 'newly arrived immigrant' is key. So, what is a 'newly arrived immigrant'? The term refers to either a refugee or a person who needs subsidiary protection as defined in the Alien Act (SFS

2005:716)⁷ and family members eligible for reunification. Also, the person has recently obtained a temporary or permanent residency permit and is at least 18 years old. Furthermore, the Settlement Act distinguishes between 'newly arrived immigrants' eligible for state settlement and those who have settled down independently and do not qualify for state settlement. The ones eligible for settlement were the ones who dwelled in asylum centres during the asylum process. The Settlement Act enabled the Swedish Migration Agency (SMA) to offer this group housing in municipal care. My work centres around this group since the temporary modular housing was the starting point of my research.

Whereas the Swedish term *nyanländ invandrare* has been translated as 'newly arrived migrant' (e.g. Beach & Dovemark, 2019), 'newly arrived refugee' (Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2020), refugees (e.g., Emilsson & Öberg, 2021) and 'newly settled refugee' (Jansson-Keshavarz & Nordling, 2022), I prefer to use 'newly arrived immigrants'. The simple explanation is that it is the translation the government offices deploy. However, I will not consistently use 'newly arrived immigrant' throughout this dissertation. Depending on the context, I sometimes use 'dweller', tenants, or, as in the introduction, 'evictee'. My reluctance towards using 'newly arrived immigrants' consistently in the dissertation stems partly from its imprecise use in bureaucratic practice and partly because of its proliferation in public discourse as a category. The slippage from 'nyanländ invandrare' to 'nyanländ' as a noun – a 'newly arrived' – reflects the arbitrary and potential formation of a category in daily parlance replacing words such as migrant, refugee, immigrant and foreigners. Therefore, I will use 'newly arrived immigrant' in quotation marks referring to the Settlement Act and deploy the terms dwellers or tenants when they better fit the context. Similarly, I will use the term 'refugee' when I refer to a person with refugee status according to the Geneva Refugee Convention and 'foreigners' and 'immigrants', similarly in quotation marks, when I cite policy work. Finally, I will deploy 'migrant' when I refer to a person who has migrated, no matter the person's legal status or purpose of migration.

Dissertation outline

This dissertation consists of nine chapters. The first four chapters introduce the topic and the theoretical and analytical lens. Furthermore, they put the Settlement Act in a historical context and offer a methodological chapter connecting the field and the analytical scope of my work. After that, four empirical chapters follow. Chapter 5 corresponds with the first empirical

⁷ See chapter 5, paragraph 1,2, 4, 6 chapter 12, paragraph 18, or chapter 21 or 22 in the Alien Act (SFS 2015:716).

domain presented in the research aim. Chapters 6 and 7 respond to the second empirical domain. The connecting point here is the temporary modular houses. Chapter 6 deals with the municipal administration and its organisation of temporary modular housing, and Chapter 7 turns to the tenants' experiences. Chapter 8 corresponds with the third empirical domain. Finally, Chapter 9 summarises the analytical points and the arguments concerning the relationship between practices of deferral and the logistification of migrant settlement management.

After this first introduction chapter, Chapter 2 offers a theoretical contextualisation, focusing on the logistical lens and the logistification of migration management. This chapter alternates between reflections on the logistical lens and descriptive accounts of migration literature using this lens. Towards the end of this chapter, I connect my empirical domains with the theoretical work I have presented to show how it informs my work. The chapter seeks to provide a broad theoretical understanding of the influences of logistical rationality in migration management as a foundation for understanding migrant settlement management in Sweden.

Chapter 3 describes the evolution of Swedish dispersal and settlement policies. Revisiting the historical roots of these policies provides an understanding of how the Settlement Act was incrementally influenced by the logistical rationality theoretically described in the Chapter 2. The chapter depicts how circumventing and deferring the housing shortage became a last-resort solution to creating an efficient and optimal dispersal system. Since the housing market and the housing shortage have affected the dispersal and settlement strategies, this chapter also presents a short historical overview of housing policies.

Chapter 4 deals with methods and fieldwork, paying particular attention to the analytical trajectory from epistemological rumination through to ethical considerations and field accessibility. The purpose is to demonstrate how ethics, my theoretical and epistemological inclinations and access to the field led to my methods and analytical scope. Besides describing my field site and material, I also highlight the shortcomings, limitations and challenges I encountered during my work on this dissertation.

Chapter 5 explores the system and calculations behind the number of dispersals. It attends to the constant striving towards precision in estimating probable dispersal outcomes and future settlement patterns while neglecting the impact of housing shortages in the country. By exploring the calculative

rationality underpinning the dispersal model and the matching system, this chapter argues that tension between desired accuracy and vagueness creates both legitimacy and a calculative fog. This practice renders the dispersal scheme logical while simultaneously deferring the housing shortage.

Chapter 6 describes how the absence of available and accessible housing forced the municipal administration to offer temporary and transitional housing to the dispersed 'newly arrived immigrants'. I explore the local materialisation of temporary modular houses and the re-organisation of bureaucratic structures and routines. The chapter argues that the organisational work that created a more stable infrastructure of temporary and transitional homes enabled the deferral of the housing shortage and, in so doing, produced a post-asylum threshold.

Chapter 7 explores the deferral of life associated with being a tenant of temporary homes. While the tenants feel stuck in transit, they also are confronted with the pressure of leaving these places. The chapter argues that the in-betweenness of living in these temporary homes and the stress inflicted upon them to leave plays a disciplinary role in shaping a self-reliant subject suitably adapted for the neoliberal housing and labour market.

Chapter 8 attends to the encounters between street-level bureaucrats and the tenants in the temporary modular housing. The chapter builds on participant observations in the so-called '*boskolor*' in one particular municipality in Stockholm. The chapter analyses these bureaucratic practices that create hypermobility, paying particular attention to the confluences of formal and informal, the private and professional sides of bureaucratic practices and the relation between these practices' content and enactment, which, I argue, engender an instrumental ambiguity and elusiveness in the circuitous management of 'newly arrived immigrants'. Furthermore, I maintain that these practices enable a continual deferral of the local housing shortage by circulating people.

Finally, Chapter 9 connects the various practices deferring and substituting for housing solutions. This concluding chapter sums up the dissertation's main findings, arguments and suggestions for further research.

Bridging levels of analysis

In the introduction, I presented two postulations. First, I asserted that logistical rationality suffuses Swedish migrant settlement management. Second, I stated that the logistification of migrant settlement requires practices of deferral, circumventing the obstacle precluding the speedy settlement process, namely the housing shortage. While the first postulation relies on broad and abstract observations informing theoretical scholarly work, the second one derives from government documents and policy work in a Swedish setting. The ethnographic analysis builds on these postulations, combining broader theoretical reflections with a specific empirical case. Therefore, before I move on to the ethnographic analysis of how state policy unfolds and materialises in Stockholm, I will flesh out these postulations in two chapters, the first dealing with the theoretical implications of logistics and the logistification of migration and the second dealing with the historical background of the particular Swedish setting and the introduction of the Settlement Act.

This chapter focuses on the logistical lens and the logistification of migration management. A large part of it reviews literature that has dealt with logistics and migration. I alternate between analytical reflections about logistics and descriptive accounts of migration literature applying the logistical lens. Moving back and forth, I describe the theoretical links between the work on logistics and migration research. Moreover, this also sheds light on the challenges and limitations of the logistical gaze on migration research, especially regarding its applicability for more ethnographic work on the ground. Even if the concept of logistification of migration has gained centrality in more recent work on migration, it is mainly used as a heuristic device. The concept often describes a discursive and ideational influence within the management of migrants, which prompts us to shift epistemological focus.

However, this shift requires additional conceptual tools to understand the implications on the ground. Therefore, I intend to expand the concept and its applicability by adding a layer of practices integral to logistics more generally and perhaps the logistification of migration management in particular. Since these layers are tied to the empirics and will be developed in the empirical chapter and the concluding chapter, there will be a preponderance of theoretical and epistemological discussions here. However, towards the end of this chapter, I bridge the theory with my empirical material in two steps. First, I discuss the discrepancy between the logistical migration management and its materialisation on the ground, conveying merely a logistical fantasy. Second, I propose that we consider the work that makes the logistification possible, maintaining the fiction of smooth flows, as the analytical site bridging the ideational level with the outcomes on the ground. In the last section, I integrate the logistical lens into the three empirical domains I presented in the introduction. What I refer to as practices of deferral are crucial components in this work. They take shape as intricate calculations, re-organisation of administrative structures that permeate temporary solutions and bureaucratic procedures of removal.

Logistics – temporal management

The logistification of migration refers to the increasing use of logistical terminology in EU's migration management, which, albeit a stealthy influence over several years, became most prominent in the wake of the long summer of migration in 2015 (Altenried et al., 2018, p. 294). Accordingly, the logistics influence suffuses the vocabulary in policy work and restructures and re-organises the EU border regime. Initially, the logistification of migration management primarily referred to a theoretical observation and an invitation to apply an epistemological lens focusing on the temporal management of people's mobility. Partly derived from border studies, the logistical lens on migration introduced a shift from terrestrial borders to temporal borders and their relationship with capital and labour, accelerating and decelerating people's movement across and beyond the nation-state. In accordance with this, Mezzadra and Neilson argue that the widespread image of borders as walls in critical work engaging with borders is misleading (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, p. 7). Comprehending borders as uniquely exclusionary fails to incorporate borders' flexibility and their ability to filter movement at the frontier of the nation-state. Moreover, it misses the proliferation of border techniques 'within territorially bound spaces of citizenship and labor markets' (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, p. 7). Today, this epistemological lens has gained centrality in critical migration literature through various empirical cases (see

e.g. Vianelli, 2021). Scholars in critical migration studies interested in the emerging logistics influence in migration management are either inspired or directly connected to the scholarly work affiliated with the 'logistical turn' (Schouten et al., 2019). I will start with a brief description of the emerging field of critical logistics to make the connection to migration management clearer.

The scholarly work affiliated with the logistical turn looks at the global expansion of logistics and its many intersections with the development of capitalism. The technical term logistics usually refers to the art and science, or/and the technology and calculation of managing the movement of things and people in supply chain capitalism (see e.g. Chua et al., 2018; Neilson, 2012). Many scholars trace the roots of business logistics to military logistics and its emergence between 1560 and 1715 (see e.g. Chua et al., 2018; Neilson, 2012). Following the historian Martin van Creveld, military logistics arose as a reaction to what he called the 'military of plunder'. As the armies grew in size, sustaining the troops at the frontier by plundering the vicinities and taking food and supplies from the population was no longer possible (Van Creveld in Neilson, 2012, p. 322). Therefore, according to van Creveld, it was not the 'strategic genius' that won the wars but hard work and cold logistical calculations (Van Creveld, 1977 in Chua, 2019 and in Cowen, 2014, p. 26). In contrast, Stefano Harney and Fred Moten (2013) argue that the birth of global logistics originates in the transatlantic slave trade. Drawing from their work, scholars are, thus, hesitant about the genealogical link to military logistics. Instead, they agree that logistics, more broadly, has always been coupled with capitalism, imperialism and colonialism (e.g. Chua et al., 2018; Cuppini, 2015; Mezzadra, 2015).

Factories made considerable economic gains through Taylorist methods of management, while transportation and warehousing practices were still underdeveloped in the 1950s (Chua, 2019, p. 1447). It is uncertain exactly how and when (military) logistics entered the scene of civilian practices, but during the post-World War II era in the US, logistics started to make a strong appearance within business management. The decades between the 1960s and 1970s were particularly formative. During these decades, system approaches to transportation and communication, the spatial organisation of firms, the container revolution, the formation of business organisations and academic schools in logistics became significant elements in the business sector (Neilson, 2012, p. 323).

Following the critical research on logistics, we should not simply reduce logistics to the technical term, to the mundane science of cargo movement, a discrete industry, or merely a business sector (Chua et al., 2018, p. 618). Instead, the logistical turn implies an understanding of logistics as intimately connected to power, capital and governance. Logistics is thus an empirical reality and a theoretical and epistemological research focus. Studying logistics has brought to life an analytical approach that emphasises the management of movement and its correspondence with re-articulations of technologies of global capitalism. The field of critical logistics combines Marxian and Foucauldian approaches; it draws from mobility studies, STS, infrastructure and much more. The Marxian influence originates from Marx's theories about circulation as an inherent process of capital accumulation, discussed in volume 2 of *Das Capital*. According to Mezzadra and Neilson, Marx argues that capitalist production entails reducing the circulatory time of capital since the capitalist cannot extract surplus value during the time of transportation (2019, p. 150). Even though Marx does not mention logistics, reducing turnover time is at the core of creating economic revenues. From the organisation of movement of goods, there is a parallel to Foucault's late work. Perhaps most notably explored in his late lectures, Foucault elaborated extensively on questions of sovereignty, discipline and governmentality in relation to mobility, populations and commodities. From a historical perspective, Foucault described the challenge of the sovereign state and city planning in governing circulation, separating good circulation from bad (Foucault, 2007, p. 18). Foucault's assertion about managing circulation represents a broader epistemological approach that has influenced various schools of thought, from security studies to mobility, migration studies and critical logistics.

The question of logistics and the global movement of goods puts issues of sovereignty, the state, capital and territory in the midst of its analytical focus. This analytical enterprise highlights the often violent implications of temporal management of mobility, how it re-configurates space and geographies both on a local and a global scale. The geographer Deborah Cowen's early work on logistics was ground-breaking in this aspect. Cowen writes:

For many, logistics may only register as a word on the side of the trucks that magically bring online orders only hours after purchase or that circulate incessantly to and from big-box stores at local power centers. The entire network of infrastructures, technologies, spaces, workers, and violence that makes the circulation of stuff possible remains tucked out of sight for those who engage with logistics only as consumers. (Cowen, 2014, p. 1)

The network Cowen refers to enables faster and efficient circulation of things while it obscures and hides the violent side of the process. Critical logistics pays heed to the invisible violence associated with supply chain management and the acceleration of goods circulating the planet. The violence is perhaps most visible in the interruptions of supply chains. Besides delays due to bad weather, flat tires and failed engines, there are deliberate interruptions deriving from sabotage and interference from organised or non-organised workers. The violence refers to, for instance, labour struggles stemming from oppressive working conditions. Interruptions might also occur on the open waters with pirates hijacking the cargo (Cowen, 2014, p. 2). These are events that most often remain in the margins of the image of smooth logistical supply chains. Breakdowns disclose the violence and pressure on people and natural environments. This violence is conceptualised differently within the scope of the logistification of migration management. The analytical move from critical logistics to the logistification of migration management calls for attention to the violent process of objectification itself. While critical logistics pays heed to the management of goods and their implications for people and the environment, the logistification of migration management takes this further and asks us to consider that the management of people is becoming more like the management of objects. Lorenzo Vianelli calls this 'warehousing as an art of governing refugees', referring to Jennifer Hyndman and Wenona Giles' description of 'don't die humanitarianism'. In other words, warehousing refers to a kind of management that ensures physical survival while suspending fundamental rights (Hyndman & Giles, 2011, p. 373; Vianelli, 2021, p. 48). The becoming object is, at least partly, a consequence of logistical rationality encroaching on increasing domains of life. The study of logistification of migration management departs from the notion of an invasive logic or rationality of logistics, driven by profit maximisation and cost reduction.

Time, temporality and rhythms of movement are key components of logistical management. I find Laura Bear's conceptualisation of capitalist time useful as an initial step towards an ethnographic operationalisation of logistics. Following her vocabulary, logistics is a capitalist technique of time in essence. By reviewing anthropologists' work, Bear advances three concepts – 'techne', 'episteme' and 'phronesis' (also termed techniques, knowledge and ethics of time) – to elaborate on capitalist time. First, techniques, or techne, Bear says, following Tom Boellstorff's definition (2008), are intentional action brought upon a time map. In capitalist modernity, this action is applied in order to bring capital to being (Bear, 2016, p. 491). Techniques of time in capitalist modernity are, for instance, finance and speculation, logistics and planning,

manipulating both time and space to maximise profit. Second, epistemes are ‘expert forms of knowledge that are associated with bureaucratic, scientific, and corporate institutions’ (Bear, 2016, p. 492). These are different from techniques in the sense that they attribute meaningful representations, which can be related to ethical and political questions. Bear states, following Simone Abram (2014), that epistemes tend to take the form of plans in bureaucracy. Third, phronesis or ethics of time alludes to the dimension of ‘right action that contains accounts of what time is and what it should be used for’ (Bear, 2016, p. 494). Phronesis refers instead to individual action based on learned experiences and ethical representations of the past and future anticipations.

Drawing on Bear, logistics is composed of techniques (*techne*) and expertise knowledge (*episteme*) which forms a kind of logistical rationality, building on calculations of efficiency that render neutral and objective results. This rationality, following Mezzadra and others, is increasingly spreading to the domain of migration management. In the case of Sweden and the Settlement Act, it presents itself in the vocabulary in policy-work and through the operations of matching people with particular locations based on statistical calculations, standardised estimations and predictions. This mathematical mediation of rationality could be called calculative rationality (c.f. Callon & Muniesa, 2005), metrological rationality (see e.g. Espeland & Stevens, 2008) or algorithmic rationality (see e.g. Beer, 2017; Totaro & Ninno, 2014), which of course are not the same thing, but they all depart from the notion that numbers and calculations do not lie. These are technologies that simultaneously convey expert knowledge and ethics of temporal management by suggesting a neutral and apolitical system. By studying the vocabulary of logistics in policy-work and the calculations operationalising the Settlement Act, I will demonstrate how logistics not only influence policy but also drive the dispersal and settlement. While these are ways of impacting events in a temporal outline, these strategies produce spaces as well. In the subsequent section, I will develop the relationship between temporal management and spatial manifestations. But first I will attend to the relationship between logistics rationality and migration management.

The logistification of migration and border policies – a logic of temporal management

When Sandro Mezzadra says that it is possible to spot a ‘logistical turn’ in migration policies and related border regimes in many parts of the world (2018, p. 8), he refers to the logistical rationality now also influencing migration management. However, as far as this analogy goes, there are epistemological

and methodological differences between the critical research on logistics as described above and the logistical lens on migration management. Besides the crucial distinction between being the object and being exposed to the consequences of how objects are managed, as mentioned above, logistics is a delineated field of science, which materialises and spatialises in warehouses, ports, infrastructure and computer systems. By contrast, the relationship between the logistics in the management of migration and its material locality is less clear-cut. This is one of the challenges I see with applying the logistical lens to migration management. Therefore, to analyse empirical cases where the logistification of migration management takes shape, and how it shapes people in becoming objects, we need to identify its localities as they unfold in relation to the logistical rationality.

The logistical lens’ intervention takes the spreading of logistical rationality as the analytical entry point, following the prominence of the vocabulary of logistics in policy debates and the ‘experimentation of “just-in-time” and “to-the-point” labour migration recruitment schemes’ (Mezzadra, 2017, p. 3). This vocabulary is most often connected to cost reductions and smooth processes of labour integration. The logistification of migration literature supplements the more well-established view from border studies that treats the proliferation of detention and deportation camps as the militarization of borders. To a large extent, the border is indeed this violent technology. Nevertheless, this view misses acknowledging that border regimes have always ‘acted to filter and hierarchically manage migration’ (Altenried et al., 2018, p. 293). For instance, the EU and the Schengen space have always been a labour and mobility regime, promoting the freedom of movement while also conveying the image of ‘Fortress Europe’, in varied degrees during the decades, keeping people out (Altenried et al., 2018, p. 293). Consequently, the logistical lens encourages us to pay heed to the points of connection between the porous and filtering border and the transformations of labour and capital. It asks us to shift the scope from terrestrial localities of borderisation to processes of inclusion that select people and filter circulation in equally violent forms as exclusionary border measures (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, p. 7). In other words, the management of migration and capital production are interconnected through the management of borders and mobility; arranging the flows of commodities and monitoring and channelling people, accelerating or decelerating their mobility, become means of capital growth and state control. Furthermore, the management of movement does not end at the frontier of the nation-state but proliferates inside as well. As I will demonstrate in this dissertation, the

Settlement Act is a telling example of the management of movement between the exterior of the nation-state and its interior.

To this end, Mezzadra and Neilson suggest a different path than often taken in border studies in their frequently cited book *Borders as method, or the multiplication of labor* (2013). Instead of emphasising moments of differentiation and technologies of exclusion, they suggest investigating processes of ‘differential inclusion’. This concept is related to Stephen Castles’ concept ‘differential exclusion’ (1995). Yet, it is different. Castles identifies areas in society that include migrants, most prominently the labour market, and others that deny them access, often welfare systems, citizenship and political participation. Mezzadra’s and Neilson’s term alludes instead to the differentiating processes within inclusion, precarisation and fragmentation of the inclusive labour market. Thus, on one hand ‘processes of fragmentation and precarisation have seeped into the shape of citizenship under the pressure of the flexibilization of the labor market’, which leads to ‘multiple lines of exclusion and inclusion’ (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, p. 164). On the other hand, ‘stratification and multiplication of systems of entry, status, residence, and legitimacy, coupled in seemingly contradictory ways with new kinds of demands for loyalty and homogeneity, foster processes of further diversification and bordering of migrants’ subject position’ (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, p. 164). Hence, exclusionary processes are more elusive and can be enacted in policies of inclusion as well. This is one of the key points for why I use the logistification of migration management as an analytical lens. As I will demonstrate in the next chapter, the Settlement Act intended to incorporate and integrate migrants into society and labour as quickly as possible. However, the law did not intervene with labour market policies or local housing markets, which precluded the acceleration of inclusive settlement measures. The account between the evictees and municipal politicians and officials in the introduction illustrates how the labour market and the housing market decelerated the process of settling down.

As mentioned above, the logistical approach underlines the importance of temporality. Even if Mezzadra and Neilson often come back to the indebtedness to border studies and pay tribute to Étienne Balibar’s seminal text *What is the border?* (2002), they claim that there is a need to expand beyond the focus on border space that dominates the research field (c.f. Caglar, 2016; Griffiths, et al., 2013; Khosravi, 2019; Tazzioli, 2018). For Mezzadra and Neilson, contemporary migration management, and the ‘growth of migration detention facilities across the globe’, is less a technique of excluding migrants

than it is a way of regulating ‘the time and speed of their movements into labor markets’ (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, p. 132). This perspective, they argue, is profoundly different from the ones offered by studies and analysis deriving from Giorgio Agamben’s understanding of the emergence of spaces of sovereign exception. Without delving too deep into this debate, I think that Mezzadra and Neilson’s take on temporal management is productive for my work to investigate how processes of exclusion keep being reproduced in processes of inclusion.

Logistical space – the materialisation of temporal management

Henri Lefebvre states that temporal processes give rise to and produce the spatial dimension, ‘whether we are concerned with bodies, with society, with the universe or with the world’ (Lefebvre, 2011, p. 130). Logistics, as a practice of managing time and movement, gives rise to space too. The question is, what kind of space does it give rise to? As Mezzadra has pointed out, following Deborah Cowen, logistics turns every border into a seam, giving rise to liminal zones ‘between the inside and outside, where old divisions no longer hold’ (Cowen, 2014, p. 82; Mezzadra, 2018, p. 7). These liminal zones are spaces of concentration of violence and hierarchisation, carving out the necessary conditions for smooth circulation flows. Given this objective and constant striving towards seamless flows, these liminal zones are temporary disruptions and necessary evils. This means that while they are spaces of connectivity, circulation and containment (warehouses, ports and container ships), they are all material spaces that require economic resources and that can give rise to contestation and friction. Logistics is the art of reducing these risks and costs to a minimum, ultimately eliminating these spaces altogether if possible. The contradictory nature of logistics seems to be that even if it tries to evade materialising into warehouses and ports, logistical spaces seem to become more numerous as global connectivity and capitalism expand.

Logistics is akin to infrastructure in the sense that, similar to infrastructure, it is concerned with enabling (and stopping) the circulation and flows of goods, people and ideas (Larkin, 2013). It operates together with or through infrastructures and simultaneously assembles new infrastructure. For instance, the new Silk Road, with its expansion of ports, warehouses and railways, is an example of how maritime logistics produces new infrastructure and, in continuation, logistical cities (see Neilson & Rossiter, 2014). Along those lines, the architect and urban planner Keller Easterling offers in her book *Extrastatecraft, the power of infrastructure space* (2014) an account of how logistics and infrastructure create entire worlds. Easterling takes the example

of economic zones of free trade to illuminate how states and capital together create exceptional spaces of trade, which extend to cities for workers in logistics. Another example is *The rule of logistics, Walmart and the architecture of fulfilment* (2016), in which the designer Jesse LeCavalier depicts the emergence of logistical landscapes and how warehousing, infrastructure and information storage come together as a spatialisation of circulation management. These are spaces created to manage circulation and capital accumulation and create worlds as a by-product (Easterling, 2005). Thus, critical logistics also directs its attention towards a spatial inquiry (Cuppini et al, 2015, p. 123), exploring the connections between the management of circulation and space.

Hence, what kind of space does the logistics rationality influencing the EU migration management produce? Mezzadra asks us to consider the hot spots, corridors, hubs, detention centres, arrival centres, asylum centres as material manifestations of logistical thinking (2017, p. 2). These are the liminal and ephemeral spaces that emerge from temporal migration management, accelerating or hampering migrants' movement. However, they are not solely products of governance or the nation-state. Instead, they are state responses to autonomous mobility, using roads and railways already in place. The architect Irit Katz describes the emergence of these ephemeral spaces as products of both the autonomous mobility of migrants and the confinement of this mobility, extending in urban space as a 'global infrastructure of camps' (2017b). Katz notes that the very same networks and infrastructures that have enabled flows of goods, engendering the freedom of movement for some, facilitate migration too at first. The makeshift camps in the vicinity of railway stations and ports are examples of this. Often, however, state authorities dismantle or transform these places into more institutionalised and securitised versions (see e.g. Katz, 2017a). The responses to the makeshift camps are authorities' measures to control unruly movement, forcing migrants to find new routes. In the following section, I will discuss the relationship between logistical migration management and spatial articulation.

Spatial articulations of temporal management of migrants' mobility

Between the two spatial articulations that Katz highlights – spontaneous makeshift camps and controlled migration hubs – emerge various logics and strategies managing the 'circulation of bodies' (Bacchetta & Martin, 2018, p. 31). They operate through care and control, either through biopolitical technologies of surveillance or through near-sighted and partial systems of

surveillance practices. The tension between these two spatial articulations directs us towards the character of space emerging out of the logistification of migration. Take the example of the makeshift camp in Calais, known in public as the 'Jungle', built by border-crossers who were temporarily stuck on their way to England. This makeshift camp represents one of these mushrooming spaces where people constructed temporary shelters while waiting to continue on their journey. Next to it, Logistic Solutions, a French company known for its military facilities, erected 125 container dwellings, paid for by the French government with financial aid from the European Commission. The container camp was set up next to the makeshift shelters to provide the border-crossers with necessities but also to control them. They had to register with the authorities and undergo a biometric scanning, leaving fingerprints to access the container dwellings, which offered clean beds and showers. The dwellers were not identified or registered with their names but only with their fingerprints. In turn, the gates to the container facilities used fingerprint scanners to let people in (Katz, 2017a). As Fiorenza Picozza and others have shown, fingerprints are heavy carriage. According to the Dublin II agreement, migrants have to go back and seek asylum where they left their fingerprints the first time they entered. To avoid being 'dublined', some migrants burn their fingerprints, hoping to erase their tracks (Picozza 2017). With this knowledge, it is easy to understand the reluctance or refusal to register in the container camp. According to Katz, the container camp is at its core biopower, stripping the people to mere biological data and bodies stored in containers (Katz, 2017a, p. 4). This, I argue, is an example of logistical spaces that seeks to control the movement of certain people and consequently transforms them to objects, warehoused in containers (Vianelli, 2021).

From the logistical lens, formal camps function as filtering technologies and 'spaces of transit' (de Vries & Guild, 2019). The Bologna Hub in Italy works as an example of a space of transit, which sometimes stops people and other times lets them pass through. Similar to how old military barracks from World War II became refugee camps (Malkki, 1995), the Bologna hub was previously known as the Chiarini military barracks. Before becoming a reception centre for asylum seekers in 2014, the barracks played a significant role in managing 'irregular migrants' as detention and deportation centres (Bacchetta & Martin, 2018, p. 22). The reception/asylum centre practised biopolitical technologies of care and control. People who arrived at the hub registered and left their fingerprints; the hub gave them medicine as a preventive measure against potential diseases, assisting the people while also protecting the nation (Bacchetta & Martin, 2018, p. 25). Even if it was a semi-carceral facility, the

guards and staff could, on some occasions, do an intentionally sloppy job to let people slip out of the camp and the system. They would ‘forget’ to take fingerprints and leave the gates open at night, allowing people, who the guards knew had other destinations than Italy in mind, to pass without taking fingerprints. Furthermore, if the hub did not register their biometrical data, the person was non-existent and was deprived of basic necessities that the detention/reception centre might provide (Bacchetta & Martin, 2018, p. 29). This is what Lori Bacchetta and Diane Martin call, drawing on Zachary Whyte’s concept, myopic technologies of operations. For Whyte, the myopticon operates differently from Foucault’s understanding of Bentham’s panopticon but not with an entirely different purpose. The panopticon focuses on details (Foucault, 1991, p. 139) and an all-encompassing vision of the subject. The myopticon is much less detailed. It disciplines rather through the uncertainty and blurred vision, through the capricious purposes that are just semi-revealed by the authority and which gives it flexibility (Whyte, 2011). In the case of the Bologna Hub, the concept refers to this partial surveillance, which allows flexible mobility management.

The Settlement Act embodies partial vision in the sense that it neglects the local housing conditions when dispersing people. On the one hand, the law is rather strict and coercive, forcing municipalities to provide housing to the ‘newly arrived immigrants’. On the other hand, it is flexible and vague regarding the standard and duration of accommodation. The flexible approach to housing results in substandard, temporary container homes, which I consider to be part of the ‘global infrastructure of camps’ and what René Kreichauf calls a campization of accommodation in European cities (2018). The temporary modular homes materialise the logic of partial vision and the expansion of camp-like accommodations within the nation-state for migrants with residency permits.

The ‘jungle’ and the Bologna Hub are two examples of spatialisation of a temporal management, a logistical management of borders, regulating the numbers of people coming in, slipping people out, or deporting them. In addition, this temporal and logistical management materialises within the borders of the nation-state. It takes form in relation to labour markets and, although it is less explored, it needs to be accounted for as part of the spatialisation of a logistification of migration management, as this dissertation demonstrates. As Bacchetta and Martin point out, the ones who slip out of the system immerse into urban degradation and precarity (2019, p. 28). In this myopic hinterland, they become incorporated into encampment structures that

are impacted by multi-scalar and intersecting power structures, sometimes accelerating, sometimes creating spatiotemporal suspensions (Peano, 2021, p. 213).

The work of Irene Peano has focused on these kinds of assemblages of degradation and exploitation in southern Italy for nearly a decade. These are not spaces of exclusion nor spaces of exception, or not only at least. Instead, they are spaces of differential inclusion where profit is extracted. Peano’s work (see e.g. 2021), located in the industrial zones in the agro-industrial district of Foggia and the Plain of Gioia Tauro, bears witness of oppression and to struggles related to labour, housing and health care rights. Her work describes racist oppression from both the public and the state. The slums that the workers live in due to racial exclusions within the housing market (Peano, 2021, p. 214), adjacent to the sprawling industrial zones, are often bulldozed and destroyed, evacuating and dispersing only to rebuilt the camps again. Hence, the migrant workers are exposed to degradation and violence and deprived of moving on with their lives. Their time is simply stolen (c.f. Khosravi, 2018) as a consequence of constant expulsion and eviction, forced mobility, keeping people continually on the move and on the edges (see Bhattacharyya, 2018). Through the lens of temporal regimes and temporal management, all these different spatial formations, labour camps, asylum centres, reception hubs, hotspots, etc, are a heterogenous form of camps which ‘impinge upon the pace and trajectory of migrant flows – whether in an overt deliberate way (such as in the case of asylum seekers’ reception centres, migrant detention centres, and also prisons), or more indirectly as in the case of labour camps and slums’ (Peano, 2021, p. 220). Following this assertion, we need to explore further how the heterogeneity of space formations connected to the management of movement multiply within the nation-state in connection to labour markets, housing markets and capital.

The logistical fantasy, state effects and bureaucracy

The camps, hubs, transit, receptions centres and, I would add, temporary housing in urban settings, are conceptualised as liminal zones, regulating movement and spaces of transition. These spaces, which I have described above, concentrate violence and friction and oppose the image of seamless, frictionless and smooth flows. Against this backdrop, we see an inherent contradiction in logistics, or at least what seems to be a contradiction. On the one hand, logistics produces the image of efficient operations and seamless flows. The science itself, the production of a vocabulary, the development of systems and algorithmic operations convey a logistical rationality, which at the

same time nurtures a fantasy. On the other hand, warehouses, ports and hubs, transit and reception centres could all be taken as evidence of the proliferation of friction and interruption of flows. Ned Rossiter writes that ‘logistics is always troubled by that which it cannot obtain’ (Rossiter, 2017, p. 107). It is always confronted by interruptions and friction, both from systemic glitches and from people resisting their incorporation into a scheme of rigid mobility. Critical logistics studies describe the contrast between the image of smooth flows and the actual friction on the ground as a logistical fantasy. In regards to migration management, the logistical fantasy (see e.g. Altenried et al., 2017) refers to two interrelated notions. Policies and practices of migration management, in EU and elsewhere, are, according to Altenried and his colleagues, ‘haunted by the fantasy of “just-in-time” and “to-the-point” migration’ (2018, p. 299). First, thus, it refers to the imitation of the logistics sector, borrowing logics and methods of operations from it, which, also, drives the development of management strategies. The fantasy refers to a utopian ideal of conduct. Second, it refers to the discrepancy between the objectives of logistics and the friction on the ground, a false promotion of reality. This means that the use of a logistical vocabulary in policy-work conveys the image of the utopian ideal while grappling with friction and unruly mobility. As I will describe in the following chapter, the Settlement Act, together and as an extension of the logistical asylum and border regime (see Vianelli, 2021), borrows ideas, vocabulary and modes of operations from the logistical sector. It produces a logistical fantasy, both by mimicking logistics, and by engendering an illusion of frictionless flows.

The discrepancy between the image of operability and smoothness and the material friction and disturbances on the ground discloses the unevenness and inconsistency of state operations and policy execution. For instance, the Settlement Act was a policy that intended to accelerate and streamline migration flows. The outcome, however, was uneven and inconsistent and had, as I will show in this dissertation, contradictory results many times. From this point of view, the state cannot be treated as a delineated monolith whose authority and governance plays out evenly and predictable across its geographical territory (Mitchell, 2006, p. 175). Instead, I take this unevenness as evidence of a fragmented state, producing aligned as well as contradictory effects. Studying these state effects requires that we acknowledge the importance of different forms of state power and that we avoid subordinating symbolic and ideational power to legal or institutional power. This means that, for instance, the logistical rationality influencing policy will have implications for how state effects take form. Accordingly, state power consists of ‘states of

minds’ and governmentalities, which can be analysed as they unfold in everyday situated practices. Therefore, conceptualising the state as a multitude of effects, not seldom contradictory, rather than a monolith, is also to acknowledge the intimate relationship between the state and the social (Gill, 2010, p. 638). The state is produced and reproduced socially, discursively and ideationally through social interactions and bureaucratic practices in everyday settings. In short, following Michel Foucault, the state is nothing more than ‘the mobile effect of a regime of multiple governmentalities’ (2008, p. 77).

Thus, in line with the approach of the fragmented, multi-layered state, we need to be attentive to where state effects produce the frontiers between those included and excluded. Here, as mentioned many times, I concur with approaches following the methodological de-nationalism (see e.g., Anderson, 2019; van Baar, 2017), but certainly also the logistification of migration, that we need to discern borderisation practices not solely as territorial lines between nation-states but practices that emerge within the nation-state. Anthropologists and scholars from adjacent disciplines have, in this regard, turned to bureaucratic work and encounters with authorities on the ground to make these mobile internal borders visible, identifying bureaucracy as a seminal site of analysis. Accordingly, Jukka Könönen argues that immigration and border-crossing is fundamentally a bureaucratic process, which continues inside the nation space (Könönen, 2018, p. 143). The internal frontier has been examined in, for instance, studies about the impenetrability of bureaucratic paperwork that asylum seekers are exposed to – signing papers, testifying accounts with the help of interpreters and navigating regulations and laws (Borrelli & Andreetta, 2019; Coutin, 2003; Tuckett, 2018). Drawing heavily on the anthropology of the state, work on bureaucracies and migration identifies street-level bureaucracy (Lipsky, 2010) as critical sites where state effects crystallise, where negotiations between various actors guide us towards the interpenetration between the society and the state and to the state’s frontiers. Similarly, the encounters between municipal officials and the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ make the internal frontier of the welfare state visible. In my work, I have identified these encounters as sites where ‘policy acquires a seemingly tangible existence and legitimacy’ (Shore & Wright, 1997, p. 5). Moreover, as anthropologists have shown, these bureaucratic encounters tend to produce side effects (Ferguson, 1994) and by-products (Holm Vohnsen, 2017), which extend and multiply into unknown areas. Exploring these sites, and connecting them to the material and spatial production of temporal governing, provides additional insights into how the logistification of migrant settlement unfolds and materialises.

The logistical fantasy and practices of deferral

As already extensively implied, the logistical lens offers a perspective on the ideational influences on migration management. Moreover, it also brings attention to the friction and inconsistencies in the ensuing managerial implementation itself. In this dissertation, I will describe the work done to smoothen out and bridge the discrepancy between the imagined result of incorporating logistical methods and the friction on the ground, a sort of maintenance of the logistical fantasy. This work refers to various forms of strategies emerging as a response to the acceleration of settlement, such as stabilising a professional administrative structure at the municipal level, constructing an infrastructure of temporary homes and developing bureaucratic practices. It is in this work that acts of deferral can be detected. As explained by Jennifer Bagelman, the critical scholarly work on deportation, detainment and dispersal has paid relatively little attention to processes of deferral within migration management and the asylum procedure (Bagelman, 2015, pp. 6–7). Even if the practices of deferral are hidden and obscure, they are akin to the more obvious and violent forms of migration management such as detention and deportation. This dissertation brings these practices to the centre of attention. Hence, while the logistification of migration management serves as a comprehensive conceptualisation of the Settlement Act, the practices of deferral are products of the work done to manage inconsistencies and maintain the logistical fantasy. In the remainder of this section, I connect the theoretical conceptualisation with the empirical domains articulated in the research aim.

The first empirical domain focuses on what I refer to as calculations of dispersal on the state level, mainly through an analysis of the operationalisation of the Settlement Act. The law is primarily a strategy that centres around acceleration and the temporal management of the circulation of people, which relies on expert forms of knowledge (Bear, 2016) stemming from logistics. The techniques used are coercive dispersal, statistics and calculations. These techniques materialise and are operationalised through the calculation device called the ‘dispersal model’. This device is more than a technique for managing movement. It also conveys a form of legitimacy through its calculative rationality (see e.g. Totaro & Ninno, 2014). In Chapter 5, I explore the relationship between techniques and expert knowledge used to accelerate the transfer of people from asylum centres to municipal housing. The technological idealism encapsulated in the calculative device obfuscates the housing shortage, ultimately deferring the housing issue down the administrative chain.

The second empirical domain focuses on the re-organisation of municipal administrations, the construction of temporary housing and the experience of living in them. The temporary modular houses are, to a large degree, materialisations of the deferred logistical bottleneck pushed down the administrative chain. They are also extensions of the infrastructure of camps (see e.g. Fontanari, 2015; Katz, 2017b; Peano, 2021) and a technique for managing migrants’ mobility, eliciting thresholds within the nation-state. Moreover, they embody features and characteristics of logistical space and warehousing. By focusing on the municipal level, Chapter 6 examines the relationship between bureaucratic knowledge production, deferral strategies and the materialisation of threshold spaces. Chapter 7 demonstrates how these re-organisations and new threshold places result in the deferral of life itself. Central to this level of analysis and these two chapters is the connection between the municipal organisation and the types of liminal unhomely spaces that the implementation of the Settlement Act elicits.

The third empirical domain emphasises the professional meetings between the street-level bureaucrats and the ‘newly arrived immigrants’, a form of housing counselling that developed in various municipalities in Stockholm at the time of the implementation of the Settlement Act. The acceleration of transfers on the state level gave rise to temporary solutions and bureaucratic routines encouraging the dwellers of the temporary homes to move to other parts of Sweden where housing is available. In tandem with the re-organisation of municipal administration and temporary housing infrastructure, these bureaucratic practices ultimately defer the problem to the ‘newly arrived immigrants’. In Chapter 8 I will analyse these practices based on bureaucracy’s affective and emotional potentiality and disciplinary side-effects (e.g. Hull, 2012; Gupta, 2012; Ferguson, 1994; Navaro-Yashin, 2007). In this chapter, I draw attention to the affective sides of implementing policy and the bureaucratic work of patching the glitches resulting from a logistification of settlement management.

Although the last three paragraphs direct attention towards the relationship between the implementation of the Settlement Act and deferral while alluding to the theoretical literature presented in the chapter, a more detailed and analytical account of the actual practices remains still empirically unexplored. From the introduction and parts of this theoretical chapter, we know that the acts of deferral emerge as a way of circumventing the housing shortages around the country. The following empirical chapters offer a more detailed

account of how the housing shortage is avoided and deferred. But before that, I will offer a context and a historical background to the evolution of the Settlement Act and its relation to Swedish housing policies.

3

Contextualising the Settlement Act

The Settlement Act came about as a remedy to the unfolding administrative crisis after the summer of migration in 2015 (Hess et al., 2017). The new law was enacted in March 2016 and intended to speed up the settlement and integration process. In the previous chapter, I asserted that this acceleration of the settlement process was only possible by circumventing the housing shortage. This postulation suggests that the Settlement Act did not offer a solution to the problem precluding the optimisation of the process. Instead, it evaded the problem and deferred it into the future, forcing the next level of public administration to deal with it. State authorities and agencies had tried various strategies before the Settlement Act to create a well-functioning system dispersing migrants and distributing responsibility across the nation-state's municipal administrations. These policies aimed to create a post-asylum system of quick resettlement from asylum centres, labour incorporation and social integration for those with permission to stay. However, the failure of previous strategies and the organisational circumstances that followed during the fall in 2015 called for a different approach. The Settlement Act is the first policy that tries coercive dispersal and that does not consider the housing situation when calculating the number of 'newly arrived immigrants' to disperse to Sweden's 290 municipalities.

The Settlement Act is the most recent addition to the Swedish dispersal policies. In a strict sense, dispersal policies have, from the outset, been logistical. They have always intended to plan and organise optimal geographic and demographic dispersal of migrant settlement. Through the lens of dispersal policies, migrants have always been an entity to manage and funnel into

integration and labour incorporation. However, these policies have not always been explicitly logistical in the sense that they borrow techniques and calculative devices described and presented in logistical terms. Revisiting the history of the Swedish dispersal policies provides insights into how the logistical rationality has incrementally influenced the dispersal and settlement policies. The historical overview also highlights how evading and deferring the housing market became the last-resort solution to create an efficient and optimal dispersal system. This links the acceleration and the logistification of migrant settlement policies with practices of deferral.

This chapter describes the evolution of dispersal policies and the Settlement Act. It starts with the birth of Swedish dispersal policies and moves on to their different forms of conduct during the decades prior to the Settlement Act. This condensed historical exposé demonstrates how the state constantly grappled with predicting the number of asylum seekers arriving in Sweden, planning for their accommodation, and channelling those with permission to stay to locations with labour or educational options. As housing policies and the housing market always has affected the results of the dispersal and settlement policies, the chapter continues with an overview of Swedish housing policies. After that, the chapter moves on to the Settlement Act and the logistification of dispersal and settlement policies.

I should add that dispersal policies are entangled with immigration and integration policies, which makes the enterprise of historicisation a bit daunting. Not least because immigration and integration policies, in turn, have ties to adjacent policies such as labour market policies. Isolating dispersal and settlement policies entirely from integration and immigration is almost impossible. Despite this challenge, what makes the enterprise of extracting some key features of dispersal worthwhile is that it shows how they have downplayed the role of accommodation and housing for settlement and integration while attention to strategies of labour incorporation has gradually won ground. This development led to the Settlement Act, which, as I will show in this chapter, focuses more on the logistical transferral of people and less on the actual conditions for settlement.

The introduction of dispersal policies in Sweden

Generally speaking, state authorities design dispersal policies to spread out migrants 'equally' in the country of immigration (see e.g. Andersson & Solid, 2003; Darling, 2016; Robinson et al., 2003; Wren, 2003). These policies are demographic migration management tools that operate in tandem with broader

immigration and integration policies. The Swedish dispersal policies started to form in the late 1970s after a political shift in immigration policies (Andersson, 2003, p. 18). What called for this shift was, among other things, the changing labour market and an economic recession. During the post-war era, the Swedish state recruited labour power, mostly from the Nordic countries but also from Italy, Hungary, Austria, West Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Greece (Andersson et al., 1992, p. 7–8; Widgren, 1982, pp. 11–13). The people who came to work moved to cities and towns in the south and central parts of the country with textile, pulp, paper, iron and steel production (Andersson & Solid, 2003, p. 73). It was, thus, the labour market that decided migrants' settlement patterns. From the mid-1960s, Swedish industry, and in particular the private sector, struggled to survive decreasing levels of demand, which in turn led to a decreasing demand for workers. Around this time, as refugees started to come in greater numbers, Swedish immigration policies were geared towards a refugee regime. Since the people who increasingly arrived in Sweden now came for refuge and not primarily to work, the refugee immigration regime had to develop strategies to steer people to locations where they could live in proper homes and find jobs quickly, dispersing them and resettling them.

Although dispersal policies treat migrants as a foreign entity to be managed and dispersed in a rather instrumental manner, it also was the idea of creating conditions for equitable welfare, housing and labour integration that initiated the policies. The housing condition, for instance, was discussed already in 1968 in a government bill highlighting segregation and substandard housing conditions among migrant workers (Andersson & Solid, 2003, pp. 72–73). During this formative era, between the 1960s and 1970s, the state formulated the fundamental features of Swedish integration policies, influenced by universal egalitarianism. In 1968, the state officially declared that 'immigrants' should have the same access to the universal welfare system as the rest of the population (Borevi, 2014, pp. 710–711). Reforms introduced during this era built on ideas about an equitable welfare system, a liberal universalist conceptualisation of citizenship and an inclusive multicultural conception of the nation (Schierup & Ålund, 2011, p. 47). However, a precondition, the Swedish political scientist Karin Borevi states, was that immigration was carefully regulated in relation to the capacity to provide people with jobs, housing, social care and education. The people who came were expected to take jobs and become self-sufficient as soon as possible (Borevi, 2014, p. 711). From this viewpoint, dispersal policies had a clear

connection to social and labour integration and welfare policies. Against this backdrop, the refugees' settlement patterns soon became a political concern.

Many refugees moved to a few districts in the metropolitan regions near the point of arrival. They settled down in overcrowded housing conditions, further accentuating the segregation from the era of labour immigration. According to a police register, 48 per cent of the refugees had, by 1981, settled down in and around Stockholm (Andersson & Solid, 2003, p. 73). Among this group, the unemployment rates increased, not so much that it affected the overall Swedish economy but still to an extent that it attracted political attention (Andersson & Solid, 2003, p. 74). The political concern regarded the correlation between segregation, substandard housing conditions and decreasing employment rates among this population. Hence, the drivers behind the first dispersal policy were equal access to welfare, such as housing, an even distribution of responsibility for reception, introduction, and, of course, increasing employment rates. In 1982, the government-appointed Commission on Immigrant Policy presented a government report (SOU 1982:94, 1982)⁸ that brought attention to the uneven distribution of responsibility concerning reception and integration among Swedish municipalities, which led to the first dispersal policy in 1985 (Andersson & Solid, 2003, pp. 74–75). The introduction of dispersal policies aimed to improve the conditions for refugees to settle down, integrate and find a job. Also, by spreading both asylum seekers and those who recently had obtained permission to stay more 'equally' throughout the country, housing and social welfare resources would come to better use.

Roger Andersson divides dispersal policies into a pre-dispersal era, an active dispersal era and a less effective dispersal era (what I refer to as a liberal settlement strategy). To this historicisation, I add a period that I call a labour-market-oriented dispersal era. Perhaps a more adequate name would be a neoliberal dispersal era since all dispersal policies ultimately centred around labour market incorporation. Nevertheless, by calling it a labour-market-oriented strategy, I want to emphasise the shift from dispersal policies focusing on housing, accommodation and labour integration together, to dispersal policies focusing increasingly on labour incorporation – matching people with labour markets – and only then, housing accessibility. Hence, seeing housing as a right and part of the welfare system, this development reflects a movement from restricted immigration policies and equal access to welfare to strict immigration policies and uneven access to welfare. As I will demonstrate, the Settlement Act pronounced this trend even more.

⁸ SOU refers to *statens offentliga utredningar* (government official reports).

From active to liberal, to market-oriented dispersal strategies

As already mentioned, the dispersal policies started to form by the end of the labour immigration era. Yet, the state introduced the first dispersal policy as late as 1985. The so-called 'local reception' strategy, the first dispersal policy, intended to steer refugees away from the metropolitan areas where they had settled down in overcrowded suboptimal housing conditions to other parts of the country to distribute the responsibility for reception and introduction broadly across the nation, while also directing them to locations where they could find jobs. The Working Group with Responsibility for Refugees, appointed by the government, suggested a re-organisation of state agencies and administrative responsibility whereby *Statens invandrarverk* (SIV) would be responsible for asylum seekers' accommodation while municipalities would locally provide homes to the ones with a residency permit. SIV, a predecessor to the SMA, would negotiate placements with the municipalities. SIV estimated that they needed placement for around 5 000 in 1985 and invited 60 municipalities for negotiations, most of them middle-sized cities with good education and labour opportunities located in south-central parts of the country. However, already during the negotiations in 1984, a year before the new strategy entered into effect, a sudden surge of asylum seekers forced SIV to begin another round of negotiations with an additional 30 municipalities. Soon, SIV had to abandon the objective of assigning refugees to locations with labour opportunities, focusing solely on accommodation (Andersson & Solid, 2003, p. 76). The number of asylum seekers kept increasing from the mid-1980s and onward. SIV continued negotiating placements while asylum accommodation centres proliferated around the country. In 1987, SIV appealed to all Swedish municipalities in solidarity to help out with accommodation and housing.

The local strategy, or the 'Sweden-wide' strategy, as it known today, was criticised already from the get-go. The main point of critique was that the strategy abandoned the labour market criteria already during its first year. When the number of asylum seekers rose, SIV started to negotiate placement without considering the local labour markets. Thus, people started to settle down in areas where they were unlikely to find jobs. Furthermore, critics argued that dispersing refugees to municipalities without consulting the refugees first was not morally tenable (Andersson, 2003, p. 24). Another critical point was that the refugees soon left the middle-sized and smaller towns and moved to the larger cities (SOU 2003:75, p. 50; Andersson, 2003, p. 27). According to Andersson and Solid, the so-called 'secondary migration' was

evidence of the state's inability to monitor settlement patterns (2003, p. 81). As a result, the government and the parliament agreed on a new and more liberal settlement policy replacing the active dispersal policy. The reform did not target labour incorporation but aimed instead at reducing costs resulting from the proliferation of asylum centres.

The Act on the reception of asylum seekers et al. (SFS 1994:137)⁹ was enacted in July 1994 (Andersson & Solid, 2003, p. 81; SOU 2003:75, 2003, p. 201). In the third section, the new law stipulated that asylum seekers were free to find accommodation independently and still collect their state benefits. In daily parlance, we hear about the law referred to as the *Ebo law* (*lagen om eget boende* = the law on independent accommodation). The reform had unexpected outcomes. Instead of 10 per cent, as estimated by the working group preparing the law, 50 per cent of the asylum seekers stayed in homes they had managed to find predominantly in metropolitan areas. Municipalities in those areas claimed that the law accentuated previous problems of overcrowding, substandard housing and segregation, which, in turn, negatively affected labour integration. On the other hand, asylum seekers could avoid long periods of waiting on their pending asylum applications in state facilities. In addition, the state reduced its spending on asylum facilities, which had increased considerably during the period of active dispersal policies (Andersson & Solid, 2003, p. 81).

Overall, neither the 'Sweden-wide' nor the *Ebo law* had succeeded in evening out the dispersal of migrants. The critique of dispersal and settlement policies continued to centre around issues concerning segregation and increasing unemployment rates among the migrant population (Prop. 2009/10:60, 2009, pp. 30–31). The centre-right government that entered into power in 2006 introduced a labour market-oriented approach to tackle these problems, which led to a new law in 2010. The new system matured during a period when more comprehensive ideas of economic incentives to work – incorporating both citizens and 'newly arrived immigrants' into labour – were circulating. These ideas took off during the late 1990s following a neoliberal turn in Sweden, where integration policies merged with new policies for economic growth and social inclusion, targeting the entire population through business-friendly policies (Schierup & Ålund, 2011, p. 49). With the new government in 2006, these policies became increasingly pronounced, pushing the whole population to work through aggressive incentives such as, for instance, higher tariffs for

unemployment insurance and reduced health insurance coverage (Schierup & Ålund, 2011, p. 50).

Following the contemporary political currents, the government bill¹⁰ that proposed the new law argued that integration required a broad approach, departing from a labour market efficiently matching supply and demand (Prop. 2009/10:60, 2009, p. 24). Two decades had gone by since the first dispersal policy. The government now sought to design a new dispersal strategy, incorporated into a broader integration strategy, focusing intensively on the labour market as the primary solution. The government bill stated that many 'newly arrived immigrants', particularly those with refugee status, never entered the labour market (prop. 2009/10:60, 2009, p. 26). Instead, they got stuck in destructive passivity, dependent on social benefits. Therefore, the government bill maintained that combating social exclusion, even as a broad societal issue, had to start with 'better and efficient' labour integration of 'newly arrived immigrants' (Prop. 2009/10:60, 2009, pp. 24–25).

The government bill led to the Act on integration measures for certain newly arrived immigrants (SFS 2010:197),¹¹ issued in February 2010. According to the new law, the SMA would estimate and calculate the need for municipal placements. Then, the Swedish Public Employment Service (SPES) would present a plan proposing how to disperse people throughout the country on the level of counties, based on a calculation prioritising labour market integration. The calculation included housing as a criterion but was in terms of percentages significantly smaller in proportion to labour incorporation, clearly signalling the prioritisation between labour and housing. The first calculation device of dispersal, mathematically and proportionally weighing criteria, evolved in 2012. In it, we see a clear emphasis on labour incorporation. To ensure that the focus on labour incorporation was not compromised, the committee drafting the government bill suggested that counties should have the authority to force municipalities to accept people if the voluntary agreements did not materialise. However, the time was not ripe for a coercive law. According to the government, it was important to safeguard the principle of municipalities' self-determination. Also, it would be too costly for municipalities to have apartments ready for a sudden and unexpected surge of refugees (Prop.

⁹ *Lag (1994:137) om mottagande av asylsökande m.fl.*

¹⁰ *Nyanlända invandrades arbetsmarknadsetablering – egenansvar med professionellt stöd (prop. 2009/10:6)*

¹¹ *Lag (2010:197) om etableringsinsatser för vissa nyanlända invandrare.* The Swedish concept *etablering* does not translate smoothly to English. This term is sometimes used separately from integration but in connection to incorporation into the labour market; and sometimes it is used as an umbrella term encompassing integration, language teaching, vocational training and labour incorporation. The translation here of integration is used for international communication according to the Government Offices.

2009/10:60, pp. 130–131). Furthermore, the government bill proposed that private intermediary actors, such as matching companies and job coaches, would operate locally and directly with the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ through the integration programme, which would create an immediate and efficient connection to the labour market (Prop. 2009/10:60, pp. 70–78).

This condensed historical background shows how dispersal and settlement policies have grappled with ways of steering refugees and ‘newly arrived immigrants’ faster into labour incorporation and away from the largest city regions in Sweden. However, even if these policies always aimed to create conditions for long-term integration and fast labour incorporation, they often ended up being last-resort accommodation and housing solutions. The Act on integration measures for some newly arrived immigrants (SFS 2010:197) took a different approach, influenced by market logics of supply and demand. With the involvement of private actors matching ‘newly arrived immigrants’ with the labour market and the calculations of dispersal, the government sought to create more efficient labour incorporation. To some extent, the Settlement Act embodies a similar logic of operation.

We need to bear in mind that most asylum seekers arriving in Sweden found accommodation on their own and settled down without state assistance. From this point of view, the liberalisation of settlement policies in 1994 had a significant impact on migration and dispersal policies. However, after 2010, the numbers of asylum seekers and people who had recently obtained residency permits still staying in asylum centres increased, while agreements with municipalities materialised less and less due to housing shortages. In response to this, the state formulated the Settlement Act and made it coercive to increase the speed of transfers between asylum centres and municipal reception.

The housing situation in Sweden and in Stockholm – a historical overview

Even if most asylum seekers found accommodation independently, the number of people stuck in asylum centres steadily grew (Ds 2015:33, 2015, p. 5).¹² However, the final straw that paved the way for the Settlement Act was the war in Syria and ongoing turbulence and political upheavals around the globe, displacing people at a greater length and speed than the SMA anticipated. As a result, prolonged waiting periods on pending asylum applications and

proliferating asylum accommodation centres ensued. In addition, the housing shortages in Sweden added to the constrained administrative situation. Recently, scholars in urban studies have called for a nuanced analysis of the so-called refugee crises through the lens of austerity urbanism, arguing that the administrative crisis elicited by the events in 2015 needs to be understood against the development of the housing market (see e.g. Soederberg, 2019). Along these lines, I argue that the enactment of the Settlement Act had direct ties to the Swedish housing market. Hence, before I turn to the logistification of settlement and the practices and logic of deferral, I will take a detour into the history of housing politics in Sweden.

By the time of the enactment of the Settlement Act, the housing shortage was severe in Stockholm, as in most parts of the country. In the meantime, the construction of housing had picked up speed. Between 2015 and 2019, 83 000 apartments were under construction in Stockholm (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2020:10, p. 6). However, the groups most affected by the housing shortage, such as young people, students, and ‘newly arrived immigrants’, were not benefiting from the rapid construction pace. Instead, real estate developers targeted more affluent groups, which affected the availability of affordable housing minimally (see e.g. Polanska & Richard, 2018). In the case of London, the geographer Danny Dorling called this process a mismatch between ‘people and rooms’ (2015, 198). Similarly, in Stockholm, the Swedish urban geographer Carina Listerborn argues that it is debatable whether the so-called ‘housing crisis’ is an issue of housing shortage or housing inequality, reflecting a polarisation in society at large (2018).

A central thesis often heard in the political debate concerning housing is that the construction of more expensive dwellings, often times, luxury apartments, will lead to upward chain mobility. Advocates of more market/liberal- oriented housing agendas especially argue that people who move to more expensive apartments will leave homes vacant (Lind et al., 2016). Research shows, however, that the so-called residential chains have little significance for, for instance, students, young people and ‘newly arrived immigrants’ (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2020b; Rasmusson et al., 2018). Although scientific evidence is limited, what often seems to happen is that economically prosperous people from other regions move to these vacant apartments. The situation for the groups in need of housing, however, does not improve (Rasmussen et al., 2018). Hence, even if Stockholm’s inhabitants have witnessed a construction boom, many of them do not have the resources to acquire these apartments (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm 2020b, p. 6).

¹² Ds refers to *departementsserie* (Ministry Publication Series).

The market-oriented approach has a firm grip over housing policies in Sweden. In line with more general neoliberal trends, municipalities in Sweden have privatised the public housing stock for decades. Going back to just a few moments in the history of housing policies offers some insights and parallels to the history of dispersal policies and the introduction of the Settlement Act.

Up to the 1990s, a Social Democratic ideology characterised Swedish housing policies. The starting point was a government report called *Bostadssociala utredning* from 1945. A committee consisting of radical economists, architects and builders worked on the government report for more than ten years. One of the most significant proposals in the report was the idea of public housing as a common good and accessible for all, what became known as *allmännyttan* (the public good). The committee advocated public housing accessible for all instead of social housing or housing earmarked for specific groups in society, arguing that this would create housing with the character of ‘institution and slum’ (Grander, 2018, p. 86). However, the state’s large-scale investments in public housing did not cover the needs of the growing population. As a response, the Swedish state decided to construct 1 million homes between 1966 and 1975 in the metropolitan areas and smaller towns with emerging industries in a political programme called *Miljonprogrammet* (Grander, 2018, p. 90). In the middle of the construction programme, during the previously mentioned recession, the demand for housing dropped. Despite declining demand for housing, many municipalities continued building to prevent further unemployment, which resulted in a lot of vacant apartments (Boverket, 2008, p. 13; Grander, 2018, p. 91). This coincided with the end of the labour immigration regime. As a result, low-income households, especially those of refugees who had arrived in increasing numbers during this period, moved into the metropolitan areas and neighbourhoods with housing vacancies (Grander, 2018, p. 91). Hence, this is an example of how a perspective on housing policies can offer an additional explanation to settlement patterns resulting from multifarious processes on different scales.

The 1990s marked a paradigm shift in Swedish housing policies. After the elections in 1991, the new conservative government abolished the housing department, responsible for housing policies on the state level since 1974. This marked the beginning of a new market-oriented era. Housing was now decentralised. The government sought to reform housing provision policies by transferring the financial risk of construction from the state to the market actors at the municipal level. Now, municipal housing companies would compete

with private actors on equal terms. Housing, the new government maintained, was no different from any other commodity (Hedin et al., 2012, p. 444). With the financial risk moved from the state to municipalities, municipal housing companies started to demolish vacant apartments, remnants from the earlier era of over-construction, which were too costly to maintain. Moreover, the state revoked the reform that had allowed municipalities to force landlords to put vacant apartments in the municipal housing queue. In addition, municipalities were no longer allowed to suggest suitable tenants to housing companies, nor could the municipal social services reserve apartments to sublet them to people excluded from the housing market (Grander, 2018, p. 99).

The marketisation of housing did not end there. The Social Democrats came back to power in 1994 but kept the housing policies introduced by the previous government largely intact. Instead, marketisation gained even more ground with the following centre-liberal government between 2006 and 2014. In the budget proposition from 2008, the right-centrist-liberal government rewrote the aims of the housing policies. The goals were now ‘long-term well-functioning housing markets where consumer demands meet a supply of housing which corresponds to the needs’ (translation by Hedin et al., 2012, p. 458). The goals of equality, social responsibility, high standards, reasonable costs and good living conditions disappeared (Hedin et al., 2012, p. 458). This was the same government that opened up for private actors in the integration programme in 2010. Additionally, the government introduced a strategy that favoured homeownership through, for instance, a new form of tenure for homeownership in multifamily housing (Hedin et al., 2012, p. 458). It was now possible to buy and transform a rental apartment or a cooperatively owned apartment into this new form of tenure. Ever since, large parts of public housing stock, especially in prime locations, have been sold to private owners (Hedin et al., 2012, p. 459).

Universal housing, which characterised Swedish housing policies until 1991, shifted to a market-oriented and privatised housing market, moving increasingly towards a financialised market with global venture capitalist conglomerates entering the market (Grander, 2018). These shifts in policies have tightened the accessibility to affordable housing; they have inflated housing prices and increased rents in the shrinking rental housing stock. This was the reality the municipalities faced when the government introduced the Settlement Act in 2015.

The logistification of dispersal and settlement policies – the Settlement Act

Housing policies and migration management are rooted in separate yet intersecting political domains with different but also related historical trajectories. Housing conditions and availability have impacted dispersal and settlement policies significantly. The proliferation of asylum centres and the prolongation of waiting after the asylum process due to housing shortages is perhaps the most obvious example of these intersections. In 2015, the Ministry of Employment proposed a solution to the problem of prolonged waiting and the proliferation of asylum centres. It presented a reform where the SMA would have the authority to assign and transfer people to municipalities without municipal consent (Ds 2015:33, 2015, p. 5).

As seen above, coercive dispersal was discussed and dismissed in 2009. Even though the housing shortage had worsened, a coercive dispersal policy seemed to be the solution forward for the state in 2015. The so-called ‘refugee crisis’ in 2015 incentivised this U-turn to a large extent. Subsequently, the Act on the settlement of newly arrived immigrants (SFS 2016:38), or in short, ‘the Settlement Act’, passed parliament in January 2016 and was enacted in March the same year. The new law altered the dispersal organisation from 2010. The SMA would be primarily responsible for dispersing ‘newly arrived immigrants’, estimating the number of required placements in each county through a calculative device called the dispersal model. A significant change from the dispersal calculation used in 2012, briefly mentioned above, was that the state removed the variable concerning the local housing conditions. Instead of four variables, the dispersal model consisted now of three: 1) the population in the municipality, 2) the labour market in the municipality, and 3) the previous reception of asylum seekers, refugees and unaccompanied minors in the municipality. The state created a presumably equal dispersal of ‘newly arrived immigrants’ through these variables. After that, the County Administrative Boards (CAB)¹³ would divide the number at the municipal level. The SMA would present the plan and the number of dispersals to the government, which then took the formal decision. From that point on, municipalities would have to provide housing for all ‘newly arrived immigrants’ transferred from asylum centres.

¹³ There are 21 County Administrative Boards in Sweden. They assist the state with the implementation of national goals, coordinate policies and interests and safeguard the law in every administrative instance. See the Government Offices of Sweden, <https://www.government.se/government-agencies/county-administrative-boards-lansstyrelserna/>. Accessed 2022-08-23.

However, as I described above, from 1991 onwards, municipal administrations had fewer tools to intervene in a privatised housing market. Aware of the situation, the state formulated a law that posed no specific requirements regarding housing. The faculty of law at Stockholm University, one of the referral bodies, brought attention to the risk that many municipalities would offer homes for a limited period, whereby the government responded that the law was intended to prompt municipalities to provide the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ with permanent homes as far as possible and transitional homes while preparing permanent solutions. However, the government bill was explicit on the point that the main objective of the Settlement Act was to contribute to faster labour and societal integration (Prop. 2015/16:54, 2015, p. 18). Whether the municipalities would offer permanent or temporary housing was a secondary objective. The new law marked a clear shift from previous dispersal policies in two aspects. First, the Settlement Act was a coercive dispersal law. Second, the state circumvented the housing shortage by deferring the problem to the municipal administrations. This shift enabled an acceleration of transferal from asylum centres to municipalities and hopefully labour incorporation. The trade-off was that ‘newly arrived immigrants’ would not be guaranteed permanent or liveable long-term housing conditions for settling down. Through this law, the government separated the domains of responsibility. It formulated the settlement process as mainly an operation of transferal. Splitting up and sectioning governing into phases, making them auditable and measurable, represents features that are seen spreading through logistical rationality (Vianelli, 2021, p. 50). Furthermore, the logistics vocabulary in state reports preceding the law accentuated this logistical influence and the drive towards an efficient and optimal settlement process. Here is an example.

In 2014, the Swedish National Audit Office (SNAO) presented an audit report¹⁴ describing the increasing number of asylum seekers and ‘newly arrived immigrants’ stuck in asylum centres. The audit report stated that asylum errands in Sweden had increased by 83 per cent between 2011 and 2013. By the end of 2013, 12 000 people with granted residency permits were still in the reception system, waiting to transfer to the municipalities where they would start their integration programmes. Among these, 9 000 were living in state-financed asylum facilities (Riksrevisionen, 2014, p. 15). Not only did this delay the integration of individuals but it also added large costs to the state (Riksrevisionen, 2014, p. 16). Therefore, the SNAO asserted that the

¹⁴ *Nyanländ i Sverige – Effektiva insatser för snabbt mottagande* (Riksrevisionen 2014)

‘settlement process’ should be more efficient and aim towards reducing costs. According to the report, the ‘inflow’ exceeded the ‘outflow’ from the asylum system and asylum facilities (Riksrevisionen, 2014, p. 16). The ‘settlement process’ was the bridge between outflows and inflows.

The SNAO defined the ‘settlement process’ as the state process assisting ‘newly arrived immigrants’ to settle down in a municipality (Riksrevisionen, 2014, p. 18). It is a bureaucratic term referring to the organisation of transferral from the state reception system for asylum seekers to the municipal reception system for ‘newly arrived immigrants’. The settlement process also delineates a liminal phase after the asylum procedure and before the reception and introduction programme in the care of the municipal administrations. The liminality consists of different steps which take various amount of time. The report stated that in 2012 the total amount of ‘lead-time’ from granted residency permit to settlement was 127 days and 139 in 2013 (Riksrevisionen 2014, p. 53). Commonly, ‘lead-time’ is used in the industrial sector regarding supply chain management. It initially refers to the time it takes to manufacture and distribute an object.¹⁵ In this context, it describes the transfer of ‘newly arrived immigrants’ from the asylum reception system to the municipal integration and labour incorporation programmes. With lead-time, terms and concepts frequently appearing in the audit report to describe the settlement process alluded strongly to the business and industrial sectors. Other examples are the already mentioned inflows, outflows and ‘matching’ entities to one another; they are all akin to logistics vocabulary, alluding to optimality, neutrality, instrumentality and technological objectivity. Influenced by this audit report from 2014, the government announced that they would explore the possibilities to create a ‘long-term sustainable and flexible system for reception and settlement of asylum seekers and newly arrived immigrants’ (my translation, Ds 2015:33, 2015, p. 34), which later resulted in the Settlement Act.

My point is that the logistics terminology illuminates language use and a system of thinking in which sectioning and categorisation are key. The settlement process is separated from the comprehensive asylum reception system and the municipal labour integration programme. Furthermore, the

settlement process is separated from the act of settling down, which might include access to a home and homemaking practices. The process refers instead to the operation of transferral. Thinking of settlement as logistics elicits above all the idea that settlement is merely the management of movement through acceleration. Moreover, by organising the process into phases, the management produces a science of movement that can be measured and assessed. In the case of the settlement process, shortening lead-time becomes a goal in itself. Consequently, and perhaps most importantly, this hides complexity. Even if lead-time is compressed, the settlement process does not end there. For the people concerned, as alluded to in the introduction, it is the actual act of settling down that matters. While lead-time was successfully shortened (see Riksrevisionen 2021), ‘newly arrived immigrants’ found themselves in a new liminal threshold materialised as temporary housing solutions. While logistical logic, in this case, tends to accelerate a process, this is possible only by circumventing obstacles precluding it and by deferring the block down the administrative chain. This acceleration has to be explored through the work done facilitating it on the ground. Following the logistical lens, the transitional housing solutions are liminal zones (Cowen, 2014; Mezzadra, 2018) or in-between spaces, facilitating the acceleration of movement of people from asylum centres to municipal shelters and the match-making process between ‘newly arrived immigrants’ and jobs. These spaces are connected to practices of deferral through calculations of dispersal at the state level and bureaucratic practices forcing migrants to further mobility at the municipal level. In the empirical chapters, I will explore how these practices are enacted.

¹⁵ In the Oxford English dictionary, the concept of ‘lead-time’ is explained as a noun referring to the time taken to produce some manufactured article. In an online Business dictionary, ‘manufacturing lead time’ is explained as ‘the total time required to manufacture an item, including order, preparation time, queue time, set up time, run time, move time, inspection time, and put away time [...]’.

Ethnographic methodology

This dissertation builds on 10 months of fieldwork in Stockholm, Sweden, between July 2018 and April 2019. The empirical material derives from field diary entries from my visits to sites with temporary modular housing and from interviews with the tenants living in the temporary modular homes and the officials coordinating reception, accommodation and settlement on several levels of public management. Furthermore, my field notes stem from participating in conferences with officials, participating in language cafés organised by civil society and from following political mobilisation against evictions.

In the previous chapters, I suggest that the logistification of migrant settlement management required circumventing the housing shortage, deferring the problem which impeded the efficient settlement process. The central research object for this dissertation are the practices engendering this deferral and their relation to the logistification of settlement management. Merely describing my methods and the data I collected, as I do in the first paragraph of this chapter, will not clarify the link between methodology and analysis. Therefore, this chapter describes how the fieldwork I undertook led me to my analytical focus. Since the line between fieldwork, the empirical material and the analytical scope, as is typical in anthropological work, is neither clear nor straight, this chapter aims to describe methods and present empirical material as a practical and analytical trajectory. This way of describing methodology discloses shortcomings and ethical dilemmas arising along the way, which have been pivotal for my analysis. By describing my methodology in a processual manner, I intend to moor my analysis to particular events and, in that way, demystify the trajectory from field site and fieldnotes to analytical scope.

In a similar line of thought, Andrea Ballesterio and Brit Ross Winthereik describe the analytical trajectory of immersing oneself in ethnographic material after fieldwork and laying out a neatly analytical discernment as an alchemical process (Ballesterio & Winthereik, 2021, p. 1). The step between the field and the analytical synthesis is not always as clear as one would hope. Every area or object of research requires different tools, and no empirical material is like another one. Instead, each case has to be discerned differently and always with a portion of experimentation to evoke the unpredictable. Marilyn Strathern describes the moment or the event when a pattern arises as being dazzled (Strathern, 1999). Jane Guyer's epistemology of surprise entails a moment when a potential, not-yet-known theme or topic reveals itself, which she calls, drawing from the author Ben Okri, the 'quickening of the unknown' (Guyer, 2013). I am particularly fond of the description of a semi-existence, something yet to be or even an absence that reveals a more significant pattern. In my work, the analytical pattern draws from an absence and the practices of maintaining this absence in place. Towards the end of this chapter, I will come back to this absence. In line with these ideas, this chapter describes my fieldwork methodology step by step, weaving together access strategies with methods, empirical material, and ethics to demystify the gap between research methodology and analytical focus. I will start with a section describing my field site(s) and the epistemological consideration underpinning the choice of research object.

Temporary housing in Stockholm – the field

Although I conducted fieldwork in several sites, they were all located in Stockholm. I did not, however, limit myself to the city but extended my fieldwork to the city-region Stockholm County. Stockholm is the capital and the largest city in Sweden, with almost one million inhabitants. It pertains to the administrative and geographical region of Stockholm County, which comprises another 25 smaller municipalities around the coast of the Baltic Sea. More than a fifth of the Swedish population lives here.¹⁶

The municipalities have their local political governments and municipal administrations; they vary in size, population, industrial and business sectors, taxes and tax capacity and clearly in many more aspects. Despite the differences and the political, administrative and geographical delineations,

the municipalities are intimately connected through public transport and the shared housing and labour markets. The shared housing and labour markets and the relationship between these markets, on the one hand, and their relationship to the dispersal quotas, on the other hand, make Stockholm a particularly pertinent case to study. According to a report from the Stockholm Chambers of Commerce, during the last ten years, the labour market in Stockholm County has produced 40 per cent of the national economic growth and almost half of the total number of new jobs (Stockholms Handelskammare, 2020, p. 4). The housing market has developed in the opposite direction, with a constantly increasing housing shortage. In 2018, the CAB of Stockholm concluded that all municipalities in the county had housing shortages and that to meet the housing demand, the county needed to construct 20 000 dwellings each year until 2030 (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2018, p. 6). Hence, while Stockholm is the largest labour market in Sweden, it is also here that the housing market is the toughest and most exclusionary.

The size of the population and the labour market are criteria for the number of dispersals in the implementation of the Settlement Act. Municipalities and counties with large populations receive more people from asylum centres. The quota increases in proportion to the labour market's size and capacity to incorporate people, since the primary aim of the Settlement Act is to speed up labour integration. Stockholm ticks both boxes with the largest population in the country and a stable and growing labour market, which means that the county receives a large number of the 'newly arrived immigrants'. In fact, the state assigned more than a third of the 'newly arrived immigrants' living in asylum centres to Stockholm between 2016 and 2019.¹⁷

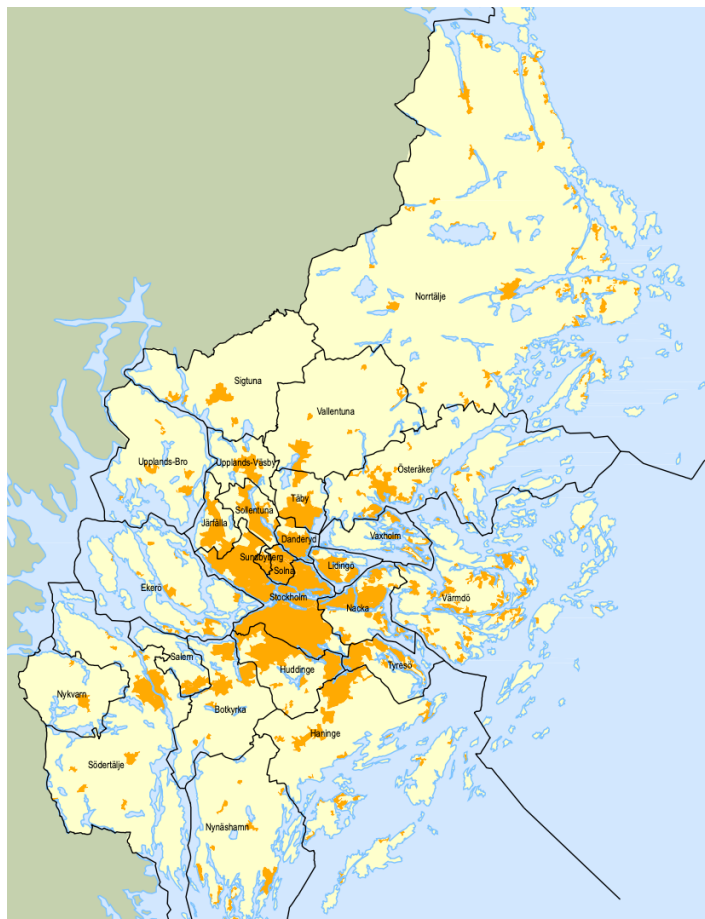
My description of Stockholm merely highlights its most striking particularities, which had implications for how the Settlement Act unfolded here. From the description, we see that the case of Stockholm is not generalisable to how the Settlement Act played out, although similar tendencies can be discerned in other Swedish cities. Stockholm stands out with its pronounced housing shortages, population size and large labour market. However, as briefly mentioned in the introduction chapter, this dissertation does not aim to assess the consequences of the enactment of the Settlement Act. Instead, the choice of Stockholm reflects my intention to explore intersections between migration and settlement management and housing and labour market policies. Due to Stockholm's particularities, which resulted in an imbalance between dispersal

¹⁶ According to Statistics Sweden (SCB), 2 415 139 out of 10 452 326 live here. See <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/statistik-efter-amne/befolkning/befolkningens-sammansattning/befolkningsstatistik/pong/tabell-och-diagram/helarsstatistik-kommun-lan-och-rikt/folkmand-i-rikt-lan-och-kommuner-31-december-2021-och-befolkningsforandringar-2021/>. Accessed 2022-08-22.

¹⁷ See SFS (2016:874), SFS (2017:27); SFS (2017:913). <https://rkrattsbaser.gov.se/sfsr?bet=2016:40>. Accessed 2022-08-22.

numbers and housing shortages, the municipalities in the county, to a much more significant extent than the rest of the country, turned to temporary housing as the primary solution. The emerging barracks and container homes ignited contestations and debates about refugee camps in the middle of the city, putting housing policies on the political agenda, which delineated a field of enquiry related to migrant settlement management and housing policies.

Figure 1. Map of Stockholm County and its pertaining 26 municipalities (CAB of Stockholm). In alphabetic order: Botkyrka, Danderyd, Ekerö, Haninge, Huddinge, Järfälla, Lidingö, Nacka, Norrtälje, Nykvarn, Nynäshamn, Salem, Sigtuna, Sollentuna, Solna, Stockholm, Sundbyberg, Södertälje, Täby, Tyresö, Upplands-Bro, Upplands-Väsby, Vallentuna, Vaxholm, Värmdö and Österåker



My epistemological focus and interest in these intersections stem from recent calls to de-migranticize migration research (Anderson, 2019; Dahinden, 2016). According to Bridget Anderson, states' perception of migration or migrants as a 'problem' does not originate in the phenomenon of people crossing borders. People cross territorial borders all the time. In this view, cross-border mobility is not a marker of natural difference but rather a line of administration. Neither are state borders natural markers of stable and homogenous societies (Anderson, 2019, p. 3). Instead, states' conceptualisation of migration arises from the question of whose mobility is portrayed and constructed as a problem. Following, among others, Andreas Wimmer's and Nina Glick Schiller's critique of methodological nationalism within the social sciences (Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002), Anderson prompts scholars within migration research to find new ways of eradicating state-centric descriptions of differences between migrants and citizens as natural categories. Instead, we should explore the lines of exclusion and borderisation drawn across groups defined as citizens and migrants to de-migranticize migration studies. This trend is also present in urban and housing studies. For instance, Suzanne Soederberg has drawn attention to austerity urbanisms and the growing levels of internal displacement, evictions and homelessness that confronted 'newly arrived refugees' on their arrival in Berlin in 2015 (Soederberg, 2019). Huub van Baar has mobilised the concept of 'evictability', in a nod to Nicholas De Genova's and Nathalie Peutz's concept 'deportability', to delineate a space of intra-state removal (van Baar, 2017).

These migration and urban research trends have influenced my epistemological focus on temporary modular housing. Departing from these homes brings attention to the intersections of migrant management and global economic entanglements, with the emerging of multinational housing companies taking advantage of the marketisation of housing. It discloses a reality of hypermobility and insecurity that large parts of the population experience today, in which evictions and evictability are a reality beyond the divide between migrant/citizen. Moreover, the barracks, container homes, and modular houses in Stockholm were not an isolated phenomenon of migrant settlement management. Germany, particularly Berlin, has a similar development with an increasing financialised housing market and proliferation of temporary container and modular homes (Cachola et al., 2017; Sowa, 2020). In addition, so-called container villages have popped up in Luxemburg (Vianelli, 2021). Hence, echoing what I have stated in the introduction, the enterprise of studying temporary modular housing intended to bring the scope of migration out of a traditional migration and integration research agenda and

into a critical research project wherein migration management and the re-articulations of global capitalism bring to light conflicts and struggle internal to nation-states.

The research scope on the intersections of migrant settlement management and housing called for a multi-scalar ethnographic approach, or what I call, drawing on Ruben Andersson (2014), an extended field site approach, focusing on different perspectives concerning partly the Settlement Act and partly the temporary housing modules. As a trained anthropologist, I aimed to make room for unanticipated links between various scales of analysis. Therefore, I headed off first towards the areas with temporary modular housing to see what might come out of my visits. In the next section, I will describe how I started my fieldwork in one of these areas and the challenges that arose. The following section aims to describe one of my field sites and the environment in which parts of my fieldwork took place. Also, it intends to bring attention to the ethical challenges that, in addition to my epistemological lens and choice of geographical location, shaped the course of my work.

Entering the field

I started my fieldwork in July 2018 during the Swedish summer holiday. Since I knew that it would be challenging to contact officials this month, I had already conducted a couple of interviews to find the geographical locations of some of the areas with temporary modular housing. Starting in July was nonetheless a strategic choice. I figured that the chances of hanging out and talking to people in the facility would be better when they were not committed to full-time vocational training and language classes. I began hanging out in one of the buildings that had been inaugurated at the end of June 2018. The modular construction, set up on a parking lot next to a park, was a three-story building with an elevator and a stairwell dividing the building into two compartments.

On the first day, I sat by the entrance observing the new tenants carrying luggage and furniture up the ramp to the elevator and the stairwell. I offered them help, but they just smiled quizzically at me, politely answering that they managed okay. Communication was rudimentary. Gestures and facial expressions had to bridge the language gaps between us. I felt stupid and hesitant. For the next few days, I sat on the stairs by the entrance, waiting while I observed the pedestrians and cyclists pass by. They slowed down to take a good look at the new building before picking up speed again. The municipal administration had erected the facility almost overnight, a construction that

stood out from the rest of the built environment. A man came by with a coffee table, left a note on it and shouted out as he walked away that it was up for grabs. Soon, the tenants started to get use to me, nodding and saying hi whenever they passed me. I conversed with some of the dwellers, and I explained my intentions. However, the step from small talk to hanging out seemed huge at the time. I was going to give it another week and then try something else. Lurking around seemed rather imposing and ethically questionable to me. The manager at the facility told me that the establishment had received some anonymous threats, which added to my feeling of discomfort at being a stranger hanging around.

The first month of fieldwork was planned as a pilot to evaluate access strategies. Since I did not intend to focus on a particular nationality or linguistic and ethnic group but rather to interact with the tenants as tenants, I chose not to work with an interpreter. Obviously, this choice exposed other limitations. As many of the tenants I greeted during the first couple of days spoke Arabic, I asked a friend of mine to prepare a short text in Arabic to explain why I was hanging out at the premises, with an additional question asking whether they would like to participate in an interview. I disseminated the short text to the tenants. Those who understood Arabic looked at it, merely acknowledging my question while carrying on with their business. Together with Tigrinya, Dari and Farsi, Arabic was the most common language among the tenants. Additionally, I picked up an old Arabic textbook I found at home to practice some greetings in Arabic while I waited for something to happen. The short text about my research had, unfortunately, limited impact on my access to the field. Nobody seemed particularly interested in my research nor wanted to participate in an interview. However, in contrast, sitting by the stairs with the Arabic textbook attracted attention. People started to approach me and wanted to look at the book. Soon, I began to talk to Khaled and his brother, Wadi, who spoke some Swedish. We decided on an exchange: they would teach me Arabic and I would serve as a Swedish conversation partner. Khaled and Wadi lived in a modular apartment with their parents. The kitchen was impeccably clean and smelled strongly of chlorine. The apartment was divided into two compartments – a kitchen and a bedroom where they all slept. Four mattresses laid on the floor in front of a television. Khaled remarked that his older brother spent too much time in front of the television playing computer games online and did not care about learning Swedish. Wadi did not take much notice of his brother's stinging remark, it seemed. Online gaming was a way of keeping in contact with his friends who now were dispersed in different parts of the world. I had the impression that Khaled tackled the situation better than his older

brother. Wadi explained that he had recently been married but was forced to leave Syria, leaving behind a life with his wife that was about to begin. I imagined that indulging in online gaming for hours was a way of escaping the absurdity of forced displacement and his deferred life. I met Khaled and Wadi in the middle of the warmest summer ever recorded in Sweden, and as the apartment got very hot, we often took off to the park to smoke chicha in the shade.

For about two weeks in July, I visited Khaled and Wadi regularly. Towards the last week in July, we met less and less frequently. Soon, Khaled and Wadi stopped replying to my messages. Sometimes, against my gut feeling, I just showed up to see if they wanted to meet up, hang out or just talk for a bit, but it was time to read the writing on the wall. They were busy and could not just hang out. Once, when we were sitting at their kitchen table studying the Arabic alphabet, the brothers' father got tired of me and asked, 'Why don't you go to school to learn Arabic?' I got the feeling that I had overstayed my welcome. At this point, I thought that continuing to pay spontaneous visits would be intrusive and ethically problematic. Instead, I continued with my initial task of mapping areas while I texted Khaled from time to time but without any response.

After this encounter, I changed my methodological strategy, focusing instead on shorter meetings and interviews. Most of the relationships I established with tenants in temporary housing were connected to and delineated by specific activities. An example is my meetings with a construction worker from Afghanistan and a father of five, whom I met at a language café that took place every Thursday evening on the outskirts of the City of Stockholm. He was in the process of alphabetisation and had just started learning how to read. Since almost all information about, for instance, parental leave or selecting a kindergarten or school for his kids was online, he often needed assistance with reading the information. Before or after the language café, I passed by his home. We had tea brewed with sweet milk and a selection of nuts, cookies and crackers as we sat with his paperwork. These were the only times we met with each other. During the rest of the week, he and his wife were busy with school and family.

Moreover, interruptions in the lives of my interlocutors further fragmented that part of the fieldwork that focused on the tenants. The people with whom I had established contact often had to leave Stockholm for an apartment somewhere far away. Even if I had planned to visit some of them, keeping in touch after

moving became increasingly difficult for them. It became evident that closeness and the urgency of matters such as help with paperwork and homework facilitated and gave meaning to our meetings. The episode with Khaled and Wadi and the short encounters with my interlocutors describes the characteristics of the fieldwork I undertook. Moreover, the fragmentation due to people's further mobility also reflects on the conditions of arrival for the 'newly arrived immigrants' living in the temporary modular housing.

Following the logistification of settlement management

In line with what Hugh Gusterson calls a polymorphous engagement, I proceeded by focusing on several shorter interactions in dispersed sites and collected data from disparate sources of various kinds (1997, p. 116). As time went by, I identified several access strategies, which also informed my methods of collecting data. I designed these access strategies not only to meet the challenges I encountered in the field but, as mentioned previously, as a strategy of broadening the epistemological focus. This epistemological focus attended to the intersections between migrant settlement management and housing to shift attention away from the migrants to the construction of migration as an economic 'burden' (Robinson et al., 2003) and the management of the settlement process which seeks to solve the problem. The methodology departed from the temporary modular housing but extended to accounts that formulate experiences and sensations connected to the implementation of the Settlement Act. Thus, empirically, in correspondence with George Marcus's multi-sited ethnographic approach (Marcus, 1995), I follow the Settlement Act. Against the background of the two previous chapters, a more theoretical description would be that I follow the logistification of migrant settlement management and how it plays out when it hits the ground. This complicates a bit the description of my approach as multi-sited.

Exploring the logistification of migrant settlement management is similar to exploring neoliberalism or capitalism. This means that the logistification of migration management, as discussed in the theoretical chapter, lacks a place. Alternatively, as in the case of capitalism, it permeates many places. Gregory Feldman proposes a nonlocal ethnography for his research on migration policy, which he describes as an amorphous object that could be anywhere or nowhere (Feldman, 2012, p. 18). Similar to how Feldman describes his approach, my fieldwork also centred around collecting evidence from disparate sources – from e-mail correspondence, government reports and documents, telephone calls, video clips, etc. – which I organised around the epistemological object

(Feldman, 2012, p. 19) and not a particular field. However, although this methodology resembles my work, the logistification of migration did produce observable places. Therefore, following Ruben Andersson, I describe my field as an extended field site – one site, many locales. Andersson's extended field site focuses on 'agonistic social interfaces', bringing together conflicting perspectives and how they replicate across several diverse locales (2014, p. 284). Similarly, I argue, the logistification of settlement produced observable places and practices that encapsulated agonistic and conflicting relationships and events. Following these has characterised my fieldwork method.

Since, as suggested in the account above, the methods and the access strategies were interwoven, I will describe my methods and access strategies together, one method opening up the next area of research, which created a chain of methodological events.

First, I conducted semi-structured interviews with officials at the state, county and municipal levels involved in the reception and settlement. These kinds of interviews were carried out continually during my fieldwork, and they primarily generated information about state policy regarding dispersal and settlement strategies, the relationship between state and municipal governance, the municipal settlement organisation, the municipal administrations' collaboration with housing companies, landlords and the civil society, and much more. However, amid this seemingly dry data, these officials expressed their personal opinions and shared their individual experiences, which opened up for ethnographic interpretations beyond the implementation of policy. Moreover, my meetings with officials led to further access to the field. For example, I joined cross-level meetings between officials from various municipalities in the county and attended conferences and seminars. Also, I received the addresses of the temporary modular housing from officials so I could start mapping the areas in the county.

Second, I visited the areas with temporary modular housing and walked around observing the construction's surroundings and environment. Anthropological work has historically paid attention to the role of buildings and houses in people's lives. Scholars have focused on the symbolic, discursive, social, and, more recently, material aspects of the relationship between people and their built environments (see e.g., Bourdieu, 1990; Buchli, 2013; Carsten & Hugh-Jones, 1995; Miller, 2009). The built environment dimension also renders broader understandings of society as buildings and architecture are not only functional but reflect societal ideas, ideals and ideologies (see e.g. Harris,

2017; Scott-Smith, 2020). Thus, spatial and material perspectives enrich our ethnographies of people and society. They draw analytical links between societal structures and the everyday lives of people. On my visits to these areas, I paid heed to the sort of construction in which the municipality housed 'newly arrived immigrants', where they were located in relation to the central parts of the municipality and the kinds of life that surrounded the buildings. However, as Maria Stender points out, an analysis of houses and the built environment depends on the accounts of how people relate to them. Ultimately, it is the relationship between humans and their surroundings that brings forward an understanding of what the built environment *does* and represents (Stender, 2016, pp. 32–33). Therefore, these walks around the areas with temporary modular housing were supplementary and aimed to add a layer of analysis to people's accounts and contribute to studying the materialisation of the Settlement Act.

Third, on my visits, I knocked on the residents' doors and asked if I could conduct an interview or I could schedule one for a later occasion. Most of the time, I ended up conducting interviews on the spot. The account with Alexander in the prologue is an example of how these meetings could unfold. Even if I had prepared interview questions, these were open-ended and centred around the interviewees' experiences of living in temporary homes and migration trajectories. Moreover, these interviews had a different purpose and character than those that I did with officials. While the interviews with officials always took place during scheduled appointments in their offices and were intended to generate knowledge primarily about the organisation and administration of settlement and housing, the interviews with the tenants took place spontaneously in their homes and focused more on subjective experiences. They were conducted more as conversations in which I shared experiences from my life. In some cases, the first interview would lead to a second one and occasionally to informal meetings and friendships. After my experience with Khaled and Wadi, I had altered my strategy and aimed for reach rather than depth. Hence, I conducted shorter interviews, sometimes recorded, but most of the time more informally in almost all the areas with temporary modular housing. These conversations required a different kind of ethical sensitivity and cautiousness compared to the interviews with officials. I will attend to this in the final section of this chapter.

Fourth, the interviews with municipal officials led me to activities organised by civil society. I joined various activities; perhaps the most experimental was a jogging group with tenants from one modular housing facility in central

Stockholm. Every Thursday evening from October 2018 to April 2019, I participated in a language café, which a group of volunteers in one of the suburbs of Stockholm city organised. On Saturday mornings, I joined walks organised by the same people. I did not conduct interviews with people I met during these activities. Instead, I perceived the meetings as arenas to make small talk and indulge in an everyday environment. As Henk Driessen and Willy Jansen have argued, many insights in fieldwork stem from these more informal conversations (2013). However, small talk's vague and unpredictable nature makes the data that emerged from it ethically challenging to manage (Driessen & Jansen, 2013, p. 251). For instance, sometimes around twenty or thirty people attended the language café. Even if I had informed the participants in the language café and the coordinators that I was a researcher, keeping track of who I had told was difficult. For these reasons, I have excluded the conversations from the ethnographic analysis. However, attending the language café and the walks offered insights into the everyday environment of the 'newly arrived immigrant'. Hence, even if they have not contributed to a thick ethnography, they have provided a deepened understanding of the everyday condition of 'newly arrived immigrants', which, in turn, has informed my methods and my analytical scope.

Fifth, by the time I began my fieldwork in 2018, two years had passed since the Settlement Act came into effect and officials working with the implementation of the law had amassed knowledge and experiences that they shared at conferences, seminars and meetings. I attended two conferences, one that targeted experiences with the settlement process and the organisation of housing and another one that focused on experiences of collaborations with the civil society and integration measures. Apart from the conferences, I regularly attended meetings between municipalities with the same purpose of sharing knowledge and experiences but in a smaller setting. Besides listening to the presentation and the conversations officials had among themselves, these were opportunities to network and negotiate access. These conferences and meetings presented similar ethical challenges as those in the language cafés.

And finally, I followed and participated in the political mobilisation against evictions that had started already during early spring 2018. Tenants living in transition homes in one of Stockholm's municipalities and an activist collective had begun organising and mobilising against the short-term housing leases and the impending evictions. I followed the organisation closely and joined political events such as protests. I took part in meetings with activists and evictees that now occupied their transitional homes. Soon, the lines

between participating and observing became blurry. One thing I learned during this period of fieldwork was that participating in activities opened up the field. In the beginning, I held back from fully immersing myself, reminding people that I was a researcher following the development of the events. However, despite constant reminders to my interlocutors and myself, it became increasingly tricky to separate observation from participation. After a long process of rumination and testing ways of incorporating my experiences of participating in these kinds of events into this dissertation, I decided to exclude the material from the political mobilisation and organisation. The main reason was that I could not guarantee that my interlocutors would remain anonymous. However, I still consider the strategy of following the political organisation and mobilisation a fruitful method of accessing the field. By participating, I established contact with tenants involved in the struggle for permanent housing, which resulted in interviews that are part of my ethnography.

These six access strategies/methods resulted in heterogenous empirical material. The next section describes the material and the process of making sense of it.

Empirical material and the ethnographic moment

One of the challenges with anthropological work is that of breadth. In the abundance of information and complexity ascribed to society, we need to organise a research path and then another one to make sense of the material collected. Marilyn Strathern writes that ethnographic practice always has a double location, defined by temporal distance rather than geographical location (Strathern, 1999, p. 1). The geographical location always has several sites. For instance, as already discussed, my fieldwork took place in Stockholm, but in practice, the fieldwork was spread out over 26 municipalities. Thus, fieldwork is always multi-sited, no matter if it is geographically spread out or if we can simply reach it from our computer at home. Instead, according to Strathern, the temporal gap between the field and the desk, not the geographical distance, constitutes the double location of ethnographic practice (Strathern, 1999, p. 1). Consequently, the field notes do not replicate the field but rearrange it. When it is time to revisit the notes, they represent a second field. What Marilyn Strathern calls the 'ethnographic moment' denotes the relationship between what has been apprehended during fieldwork and what seems to require further apprehension in the second field (Strathern, 1999, p. 6). Strathern's description of the relationship between fieldwork and ethnographic writing pays attention to the gaps between the two practices.

While the practice of negotiating access and conducting interviews does not entirely explain how the material transforms into an ethnographic analysis, the ethnographic moment hints at the dialectical process of going back and forth between two temporal moments of apprehension. Hence, there is a temporal process and a regressive slippage while conjoining the first and second fields of immersement into the ethnographic moment (Strathern, 1999, p. 6). Every ethnographic moment is an immersement and simultaneously a movement between fields and perspectives that continually poses new analytical questions. Before I continue with the process of handling my material and the trajectory towards the analytical focus on practices of deferral, I will describe the empirical material that my fieldwork generated.

The most significant part of my empirical material consists of a heterogeneous collection of almost 300 computer written pages of field notes. These include descriptions and photos of the temporary modular housing and conversations with tenants in the areas along with field diaries with reflections regarding my visits and encounters. They contain notes from attendance at language cafés and hanging out with the participants and documentation of protests and meetings during political mobilisation against evictions and temporary housing contracts. Furthermore, they contain accounts and summaries from meetings and conferences with officials and diary entries in which I reflect on my encounters with officials. The parts of the dissertation that centre around bureaucratic practices stem primarily from notes about hanging out in a municipal office and transcripts from meetings between ‘newly arrived immigrants’ and street-level bureaucrats.

Of comparable size to my field notes is my material that derives from recorded interviews with the tenants and officials at the state, county, and municipal levels. I recorded 37 interviews with 47 people. Some of these interviews are group interviews. The interviews I did not record are included in my field notes. The recorded interviews vary from 45 minutes to two hours. The transcriptions amount to around 200 computer written pages. Hence, the lion’s share of my empirical material consists of field notes and interviews.

Documentation comprises the smaller part of my empirical material. It is a heterogenous collection of data consisting of governance documents, such as governance decisions and order papers. It also includes brochures, PowerPoint presentations from conferences and information provided to ‘newly arrived immigrants’.

A polymorphous engagement creates, unsurprisingly, a heterogeneous collection of empirical material. The disparate and eclectic empirical material forced me to find analytical themes that transcended the various levels that I had studied, from logistics on the state level to the implementation and materialisation of the Settlement Act. I argue that this is one of the productive elements of an extended field site; it prompts an analytical process of finding the connections in the contradictions and irregularities on several levels.

Similar to other anthropologists, I describe my analysis as seeking unanticipated insight (Ballesterio & Winthereik, 2021, p. 3). This quickening of the unknown (Guyer, 2013) departs from the ethnographic moment and the immersement into field notes and adjacent empirical data. In my work, this enterprise has taken the shape of comparing and juxtaposing various accounts of the Settlement Act and its consequences, studying moments and encounters where diverse perspectives collide and confront one another. An early moment that I recall as a quickening of the unknown emerged from one of the last interviews with an official high up in the ranks of the SMA. This interview centred around the so-called dispersal model. During my preparation for the interview, the interview itself and the transcription of it afterwards, I could see how the calculations involved in the dispersal of ‘newly arrived immigrants’ grappled with ways of changing the course of future settlement patterns while omitting a fundamental determinant, namely housing. As seen in the previous chapter, dispersal policies have always dealt with the problem of ‘unruly’ settlement patterns. The calculative logic and the logistical fantasy relied on the deferral, the circumvention of a very concrete and material condition on the ground. The absent variable has then been extrapolated and extended to an analytical model through which social and human practices of deferral become visible in several arenas and domains of analysis. Hence, this interview was pivotal to how I decided to organise my empirical material around practices creatively substituting permanent housing, pushing the housing issue systemically further down the road into the future. Therefore, my empirical chapters begin with an interview at the SMA and then describe how the practices of deferral unfold along with the implementation of the Settlement Act.

Ethics in practice and in writing

In this last section, I will deal with ethics. I perceive ethics as a constitutive part of this research project’s execution, from negotiating access to the period of ethnographic writing. In one way or another, anthropological methodology always centres around people and human behaviour. The engagement with

people forces researchers to ponder why the research should be conducted in the first place, for whom the results might be interesting; it calls for questions about what potential harm the study might cause the interlocutors during the practice of conducting the research and as a published product. Hence, ethics goes to the heart of the discipline and imbues its epistemological, theoretical and practical core (Caplan, 2003, p. 3).

As I illustrate in the section about my first month in the field, negotiating access relied on the ethics of everyday situations requiring sensitivity towards trespassing people's integrity, even when not explicitly articulated. The strategies for accessing the field and establishing contact required attentiveness regarding each unique situation's specific ethical challenges and dilemmas. Thus, besides linking access strategies to methods, the account of how I entered the field was intended to illustrate the ethical sensitivity involved in the methodology. This ethical sensitivity complements formal ethical codes of research practice. Therefore, ethical guidelines cannot anticipate the uncertainties and unpredictability in fieldwork, nor are they an ironclad formula (American Anthropological Association, 2009). Furthermore, as mentioned above, anthropological fieldwork builds on the unpredictability of the field. This means that making room for serendipity is at the core of the entire enterprise. And this requires a constant attentiveness towards ethically problematic situations that arise in the field, a kind of 'ethics in practice' (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004, p. 264). I will revisit my research methods/access strategies from the point of view of ethics and then continue with the ethical considerations coupled with ethnographic writing.

An ethical requirement is that we are transparent regarding our research when reaching out to potential participants. In the emails I wrote to reach out to officials, I clearly stated my research intentions. Once we met for the interview, I asked them for their informed consent and whether they wanted to remain anonymous or not. In contrast, when I interviewed the people who resided in the temporary homes, I first declared my purpose only when we met face to face. Since I did not have contact information for those people, I could not inform them in advance. Instead, I visited the areas and knocked on doors. Although I explained the reasons for my visit, asked for informed consent and asked them whether they preferred to remain anonymous before starting the interviews, this invasive way of reaching out to the interviewees called for additional ethical considerations. Given that I had appeared from nowhere at their doorstep, they had practically no time to reflect on the implications of a potential interview. Therefore, when I presented myself, I always asked if I

could schedule an interview for another day or if I could take their phone number and schedule a meeting on another occasion. Many times, however, the residents invited me in. They would kindly offer me a hot drink while we made small talk; I would explain my research topic in more detail, and then, most often, we agreed on doing the interview. Other times, we scheduled meetings and met at a later occasion in cafés or took a walk in a park close by.

The interviews in the residents' homes called for particular sensitivity and demanded attention to a plethora of power relations at play, such as gender, class, belonging, race and ethnicity. Moreover, the unpredictability of life and the particular moment of our encounter could present additional challenges, which I could not anticipate. Consequently, at the moment of the interview, I asked a few questions, preferably initiating a conversation. I saw these interviews as an opportunity to establish contact rather than one in which to exhaust information, aware that I had stumbled into their homes and taken advantage of their generosity and hospitality.

Although my positionality impacted all encounters during fieldwork, for the reasons just mentioned, it is particularly pertinent to reflect on how it might have affected my meetings with the tenants I interviewed in their homes. To illustrate the complexities that could arise connected to my positionality, I will revisit an interview I conducted in the winter of early 2019 in an area with temporary modular homes. After introducing myself, M, as I will call the tenant, welcomed me in, offered me his armchair and brought a chair from his kitchenette. He poured me some instant coffee and served me sunflower seeds on a plate he placed on the floor. M did not speak Swedish but managed all right in English, and I did not speak a word of Farsi. Despite the language barrier, I would say that the conversation went well. M told me about his journey, both the long trajectory from Iran to Sweden and how he had managed to survive by working in hotels and restaurants and staying in different sheltering places and refugee camps. I thought that being a Ph.D. student served me well this time. M had a sister who was an anthropologist, and M himself wanted to pursue doctoral studies in criminology or sociology, so we had a lot in common. Still, M's answers were short and seemed a bit reserved. At first, I thought that must have been due to the language barrier, but when M's friend suddenly joined the conversation after an hour or so, I began to think otherwise. It might have been M's way of being polite and holding on to his right to opacity.

M's friend, O, was more talkative. I started to ask him questions to include him in the conversation. He mumbled and replied a bit hesitantly. O then asked me who I was. I explained that I was a researcher from the university studying temporary houses. 'Ah, searching for a house?' I clarified that I worked at the university and did research on migration. 'Oh, you work for migration?' 'No, no, I work for the university, not the Migration Agency', I said. M told his friend something in Farsi. I understood only the word Chile. 'Chile, yeah, yeah!' That seemed to have had a positive impact. I clarified that my parents were from Chile; I was born here. I explained that I grew up in Sweden and lived in Stockholm. 'Very good', O said. 'I have many friends from Chile'. I started to hurl questions at him, asking how long he had been in Sweden, where he came from and where in Sweden he had been before moving to Stockholm. We talked about his job and his colleagues from Latin America with whom he spent a lot of time. After a while, O asked if we could shift to Swedish. M said yes and took a more passive role in the conversation. This made me a bit hesitant, wondering if he had understood that I was a researcher. It turned out that O spoke much better Swedish than English. We continued the conversation. O told me about the different jobs he had had in Sweden, which had never led to fixed employment. 'Sweden is the best country; it has only two problems, there are no jobs and no homes', he concluded. He told me about his friends from Chile, Bolivia, Brazil and Nicaragua. Because I assumed that he had mentioned his friends from Latin America to build on common ground, I started to ask questions about his friends. Our conversation suddenly turned as he explained that he did not like my asking too many questions about his friends. He did neither pose too many questions to them. He thought it was impolite, if not rude, to pose these kinds of questions. O said that he preferred to have conversations rather than asking a million questions about where people were from, why they had immigrated to Sweden, and whether they were married and religious; these types of questions, O believed, were private matters which were none of his or my business. M, nodding while listening to his friend, concurred.

O and M had highlighted the asymmetric relationship between researcher and interviewee, which O also had experienced in the language cafés that the Red Cross organised. Furthermore, he felt that some of the teachers in the language courses similarly violated his integrity. He suggested that it was a cultural thing. In Iran, where both M and O had emigrated from, it was impolite to ask complete strangers potentially sensitive questions. Having fled a totalitarian state and passed through all kinds of migration scanning processes, it is certainly understandable that they wished to end these kinds of questions. Even

though neither M nor O had explicitly suggested that I had trespassed in any way, I felt that they made visible a striking asymmetry in our relationship. My position as a researcher might have reminded them of inquisitory officials and teachers who posed sensitive questions. The fact that I had imposed on their leisure time to conduct an interview in their home accentuated this asymmetry. From this perspective, I interpreted O's inclination to talk about his Latin American friends as a way of building on common ground, trying to level the asymmetry. Instead of focusing on their journey and migranhood, O attempted to find a common topic we could talk about.

Every situation in which I entered someone's home was different. Even if the asymmetry often affected the interviews, it was difficult to anticipate how it would shape these spontaneous interviews. On other occasions, the tenants were eager to tell me their stories and complain about their living conditions. Before starting fieldwork, I suspected that it would be easier to establish contact with men than with women, but this turned out to be wrong, at least in part. Still there is an overrepresentation of men in my data. But this overrepresentation does not derive from rejected interviews. Instead, one explanation for the overrepresentation of men is that, as an official told me, there are more male tenants in the temporary modular housing. In general, there were more men than women asylum seekers arriving during the fall of 2015.¹⁸

After the first meeting, I always contacted the tenants to see if I could meet them for a second interview. But I carefully tried to avoid coming across as too insistent. Since I conducted the interviews in people's homes, it was imperative that I did not appear intrusive. Just a couple of times, the interviews with the tenants led to relationships and follow-up interviews. On the other hand, volunteering and participating in political mobilisation elicited longer-term relationships.

Previously in this chapter, I have described how I participated in the language cafés initiated by civil organisations and in protests and political mobilisation jointly organised by housing activists and activists residing in temporary houses. These engagements entailed helping tenants with homework from the language courses, assisting with paperwork, interpreting information from the authorities, and writing letters to landlords. When I participated in the political

¹⁸The Swedish Migration Agency. *Applications for asylum received, 2015*. Statistics from 1 January 2016. <https://www.migrationsverket.se/English/About-the-Migration-Agency/Statistics/Asylum.html>. Accessed 2022-05-22.

mobilisation, I helped paint banners for protests and disseminate flyers about protests and political gatherings. Many of the activities took me by surprise, and I often engaged in them without fully considering the ethical implications.

Volunteering and activism are common ways of conducting migration research (see e.g. Darling, 2014; Jordan & Moser, 2020; Picozza, 2021; Tuckett, 2018). In the related literature, these practices are frequently discussed in terms of reciprocity and giving back. For instance, Joanna Jordan and Sarah Moser write that in transit camps along the Balkan route, where the state and formal large-scale humanitarian organisations are absent, grassroots organisations and activists are the primary caregivers (2020, p. 5). In this setting, the researchers assisted the migrants by running errands and providing information about border policies. This was their way of offering something in return. However, reciprocity does not always (perhaps never) rest on symmetrical relationships. Reflecting on reciprocity reveals the hierarchical dynamics between researchers and their interlocutors or interviewees. While we as researchers might convince ourselves that assisting with errands, being a conversation partner or helping out with political mobilisation gives us the right to do our research, we need to reconsider how this reciprocity was conceived in the first place and on what grounds. In my case, I did not start as an activist but became involved as a way of slowly immersing myself in the field. Nobody had asked for my assistance. In addition, when participating in more engaged fieldwork, it became clear that stating my role as a researcher did not always work as people, for instance, could appear suddenly during political meetings and rallies. While immersed in the field, aware of the complexities of ethics in practice, I always kept in mind that I would have to deal with ethical complexities retrospectively and apply an ethical filter when I later would analyse the material and write the ethnography.

The principle of not doing harm or wrong to people might seem obvious. However, we do not always foresee what harm our writing might do. Using pseudonyms is a simple yet insufficient strategy to protect the anonymity of the research participants and avoid possible damage. Even when replacing names, locations can reveal people's identities. Also, particular events can disclose locations and, from that, people involved. The constant stripping of ethnographic accounts exposing potentially sensitive information has led me to exclude the part revolving around political mobilisation, organisation and counter-tactics. First, as already mentioned, I could not always ask all participants for informed consent. Second, there was simply no way of guaranteeing that the accounts would not bring any harm to my interlocutors.

Besides the general precariousness, many of the tenants or evictees involved in the protests lived informally in their temporary homes. Exposing more data about the tenants or their political struggles could make them even more vulnerable. As a result, the ethical filter, by which I excluded these accounts, has shaped the dissertation significantly.

In some cases, I anticipated the problem of confidentiality. For instance, one of the reasons behind mapping areas with temporary modular housing and conducting interviews in disparate places was that I could mix locations and stories when representing accounts from the tenants in the temporary modular housing. By doing this, the voices of my interlocutors cannot be traced to specific areas. In other parts of the dissertation, more precisely in two chapters, it has been more challenging to keep my interlocutors anonymous. The ethnographic analysis in Chapter 5 draws heavily on an interview with an official at the SMA who is in charge of the settlement and dispersal at the national level. He is the only one in this position, so people who know the organisation from the inside will be able to recognise him. The same problem arises with a person in Chapter 6. However, applying the principle of avoiding doing harm, the information that I present in these chapters is not of a sensitive nature. The analysis in both chapters centres around discourses or ideas that permeate the entire organisation of settlement and reception, and the quotes from the interviews are backed by policy documents. In addition, I have shared the chapters with the persons who are identifiable to people inside the organisation and considered their opinions regarding their exposure.

I will end this chapter by saying that my ethnographic methodology consisted of navigating various sensitivities. By positioning myself in an epistemological tradition and tackling the whims of the field, I have sought to carve out an analytical perspective, which I believe contributes to an understanding of the constant re-articulations of liminality and thresholds.

Dispersal and matching

I registered at the counter upon my arrival at the SMA's regional office, a modern and discrete building by the railroad tracks at the centre of Sundbyberg in Stockholm County. A security guard printed a nametag that I put on my jacket before passing through the bars. The entry floor seemed to be mainly security and reception. I sat down next to a staircase in the middle of the room that connected the open floors and waited for Finn, who I would interview. The waiting hall was airy and light from the daylight falling from the glass ceiling. I could see people working and having meetings from where I sat, which conveyed a sensation of transparency.

Finn had worked on 'settlement' related issues for several years and was the national expert at the SMA and coordinating settlement since the introduction of the Settlement Act. He fetched me in the waiting hall by the staircase and suggested that we take the stairs up to the top floor, mumbling that this was his way of getting exercise during the day. I hurried up behind him as Finn rushed up the stairs, cheerfully greeting people along the way. When we arrived at the upper floor, he paused for a short moment and looked at me. A wrinkle appeared between his squinting eyes. Finn had forgotten to book a room. He flipped through the menu on some digital monitors next to the doors to see if he could find another room. The conference and meeting rooms were glass modules. Besides these rooms, there were some casual working spaces between kitchenettes and coffee machines in the open office space with panoramic windows overlooking Stockholm.

Translucency and clarity imbued the building, embodying the ideals of transparency in Swedish state administration. In addition, to ensure that the state agency communicated clearly, Louisa joined Finn and me during the second half of the interview, along with two other officials, Kerstin, located in

Norrköping, and Emir, in Umeå, who participated via video link. Louisa worked in the unit of communication. Her primary role during the interview was to observe how officials communicated with external audiences and study how communication could improve. For clarity but also efficiency, Finn and I had talked on the phone before we met so he could prepare answers for our meeting. It would prevent speculation and guesses and would avoid wasting his and my time. Over the phone, I mentioned the events of the refugee crisis in passing, but Finn interrupted and corrected me: ‘the refugee situation, not the refugee crisis; it is important how we use the terms’. Finn maintained that the so-called ‘refugee crisis’ was a political term; as a representative of the SMA and the state, it was crucial to be aware of carrying out policy, not making politics, which also entailed using the correct terms.

Preciseness, efficiency, clarity and transparency are guiding principles and ideals for Swedish statecraft and governance bodies.¹⁹ Preciseness and efficiency are performance goals, while transparency and clarity generate visibility and accountability. However, it is not unusual that the audit culture in organisations overshadows the ends of the performance. In such cases, developing systems and technologies of efficiency and transparency becomes a purpose in its own right. This chapter explores the so-called dispersal model and the matching system and their underpinning calculative logic. The dispersal model is an example of technocratic governance becoming preoccupied with means rather than ends, conveying a technological solutionism (Amoore & Piotukh, 2016, p. 15). Furthermore, it is an example of the politics of expertise, in which precision, quantification and vagueness operate in tandem (Scheel & Ustek-Spilda, 2019). This chapter advances the argument that the tension between precision and vagueness creates both a legitimacy and a calculative fog. Through the calculative dispersal and matching system, the SMA succeeds in dispersing and transferring ‘newly arrived immigrants’ to municipal care while deferring to the municipal level ensuing problems originating from housing shortages. This chapter intends to describe the dispersal and matching system and the tension between precision and neglect.

The dispersal model

In recent decades we have seen a proliferation of categories emerging as the state and authority bodies perceive increasing people as governable objects by necessity (Picozza 2017). Accordingly, the state produces categories such as

‘failed asylum seekers’, ‘unaccompanied minors’ and ‘illegal migrants’, just to mention a few labels, to produce a social order by simplifying ambiguities and creating an illusion of control. Hence, managing mobility goes hand in hand with the formulation of categories and labels. The ‘newly arrived immigrant’ is yet another emerging category emplacing a person between the asylum system and citizenship. In a similar spirit of controlling mobility, Finn and his colleagues divided ‘newly arrived immigrants’ into two subcategories. The term *abosar* refers to ‘newly arrived immigrants’ residing in asylum centres. *Kvotare* refers to quota refugees in the process of relocation to Sweden. People in these two categories were targeted for faster dispersal through the Settlement Act. In the practice of dispersal and settlement, the terms refer to spatial arrangements and locations rather than administrative or legal definitions, *abosar* wait in asylum centres, *kvotare* in refugee camps. Finn was responsible for the overarching process of transferrals from both refugee camps and asylum centres to Swedish municipalities. Besides the unit in Sundbyberg, there were two additional units in charge of resettlement. The headquarters in Norrköping – where Kerstin focused on, as Finn put it, ‘the logistics concerning relocations to Sweden’ – was one of them. Another was located in Umeå. Emir was team leader in Umeå, where he worked with the actual transfer of both *abosar* and *kvotare* to the municipalities in Sweden. However, before the transfer took place, the dispersal numbers had to be calculated.

The calculation is the technical core of the Settlement Act, underpinned by the idea that statistics and mathematics offer us objective tools to predict probable outcomes. The first calculation takes the total number of estimated ‘newly arrived immigrants’ who will be granted asylum during a year and divides it by the total number of municipalities. The second calculation is detailed and aims to create a more ‘equal’ and ‘proportional’ dispersal of the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ based on three variables: the municipalities’ 1) population, 2) labour market, and 3) previous reception of asylum seekers, refugees and unaccompanied minors.

The dispersal model has developed and matured since 2010 when the Act on reception and settlement of certain newly arrived immigrants (SFS 2010:408) entered into force. The law from 2010 mandated the SPES to calculate dispersal numbers to counties. In 2012, SPES launched the first instrument of dispersal in collaboration with the SMA, The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and the CAB. As the Settlement Act intends today, the purpose was back then to speed up the labour incorporation of ‘newly

¹⁹ This has been studied in work on audit culture and in the social sciences of organisations and organizational structures (Hollertz, Jacobsson, & Seing, 2018).

arrived immigrants'. SPES specified the priorities and objectives of the yearly dispersal plan in a memorandum. The variables and the percentages changed from year to year. In the first memorandum from August 2011, SPES declared that the labour demand in municipalities and the possibility of people finding labour had guided the dispersal plan.²⁰ Therefore, SPES stated that their calculation had prioritised the labour market over available housing. The proportion between weight variables in the plan reflected this priority. In the dispersal calculation from 2012, the housing market got a five per cent weight, the labour market 45 per cent and the population size in the municipalities 40 per cent. Between 2012 and 2015, the SPES determined that the housing market weight variable was between five and fifteen.

With the introduction of the Settlement Act, the SMA took over the responsibility of adjusting the dispersal calculation. Additionally, three overarching changes were made. First, the municipalities could no longer reject 'newly arrived immigrants'. Second, the previous dispersal instrument had only calculated numbers of 'newly arrived immigrants' to be dispersed among the counties. In 2016, the SMA calculated dispersal numbers to both counties (*länstal*) and municipalities (*kommuntal*).²¹ The dispersal model was now a more centralised system than it had been previously. And by contrast to previous dispersal regimes, it was coercive. And third, as just mentioned, the variable 'housing market' was removed. The last point is crucial since many municipalities had turned down agreements due to the local housing situation. The solution was simply to remove the variable and make the dispersal coercive. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the Settlement Act focused on creating a fast transition from asylum centres to labour incorporation. Accommodation was removed from the logistical management of settling down. However, to make up for the absent variable, the SMA and SPES had to weight the remaining variables with more precision.

Revisions – the example of 2019

The dispersal model is constantly changing and evolving. Each year, in April/May, the government filed a governance decision with instructions regarding changes to the calculation. In what follows, I will give the example of the changes requested by the government for the year 2019 to bring some clarity to how the dispersal calculation worked. Moreover, the example

illustrates the promises that the enigmatic technical device conveyed. It also discloses a dilemma. While the experts working on the dispersal model developed the device to increase its precision, they were aware that they had to exclude the housing variable, which could improve the precision of the tool significantly. However, this variable could also bring the dispersal to a halt. As a result, the calculations become a sort of puzzle. The experts had to become visionaries, working with the means at hand.

The governance decision for 2019's dispersal plan²² requested changes to the calculation, some of which involved a sharpened focus on the labour market variable. First, the labour market variable should be weighted higher in proportion to the other two variables. Second, it should be more precise to reflect 'newly arrived immigrants' durable employment. And third, the government stated that in their calculation the SMA should continue to consider the significant proportion of 'newly arrived immigrants' who found homes independently. The third request does not concern the labour market. It is, instead, a statement that highlights the considerably large proportion that was not affected by the Settlement Act and the dispersal model. During fieldwork, I heard several estimations of this number. For example, at one of the conferences I attended, an official from the SMA estimated that 80 per cent of all 'newly arrived immigrants' found housing independently. Other estimations varied slightly; for instance, the one made by the SMA in their dispersal plan for 2019 was 70 per cent. The high percentage is an inconvenience because the fewer people who pass through the state allocation scheme, the less statistical accuracy the dispersal model has in creating an even dispersal. According to the government, further analyses were needed to create a more even distribution between municipalities. Towards the end of the governance decision, a statement enticed me to speculate regarding the desire to manage and control people's mobility. The letter states that:

The aim of the Settlement Act is that all municipalities should participate and take responsibility in the reception of newly arrived immigrants (*nyanlända*) for better integration into the labour market and society. Many newly arrived immigrants are still settling down independently, and consequently, the comprehensive reception is still uneven, which can affect the conditions for receiving newly arrived immigrants. (author's translation)

²⁰ SPES Order paper, registration number: AF 2011/294547.

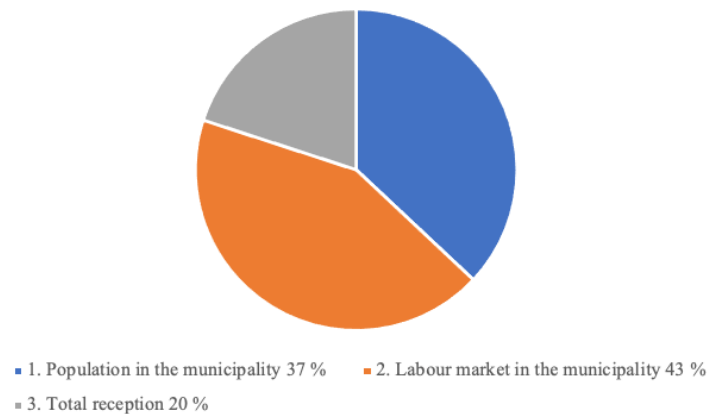
²¹ SMA's dispersal calculation entered into effect on 1 January 2017. Hence, SPES's calculations still determined the dispersal numbers between March and December 2016.

²² Governance decision: A2018/00998/1. The SMA received the decision 5 May 2018 (register number: 1.1.2-2018-19779).

The issue of independent settlement is a remnant of the enactment of the Ebo law in 1994. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the Ebo law led to an unpredicted increase in independent accommodation. The Ebo law is often described as one of the root causes of uneven dispersal of asylum seekers and migrants and further housing and urban segregation. The quote above reflects a desire to control mobility and create even flows and equal conditions for settling down. The government and the SMA ascribed to the dispersal model a potential ability to counter the imbalance of migrants' settlement patterns.

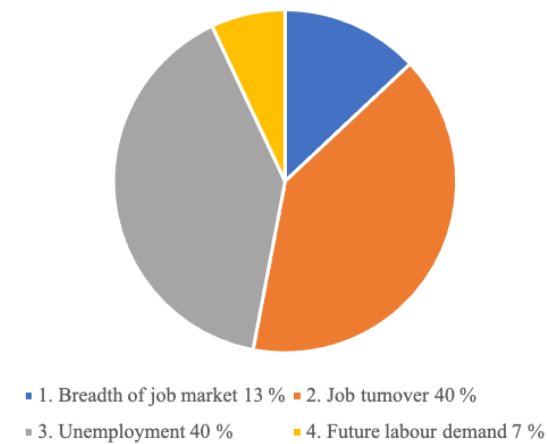
After receiving the governance decision, the SMA translated the requests into numbers and percentages. In 2018, the SMA had weighted the dispersal calculation as follows: 1) population in the municipality: 40 per cent, 2) labour market in the municipality: 40 per cent and 3) total reception of asylum seekers, refugees and unaccompanied minors: 20 per cent. In 2019, following the requests from the government, the SMA altered the weight variables to 1) population: 37 per cent, 2) labour market: 43 per cent and 3) total reception: 20 per cent.

Figure 2. Dispersal 2019 and weight variables.



These variables were supplemented by additional sub-variables and changes in previous sub-variables to operationalise the requests from the government. For instance, the labour market variable was updated through modifications in the four following sub-variables: 1) breadth of job market, 2) job turnover, 3) unemployment and 4) future labour demand. Below, I will explain how these sub-variables worked.

Figure 3. Labour market in the municipalities and weight sub-variables.



The first sub-variable, breadth of job market, was given thirteen per cent weight. This sub-variable included every local job market area (*lokalt arbetsmarknadsområde*) with at least 100 practitioners. Since people commute between neighbouring municipalities, this sub-variable considers local labour market areas instead of restricting the areas according to municipal boundaries. Accordingly, the more jobs with at least 100 practitioners in a given local job market area, the better the SMA considers labour incorporation conditions.

The second weight sub-variable, job turnover, was given a value of 40 per cent. This sub-variable builds on the SPES's statistical classification and definition of non-Europeans moving from unemployment to employment. The purpose of this sub-variable was to describe how well non-European-born people have succeeded in finding a job. In its previous form, this sub-variable calculated the job turnover of 'newly arrived immigrants' during the year before

measurement. However, according to the SMA, this former calculation produced inconsistent statistical results due to the small number of ‘newly arrived immigrants’ assigned to smaller municipalities. Instead, the updated edition calculated the number of job turnovers among non-Europeans who had resided in Sweden for a maximum of three years. Finn told me that it did not make sense to include ‘newly arrived immigrants’ because many often got stuck in the integration programme for longer than the planned two years. The SMA calculated job turnover in the following way:

$$A/(K+N)$$

The letter *A* represents the numbers of non-European-born people who have moved from unemployment to employment in the last year. *K* signifies the remaining number of unemployed in December, before the measurement year. Finally, the letter *N* denotes the number of non-European-born people registered during the last year. This calculation is made per municipality and per year.

The third sub-variable, unemployment, was given 40 per cent weight. This sub-variable targeted the number of unemployed registered as taking part in any of the SPES’s programmes with subsidies compared with the labour power in the municipality. The average value calculated per municipality had an inverse impact on the dispersal, meaning the lower the value of unemployment in a municipality, the larger number of assigned people.

Lastly, the fourth sub-variable, future labour demand, was assigned seven per cent weight. The SMA constructed this sub-variable building on a prognosis made by SCB in 2018 for the population between 18 and 64 years in the coming years. By dividing SCB’s prognosis of the number of people in work age for the year 2030 by the number of people working in 2017, the SMA calculated and estimated the future labour demand. For this sub-variable to positively impact a municipality, meaning that it would be assigned an increased number of ‘newly arrived immigrants’, the municipality had to have a decreasing population between 18 and 64 years. In addition, the municipality had to have unemployment rates below the entire country’s average. This calculation predicted labour shortages in the future.

Finn guided me through these intricate calculations to understand the logic of the dispersal model. He told me that the dispersal model’s statistical significance had less accuracy every year – the smaller the population, the less

accuracy. Finn said, ‘Last year 15 200 and this year, 9 000 [...]. That means that very few come from our facilities. And this leads to the conclusion that this thing [the dispersal model] has less and less impact every year’. However, he argued that it is convenient to have the dispersal model in place if the number of refugees and asylum seekers suddenly should increase. In that case, Finn said that they could weight the variables to suit a different situation, gesturing with his hands how he, with an invisible screwdriver, adjusted the weights. This simple gesture conveyed an image of the dispersal model as a machine, which was constantly adjusted and calibrated and could always improve its precision. Even if the dispersal model seemed at the time to become less and less precise and accurate, I got the impression that Finn had a lot of expectations and hopes regarding its potential. By calibrating the instrument and adding more data, statistics and variables, it could perhaps prevent further segregation in the future. Finn said:

We need a [dispersal] model that can distribute the responsibility to all municipalities. And we have other issues...well, you know, the police have pointed out particular areas [...] what’s their name...vulnerable areas... that are identified [...], they have identified 32 [socially] deprived areas and they have looked on socioeconomic factors, I think. And it is this that perhaps we also would like to catch with the [dispersal] model. That is: which are the municipalities that during a longer period have had problems with newly arrived immigrants [*nyanlända*]?

Since 2018, the government has distributed state subsidies to 32 municipalities with socially vulnerable areas.²³ The purpose has been to prevent social and economic segregation. Finn referred to these areas during the interview. He alluded to the possibility of including a variable that could restrict the dispersal to these areas. It was an example of how the device could be adjusted and improved. The dispersal model was still in its infancy. Finn told me that he envisioned that by adding more information and constantly enhancing its precision, it would one day be an autonomous machine, meaning that it would work optimally according to the instructions and data that it processed. Louise Amooore and Volha Piotukh have asserted that in times of big data, calculative devices make promises about rendering information intelligible and comprehensible far beyond the capability of human cognition (2016, p. 15). The vision of an autonomous machine also alluded to rationality based on the virtue of calculations and machine learning, which exceeds human rationality

²³ See the ordinance *Förordning (2018:151) om statsbidrag till kommuner med socioekonomiskt eftersatta områden*. https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/forordning-2018151-om-statsbidrag-till_sfs-2018-151. Accessed 2022-08-10.

(Beer, 2017). In a way, Finn's allusion reflected this hope for technological solutions. At the time, the dispersal model lacked data to produce statistically reliable results. However, the instrument itself could improve. It was a matter of feeding it more data and developing the variables' precision. Towards the end of the interview, Finn mentioned that a group of people at the SMA worked on an algorithm that could potentially create a more precise matching system. I will dig deeper into the algorithmic influence in dispersal schemes soon, but first, I need to attend to matching.

Matching and streamlining flows

The implementation of the Settlement Act on the state level was a two-step process. After the first step that entailed the calculation of dispersal numbers, the SMA's unit in Umeå transferred people to locations based on secondary matching criteria. The calculation described above designates the first match between individuals and places, in which the individual is a statistical number. After the calculations, the second match-making process ascribed some individuality to the 'objects', insofar as far it did not interrupt the even and smooth flow of dispersal. Here, there was some room for special requests from the individual and the municipalities.

Emir was team leader in Umeå, responsible for the practical match-making between 'newly arrived immigrants' and locations. He joined through a giant screen on the wall, as did Kerstin in Norrköping, who was responsible for the re-locations of refugees from UNHCR refugee camps to Sweden. After conducting the interview alone with Finn, we were now sitting in a room looking at a projection of Emir and Kerstin. Louisa, who would observe us and, in particular, how her colleagues communicated, was already in the room when Finn and I entered.

Emir explained, referring to the legal advisor at SMA, that the 'newly arrived immigrants' were, legally speaking, 'objects' who had no legal right to negotiate their placement. However, Emir added: 'in practice, we try to match the person based on requests so far as it is possible'. He continued: 'Every municipality has a number they ought to take. When it is time for them [newly arrived immigrants] to come, we look at the secondary matching criteria. The principle of proximity is important, not in the *kvot*-cases, but when it comes to *abo*'.

Emir described the process thoroughly, step-by-step. He explained further that once a 'newly arrived immigrant' had accepted a location, the reception centre

wherein they were staying opened a so-called 'settlement file'. An official would then interview the person and send the file with standardised information about the person to Emir and his colleagues in Umeå. If the individual turned the offer down, they had to leave the asylum centre within three days. Hence, the fast evacuation notice left them with few options. If and when they accepted the relocation, Emir and his colleagues considered the secondary matching criteria. These criteria contained 'special requirements/needs' and 'special motives'. The former category targeted the person's needs, such as proximity to hospital care, specific educational resources, and whether the person needed home adaptations or to stay in institutional care. The latter category of matching criteria targeted job offers, job training or education programmes, shared custody of minors, protected identity, and proximity to relatives. Additionally, Emir asserted that it was essential to consider the needs of people who defined themselves as LGBTQ, particularly when it concerned quota refugees.

The next step was to send the file to the municipality that was selected for hosting the individual. From that moment, the municipal administration had two months to prepare a home for the 'newly arrived immigrants'. But, in reality, the municipalities had more than two months to prepare themselves. The SMA had already presented the plan with dispersal numbers to the municipalities in October the year before. In the initial plan, the municipal administrations could see the numbers of 'newly arrived immigrants' arriving each month throughout the year. It was not uncommon that some municipalities requested more 'newly arrived immigrants' and some less during these discussions. Finn filled in that municipal administration sometimes asked for a higher number due to labour demands. Only then, by November/December, were the numbers and the dispersal set for the following year. But there was some additional flexibility in the system even after this, Finn said. The municipality could move the numbers around a bit. Finn said that even if most of the changes should occur during the month of negotiation and planning with the CAB,²⁴ between October and November, but there was room for minor changes and negotiations even after this. For instance, Emir

²⁴ According to the ordinance *Förordning (2016:39) om mottagande av vissa nyanlända invandrare för bosättning* paragraph 5, the CAB determine the dispersal of 'newly arrived immigrants' at the county level, based on the dispersal numbers suggested by the SMA and decided upon by the government. Important to note is that according to paragraph 6 in the same ordinance, the CAB are allowed to consider the housing situation in the municipalities in the county when dividing the dispersal numbers within the county. However, they cannot alter the numbers at the county level.

continued, if a municipality preferred to host five ‘newly arrived immigrants’ rather than three one month and reduce the reception of another month to two, that was possible to arrange. However, as Emir maintained, it had to be compared with the yearly number of dispersals – ‘it should be an even flow’ so that all the units in the chain can cope. Hence, even if speeding up the process from asylum centres to municipal care, an even flow was necessary for optimality. In this context, the idea of matching was to create streamlined flows of movement that were optimal and efficient.

The notion of streamlined flows, or ‘even flows’ (*jämt flöde*), as Emir called it, resonated with the temporal management of movement. Besides speeding up the transfer, the matching operation intended to create even flows of circulation through the asylum system to the reception and labour incorporation in municipalities. While Emir presented the practical procedure of matching ‘newly arrived immigrants’ with locations, he shared charts with statistics of the dispersal numbers and instructive step-by-step illustrations on the screen. The illustration of dispersal numbers, moved from one place to another in even flows, conveyed an image of a large-scale operation, where unruly mobility turned into controlled mobility. This process transformed people into manageable objects and categories.

In Thomas Nail’s migrant ontology, migration is defined as social expansion and expulsion and social pedesis (Nail, 2015, p. 223). The latter refers to the unruly character of mobility, often portrayed as waves, flows and floods. These metaphors, which filled the narration of the events of the summer of migration in 2015, alluded to a natural and chaotic movement pouring into Europe (Pallister-Wilkins, 2019). Also, they depict people’s movement as a mass, as non-agents who move fast and unpredictably, a description that was accentuated by the vocabulary of numbers and even flows that characterise the state’s perspective.

The dispersal and matching system intend to order the social pedesis by channelling people and coordinating the pace of movement, in other words, creating even flows between the outer side of the nation-state and the inside. Creating sub-categories, routines and time maps are instruments to stabilise and accelerate the movement from overcrowded asylum centres to municipal accommodation, creating an efficient and organised movement scheme. The speedy and instrumental process transform people into pieces of a puzzle, or objects to move from one place to another. When Finn, Emir and Kerstin described the process, I could detect a certain complacency and pride over the

organisational efficiency with which the transfers were coordinated. Perhaps this appeared most striking when I asked Emir how many they were in the unit in Umeå, which handled all communication and negotiation with the municipalities regarding the transferal dates. Finn sat back on his chair, smirked at Emir, and said, ‘well, you are not that many; tell us now how many you are’. Emir started to count and said:

Let’s put it this way, we are two caseworkers and me. But the IT section is here too so we are four people here now. Normally, we are four or five caseworkers, myself – the team leader – and the head of the unit. We will recruit more people. We should be seven caseworkers...but yes, we are pretty efficient.

This meant that between four and six people handled all the requests and adjustments regarding transfers from asylum centres. Efficiency was indeed required. Nevertheless, efficiency as a virtue in managing people’s movement should be understood as a consequence of the dehumanising description of people on the move. While waves and floods are words that represent unruly mobility, the terms ‘even flow’ and ‘match-making’ are their equivalents for control, preciseness and efficiency. The lingo of logistics and mathematical precision is the other side of the dehumanising vocabulary of floods and waves. This matters not only as an issue of dehumanising representation. In treating people as numbers and objects, a reductionist view of people becomes internalised in the practice of management, which, ultimately, always prioritises efficiency. The dispersal and match-making procedure shows how the efficiency of transferring people out from the asylum centres is more important than calculating the risks that the allocation of people leads to further precarisation and displacement due to the housing market. I will turn to a short account of matching theory to explain the hierarchisation and prioritisation.

The matching theory stems from the idea of ‘matching markets’.²⁵ A match rests on a mathematical framework of allocating resources where both parties in the transactions agree to it (Jones & Teytelboym, 2017). The economic model is built around the idea of homo economicus, that an individual makes choices always seeking to maximise their preferences. Since the late 1990s, the matching theory has been deployed in several domains, such as the health care and the educational system. Moreover, as Will Jones and Alexander

²⁵ A typical example used to illustrate a two-sided match in this literature is a non-polygamous heterosexual consensual marriage between two persons (Gale & Shapley, 2013; Jones & Teytelboym, 2017; Wang et al., 2020). Matching theory departs from the idea that no man or woman can get married without a mutual agreement.

Teytelboym assert, economic models have frequently appeared to solve political deadlocks between states regarding ‘burden-sharing’. Perhaps one of the more cynical proposals is Peter H. Schuck’s model of tradeable refugee quotas (Jones & Teytelboym, 2017; Schuck, 1997). In his model, states would commit to assuring temporary or permanent protection to refugees. States would, however, also be allowed to pay other countries to take their quota (Schuck, 1997, p. 248). Jones and Teytelboym argue that their idea is totally different and entails nothing like selling or buying quotas. Instead, they propose a refugee matching system that ‘merely sets out a way to find the optimal allocation of a given population of refugees amongst a given population of refugees amongst a given population of States, given their preferences and given States’ quotas’ (Jones & Teytelboym, 2017, p. 87). Jones and Teytelboym, on the one hand, and Schuck, on the other, motivate their models by taking the state’s perspective, regarding migration as a chaotic and unpredictable flow that produces social disruption and destabilisation (Jones & Teytelboym, 2017, p. 86). However, Jones and Teytelboym suggest a model that considers refugees’ choice of resettlement. The proposed model would pair states that participate voluntarily in the system with refugees. Both parts would define requirements and requests. States that participate in the system would have to accept a minimum quota, and then the two sides would be matched as optimally as possible. Match-making processes like this one allude not only to economic efficiency but also to a consensual and fair transaction between parties paired together. However, according to the economic literature on the topic, no matching mechanisms exist that produce a stable and efficient outcome where all parties’ requests are fulfilled. Instead, the system needs to formulate a list of properties or requests that will be prioritised (Jones & Teytelboym, 2017, p. 100).

Against this background, it is not surprising that the dispersal of ‘newly arrived immigrants’ applied the same kind of vocabulary. As I will show in the next section, the SMA does not operate in a vacuum but rather takes inspiration from trends in international migration management. It is also tempting to reflect on what matching theory connotes. It conveys the image of maximum fairness according to a set of rules and priorities while at the same time applying efficient and rational decision making. However, as demonstrated earlier in this section, the match-making process is not a consensual agreement between ‘newly arrived immigrants’ and the municipal administrations. The ‘newly arrived immigrant’ had few alternatives when he or she was offered a municipal allocation. In Chapter 7, I will offer some examples of people who did not know that they would arrive to temporary substandard housing after

accepting the offer. In many cases, the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ that were transferred to Stockholm had not been informed about the exclusionary housing market they would have to face. To be fair, the dispersal and matching system was not designed especially for the housing conditions in Stockholm. But on the other hand, since these conditions applied to the three city-regions in the country, a lot of the people implicated in the Settlement Act would experience long-extended precarity in the housing market. Neither did all municipal governments agree to be part of a coercive dispersal system. The dispersal and match-making process did not prioritise the requests of the parties involved. The first priority was to efficiently and quickly transfer ‘newly arrived immigrants’ out of the asylum centres and to minimise the ‘lead-time’ between asylum approval and municipal integration. The efficiency relied on coercive dispersal and the circumvention of the housing market and the deferral of the problems that would emerge from it.

Matching systems and algorithmic rationality

In this section, I will discuss the rationality underpinning the dispersal model and the match-making procedure by contrasting it to developments in matching systems and algorithms in the wake of what has been called the ‘refugee crisis’. Contextualising the dispersal and matching system has two purposes. Firstly, it shows that the system’s logic did not emerge out of a void. Secondly, it highlights algorithmic rationality in which the precision of the technological instrument compensates for the lacking housing variable in the dispersal and matching system.

At the time of writing, several national and international projects are developing matching algorithms to create efficient and optimal resettlement schemes. Also, there is a growing research interest in the topic (Andersson & Ehlers, 2019, p. 27). The SMA has mainly drawn inspiration from a project developed at the Immigration Policy Lab (IPL), a collaboration between Stanford University and *Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule* (ETH) in Zürich. The IPL project uses big data to match refugees with host countries. The algorithm in the project uses ‘a combination of supervised machine learning and optimal matching to discover and leverage synergies between refugee characteristics and resettlement sites (Bansak et al., 2018, p. 325)’.

Similarly, the SMA has been developing a matching algorithm. This project aimed to explore the possibilities of adopting a machine-learning algorithm to optimise different variables to improve the match between ‘newly arrived immigrants’ and municipalities. The official I contacted clarified that the

project's purpose was not to develop a system that would match individuals directly with labour. At best, it would help calculate the probability that an individual will integrate and find a job in a particular location. The idea was to present the probability in percentages, which would be more accurate than a prediction without machine learning algorithms. Hence, the aim was to improve the calculation and the ability to manage a more extensive amount of data. Even though the algorithm had not materialised yet, the dispersal and matching system had similarities with the emerging algorithmic technology. The dispersal model, continuously updated with variables aiming to produce more precision in its estimations, is a predecessor to the machine-learning matching algorithms. The development of variables and sub-variables, the adjusting of data and the adding of new statistics are slowly producing more accurate calculations of probable matches between 'newly arrived immigrants' and locations of labour integration. The dispersal and the match-making procedure operate in two temporalities. First, it deals with the present in terms of lead-time reduction and efficient transfers. Second, it deals with the future through estimations and predictions of people's future settlement patterns. The purpose of the calculations is to present a dispersal plan that leads to improved chances for the people dispersed to find a job and settle down. This long-term settlement cannot be checked in the present. However, the preciseness of the calculation and the estimated probable outcomes can. While neglecting housing as a precondition to settling down, the dispersal model improves the technological framework for calculating optimal matches with the variables at hand. It is in the neglect of variables that the critique on algorithmic rationality helps us to understand the logic of the dispersal and matching system as well.

According to Ian Lowrie, an anthropologist studying algorithms, functionality and efficiency are the essence of the science of algorithms. The epistemic ground of the algorithm is what constitutes its rationality and not its ontological inquiry of reality (Lowrie, 2017). Following Ian Hacking, Lowrie states that 'the *sine qua non* of mathematical reasoning, historically, has been the work of proof' (2017, p. 6). In contrast, according to Lowrie, data science working with algorithms, even though dependent on mathematical axioms, has replaced the inquiry of truth making and proof with the usefulness and functionality of the algorithm (Lowrie, 2017, p. 6). This means that the algorithm's efficiency will define its validity and functionality and not the data used concerning what it represents. That is to say that an algorithm built without a particular variable, for instance, housing in the case of resettlement, can still be more or less efficient in relation to what data is fed into the algorithm. Therefore, we should ask: what are the characteristics of the data? This question relates to what I

previously mentioned as a process of creating standardised and simplified objects. The algorithm lacks content and operates in coordination with data sets, metrics and variables. Data are not, according to Lowrie, reducible to information. Data are, in the context of algorithms and computation, 'digital traces of real processes or objects capable of being manipulated within computational environments (Lowrie, 2017, p. 9)'. The last part suggests that it has to be an object capable of being manipulated within the computational environment. In other words, data are computable. On the other hand, information can vary and create entities that are not compatible with calculative computations. Thus, data cannot always consider the irregularities and complexities of the object it is trying to use as data but has to work with standardisations and simplifications to make it computational. I would say that this argument also goes for the dispersal and matching system, which moulds people into computable entities. It is mirrored in the processes of primary matching criteria, i.e. the calculations made in the dispersal model, which then are matched, *if possible*, through the secondary matching criteria.

Paolo Totaro and the physicist Domenico Ninno bring forward a broader philosophical critique of algorithmic logic and modern rationality. In short, drawing from sociology, philosophy and physics, they argue that it is evident that 'the mathematical function regularly clashes with interpretations seeking to find an absolutely valid content for the physical relations it represents' (Totaro & Ninno, 2014, p. 41). While calculations and algorithmic processes might function accurately, entities represented by reductive descriptions fail to elicit the desired exactitude. Within the scope of political administration and bureaucracy, Totaro and Ninno argue that technocratic attempts to eliminate informal elements through formalisation processes usually aggravate the problem of efficiency and precision (2014, p. 42). The dispersal and matching system exemplified the problem of precision and inaccuracy by, on the one hand, constantly seeking the exactitude of certain variables while, on the other hand, omitting others. Therefore, the algorithm's functionality does not necessarily ensure that the results on the ground will be as optimal as the intentions of the calculation. In other words, the kind of data and how the data are formalised and delineated will have importance for the results on the ground, which is a reality externally located to the endogenous instrumental reliability of the calculation. However, this did not have to be a problem. The dispersal and matching system aimed to solve the problem of dispersal in the present. The outcomes visible in the future had secondary importance. The issues that would arrive from housing shortages – e.g. further mobility and

displacement – were deferred into the future and delegated to the municipal administrations and local governments.

Hence, calculative devices like algorithms and the calculative dispersal model are like discursive statements in the sense that they highlight certain things while obscuring others. Amore and Piotukh assert that, in the age of big data, calculative devices filter what we see and create novel ways of perceiving the world. They engender new visibilities and invisibilities (2016, p. 5). The dispersal model operated similarly by rendering visible some information while ignoring and invisibilising others. However, this partial vision is not necessarily unintended. As noted by many scholars in critical migration studies, invisibilisation or partial blindness is often part of the strategy of governing migration (see e.g. Tazzioli, 2020; Whyte, 2011). In its various forms, certain blindness has different sorts of functionality. For instance, by ignoring rules around taking fingerprints, states that do not want to accept asylum seekers can get round the Dublin III regulation (Bacchetta & Martin, 2018).

Moreover, the calculative mode of operation and its partial blindness allow endless revisions, allocating the solution to an enigmatic machine (Pasquale, 2015). Suppose the dispersal and matching system calculations do not play out as intended on the ground. In that case, the calculation can always be adjusted and improved. I argue that the innate ability to constantly improve creates an almost inexhaustive source of anticipation. What's more, the assembled expertise and the statistical and mathematical logic generated legitimacy for the dispersal and matching system. In fact, as Scheel and Ustek-Spilda argue, expert knowledge does not by necessity intend to improve the outputs of migration policy and governance. Instead, organisations produce knowledge to increase legitimacy (Scheel & Ustek-Spilda, 2019, p. 666). However, since the organisation I have analysed in this chapter differs from the ones in Scheel and Ustek-Spilda's article, my argument is slightly different. I argue that the dispersal of 'newly arrived immigrants' aimed to improve the migration policy output, at least, inasmuch as efficiency needed to improve. However, other consequences had to be neglected and deferred to achieve one of the policy outputs. In the meantime, the calculations produced legitimacy and encapsulated political visions in a technological device. In the final section, I will discuss how this partial blindness relates to deferral and the logistification of settlement.

Numeric and calculative operations as practices of deferral

The Settlement Act aimed first and foremost to disperse 'newly arrived immigrants' from asylum centres to municipal care and to involve all municipalities in the reception and integration process to accelerate labour incorporation. Key to this objective is the question, or what I described above as a puzzle, of how to create a quick settlement while ignoring housing as a component of long-term integration and settlement? On the political level, this was solved by enacting the Settlement Act, a coercive dispersal scheme. Chapter 3 described how the sectioning of different steps of the settlement process delimited settlement to primarily a transferal process, which was measured in lead-time. I referred to this as a logistification of settlement. In this chapter, I argue that the numeric and calculative operations are pivotal components in the logistification of settlement. Their place in the settlement process is primarily operational, which is to say that they calculate the dispersal numbers and execute the transfers. However, the dispersal and matching system does more than this. As Scheel and Ustek-Spilda have argued, following the STS literature, quantification and numeric descriptions not only measure phenomena but also enact the object they intend to measure as an intelligible reality (2019, p. 668). The literature that argues that numeric and calculative representations are performative actions often draws from post-structuralist thoughts and philosophers such as Ludwig Wittgenstein, J. L. Austin and Ian Hacking (see e.g. Espeland & Stevens, 2008; Hansen, 2015; Scheel & Ustek-Spilda, 2019). This literature frequently advances the argument that language constructs our understanding of reality.

Even though I advance a similar argument here, I primarily want to highlight the perhaps more trivial and direct outcome of designing this reality, which is that of state negligence. In my case, the dispersal model creates a numeric representation in which 'newly arrived immigrants' are described as dispersal numbers. In this numeric representation, the SMA accounts for some information while other information, in alignment with the government regulation²⁶, is removed from the calculation. While precision seems instrumental to the dispersal model, the operations remove information that could improve its exactitude. I am thinking primarily of the local housing market, which the previous calculative device included. Besides omitting this variable, the match-making process between 'newly arrived immigrants' and locations offered some secondary criteria, which were applied if they did not preclude the flows and quick transfers. These calculations and match-making routines represent political decisions, even if they do not constitute politics.

²⁶ *Förordning (2016:39) om mottagande av vissa nyanlända invandrare för bosättning*

The dispersal and matching system carries out policy efficiently and transparently. Still, it operates as an enigmatic machine (Pasquale, 2015), encapsulating and black boxing parts of the politics of neglect into the calculations, producing a reality in which housing shortages do not exist. The dispersal and matching system equips the SMA in its task to do three things: first, it executes political decisions. Second, the precision and instrumentality make policy execution appear like objective and neutral operations. And third, one of the obstacles producing the problem in the first place is deferred to the next level of administration.

In the following chapters, I will follow the materialisation of the absent variable and the consequences of removing the housing market from the calculation. I argue that the practices that emanate from deferring the housing shortage are the work that maintains the logistical fantasy of smooth and even flows from asylum centres to municipal care.

6

The organisation and spatialisation of deferral

One of the first modular facilities built for ‘newly arrived immigrants’ was located in Fagersjö, behind a grocery store in a small suburban area about forty minutes from the city centre of Stockholm. The facility stood on a football pitch surrounded by block apartments. It consisted of two parallel rows of brown wooden barracks erected on top of each other. Between the two compartments, there were four similar grey units forming a square. These four units comprised the office space for the people working at the facility. Here, I had an appointment with the manager of the facility.

The manager and two of her colleagues received me kindly with coffee and sweets in one of their meeting rooms. They told me about their organisation and the daily routines at the site, consisting primarily of tending to the tenants and running what was called ‘*boskola*’,²⁷ which I will focus on later in Chapter 8. Suffice to say here is that *boskolor* attended to issues concerned with the home, the housing market and, especially, finding new homes for the dwellers. Besides the *boskola*, the manager and the crew offered support and advice on finding jobs. After the interview, we took a tour of the facility. We started with the upper floor of one of the buildings. A corridor crossed the middle of the modular units dividing them into two rooms à nine square metres. One of the manager’s colleagues smirked, saying that they were exact replicates of the cabins on Silja line, a ferry that runs between Sweden and Finland. There was a small bed, a table in front of the window and a small bathroom. Everything was tiny and stuck to the walls. This facility was just one example of many

²⁷ I use the Swedish term ‘*boskola*’ (plural: *boskolor*) throughout as there is no easy translation for the phenomenon.

temporary housing solutions that emerged after the enactment of the Settlement Act.

The municipal administrations often deployed workers' barracks and container homes to compensate for the lack of available housing. At first glance, the buildings symbolise the results of failed policy and friction in the logistical transfers, resulting in sub-optimal living conditions. They make visible the cracks in the system and the unavailability of housing. Hence, they symbolise at once both the so-called refugee crisis and the housing crisis. Theoretically, they embody the implementation of the logistification of migrant settlement management, a sort of warehousing in container houses. However, as I will explore further in this chapter, they also represent the perpetuation of an infrastructure of temporary or transitional housing for 'newly arrived immigrants'. Rather than preparing permanent housing solutions to which the people in the temporary homes could transition, the municipal administrations in Stockholm developed organisational structures and bureaucratic routines to stabilise the management of transitional housing. This means that transitional housing as temporary solutions became permanent solutions. I conceptualise the re-organisation of bureaucratic structures and the stabilisation of transitional housing as a substitution for permanent housing solutions and what enabled a further deferral of the housing shortages. This is work carried out in place of housing. While the previous chapter described the calibration and fine-tuning of weight variables to compensate and defer the material lack of available housing, this chapter turns to the local materialisation of temporary homes, re-organisation of bureaucratic structures, and the deferral of housing in Stockholm County and in particular the municipality of Stockholm. The municipal organisational work and the buildings I describe in the chapter represent a bridging required to maintain the fantasy of smooth flows. I advance two arguments in this chapter. First, the organisational work and the stabilisation of an infrastructure of temporary homes enabled the continuous deferral of the housing shortage. Second, the stabilisation of the organisation and the emerging temporary housing infrastructure created a post-asylum threshold. The period of waiting that the 'newly arrived immigrants' experienced in asylum centres after obtaining residency permits continued in municipal accommodations, where it took on a novel institutional character. The fast transfers could take place thanks to the temporary accommodations.

The first two sections in this chapter deal with the initial emergency solutions, the temporal pressure inflicted upon the municipality and the growing number of areas with temporary modular housing. I will alternate between a helicopter

perspective on Stockholm County and the municipality of Stockholm. Then, I focus on the expansion of the administrative units working with the reception of 'newly arrived immigrants'. Similarly, this part of the chapter alternates between intra-municipal structures and particular administrations and organisations working solely within the municipality of Stockholm. It attends to the logistical vocabulary and the notion of transitional housing as a contemporary and historical method of avoiding the cementation of social classes in the built environment. Following this section, the chapter elaborates on the temporal delineation of the post-asylum threshold and how this relates to ambiguities and conflicts of interests arising from the formulation and implementation of the Settlement Act. Although the municipality of Stockholm is an example that stands out from the rest of the Swedish municipalities, it is thanks to this idiosyncrasy that broader structural and ideational underpinnings of the local implementation of the Settlement Act become visible.

Acceleration of transfers and emergency housing

In 2016, temporary modular housing of various kinds started to appear around the municipalities in Stockholm. These constructions were short-term housing solutions for 'newly arrived immigrants', who the SMA had transferred from asylum centres to cities and towns all around the country. Each year between 2016 and 2017, the municipalities in Stockholm County housed almost 7 000 people. During these two years, Stockholm city alone arranged transitional housing for more than 7 000 'newly arrived immigrants'. The housing market in Stockholm had been constrained for at least a decade, forcing municipalities to be creative. From this viewpoint, the Settlement Act was not only a new dispersal policy but a political instrument and an intervention in municipalities' local housing policies. Ironically, by omitting the housing market as a variable of dispersal while accelerating the transfer from asylum centres to cities and towns, the local housing situation moved up the political and administrative agenda through the backdoor, forcing municipalities to take immediate action.

However, the Settlement Act inflicted no sanctions upon the municipalities that refused to house the 'newly arrived immigrants'. According to Finn, national expert and coordinator of the Settlement Act at the SMA, some municipal administrations exploited this. Occasionally, transferring people required playing hardball. Finn explained that some municipalities thought they could buy time by putting pressure on politicians, asserting they had no available housing. By pressuring the government, stating adamantly that the

housing shortage made it impossible to house ‘newly arrived immigrants’, Finn said, the municipal administration thought they could get around the law or, at least, negotiate the dispersal numbers. Consequently, the SMA and the municipalities negotiated timelines and due dates. Still, municipalities were pushing the process ahead of themselves. The SMA started to develop routines and initiated dialogues with regional experts and their contacts on the ground, developing equally harsh responses. Finn said: ‘Well, then we just send them off to the municipalities and tell them that in two weeks, this person will stand on the steps to your municipal office’. Finn and the SMA’s strategy corresponded with what I thought was a rumour or an urban myth. Many street-level officials had told me that one morning in one municipality, a ‘newly arrived immigrant’ stood on the doorstep of the city office in shorts and sandals, carrying nothing but a small suitcase. The person had been relocated to Sweden through the UN resettlement programme and matched to this municipality – I never knew which one – that had not complied with their assigned responsibility. The story, with the caricature of the refugee in sandals, conveyed the message that people would come no matter how restrained the local housing situation was. Hence, they should better be prepared. This story also depicted the match-making process as less a match-making and more a transfer of people.

Figure 4. This picture is from a facility in the northern part of the municipality of Stockholm. A family of ten shared three similar rooms, each the size of 20 square metres. The family rented each room for approximately 650 Euros. (Photo by author)



Temporary and ad-hoc emergency housing solutions characterised the first period after the new law entered into force. The municipality of Stockholm erected barracks, deployed hostels and hotels and refurbished and adapted vacant retirement homes to keep up with the speedy transfers. In comparison to other municipalities in the county, the municipal administration of Stockholm had to find accommodation for 2 800 people in 2016, while, for instance, Nykvarn, in the same county, had to find solutions for 41. The differences in size and resources between the municipalities and the number of assigned ‘newly arrived immigrants’ shaped the strategies of administration and organisation and the type of housing offered to them. For instance, while the municipality of Stockholm was deploying emergency housing solutions, the municipal administration planned and constructed temporary modular housing of higher standards, creating a reliable infrastructure of liveable temporary housing. Stockholm’s city administration worked steadily to replace the first wave of emergency solutions with new temporary housing. This development made the municipality of Stockholm a unique case in the county, routinising and physically materialising a new type of transitional housing for only ‘newly arrived immigrants’. It meant that neither the municipal administration nor the local government intended to transition the tenants to the regular housing stock. Instead, the municipality arranged an organisation and infrastructure of temporary housing and deferred the housing shortage into the future. Alongside constructing these temporary modular facilities of a higher standard, the municipality re-organised and expanded its bureaucratic administration working with ‘newly arrived immigrants’, which I will attend to below.

Temporary modular housing

The adjective ‘temporary’ refers not only to the tenants’ short-term leases. The units were built using temporary building permits that allowed them to be in place for fifteen years maximum.²⁸ Often, the municipality procured private actors who delivered the temporary homes. The private actors were often large construction firms like Scandia and smaller companies like Boxframe, which had developed a method and built a machine to refurbish and reuse retired shipping containers as flexible homes. The municipal administration rented or bought the modular homes and sublet them to the ‘newly arrived immigrants’. The construction firms often restored workers’ barracks or remade containers

²⁸ After 5 or 10 years, depending on the length of the permit obtained initially, the permit could be prolonged by 5 years at the time (PBL 2010:900 chapter 9, 33).

as buildings and dwelling units that were easily transported and put into place, and that were subsequently easily removed as well. Despite the differences between these areas and the companies' pre-fab construction choices, most of the first temporary houses had a makeshift appearance. The container structures or the worn-out wooden panels that served as the exterior of some of the workers' barracks were common traits. Furthermore, the elevated foundations of the buildings, the visible outer cables and pipelines, corrugated tubes lying on a recently prepared provisional gravel foundation and a path leading to an electrical enclosure nearby, and the often-deserted surroundings were typical characteristics.

Figure 5. Temporary housing container in Huddinge municipality. (Photo by author)



One of the facilities I visited was located on the edge of an industrial and warehouse area in a coastal municipality north of the municipality of Stockholm. To get to these barracks from the commuting station, I walked on a narrow sidewalk passing through a landscape of warehouses, garages and depots with parked trucks and heavy construction vehicles. On the other side of the road, behind the seemingly unorganised piles of construction leftovers lying next to the fence, I could see more warehouses and some lunch restaurants. Deeper into this landscape, I could glimpse jet boats looking deceptively tiny, wrapped in plastic stored on a metal grid.

Figure 6. Temporary modular housing and its surroundings. (Photos by author)



The facilities were commonly divided by gender. For example, the red barracks at the edge of the warehouse area (Figure 6) housed men only. Here, tenants shared a living room and kitchen. Each of them had a small private room with a small bed, a desk, a toilet and a shower cramped into nine square metres. These kinds of transitional housing were common in the county.

Woodlands separated the warehouse landscape from small farmlands and barns in the area. The area became desolate early when the workshops and lunch restaurants closed around 4 pm. On my way home after a couple of hours in the area, I scrolled the site on Google maps on my phone. The houses were missing, just a flat gravel plot with some rocks and a truck chassis. It seemed like a leftover plot of land that quickly could be restored to how it looked before the barracks were put there. One of the conditions for building on temporary permits was that the builder restored the area to its previous state. These areas were ghostly in that sense; their emplacement hinged upon their removal and non-existence from the built environment and history.

These kinds of barrack and container homes, detached from residential areas with less exposed locations in warehouse landscapes, were common in some of the more sprawling municipalities on the periphery of Stockholm County. In municipalities with a denser urban fabric, the temporary modular houses were instead located on interstitial plots in residential areas. These facilities resembled housing complexes on two or three or even four floors. The municipal administration deployed parking lots or areas where schools or kindergartens had recently been closed down. Besides the geographical

location, there were differences between the first generation of temporary modular housing and what could be called a second generation. Particularly in Stockholm's municipality, the emergency solutions – the workers' barracks and apartments in retirement homes and hostels – were being replaced by standardised large-scale temporary modular housing. These were detached yet not isolated sites. They took the shape of their own transient neighbourhoods in the vicinity of more permanent ones.

Figure 7. An area with modular housing along the motorway in the City of Stockholm. (Photos by author)



During my fieldwork, I identified and mapped 37 areas with temporary modular houses spread out in the 26 municipalities, and more were either under construction or in the planning stage. However, appeals from neighbours and public contestation had paused the construction of several buildings and, in other cases, momentarily suspended the plans to construct additional facilities. Temporary modular housing facilities were controversial compared to other housing solutions. According to a report from the Nordic research institute Nordregio, protests and local reactions were more common in cities and towns that used temporary solutions like modular housing than in those that offered accommodation in the regular or private housing stock (Stjernberg et al., 2020, p. 93). Moreover, Nordregio's survey showed that the critical local reactions towards housing 'newly arrived immigrants' were, in some cases, of a racist and violent nature (Stjernberg et al., 2020, p. 94). Interviews I conducted with officials confirm that there were indeed cases of vandalism of temporary modular housing and threats from racist and nationalistic organisations.

The temporary modular houses embodied and concretised the local unfolding of the so-called refugee crisis. The debates concerning the buildings gave them additional visual exposure, which in some cases provoked local reactions and contestations against the rapid proliferation of 'shanty-towns', as they were referred to in a protest.²⁹ However, on the national level, the most common solution was to offer the 'newly arrived immigrants' temporary contracts in apartments in the regular housing stock (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2020a, p. 50; Stjernberg et al., 2020, p. 90). The temporary housing modules emerged in Stockholm more prominently than anywhere else in the country, a region plagued by privatisation and marketisation. As symbols of not only the 'refugee crisis' but also the increasingly exclusionary and unequal housing market, they provoked reactions connected to housing policies too. In social communities on the Internet, the 'newly arrived immigrants' were portrayed as spoiled 'luxury migrants' expecting permanent homes in central Stockholm upon their arrival,³⁰ alluding to stereotypical figures of the 'bogus asylum seeker' and 'queue jumper' (see e.g., Hugo, 2002; Neumayer, 2005).

From initial emergency solutions such as barracks to neighbourhoods with housing modules in the municipality of Stockholm, transitional housing complexes were becoming standard solutions. Simultaneously, a re-organisation of municipal units and a restructuring of administration were underway, accompanying the construction of these temporary spaces. As Jonathan Darling (2014) and others (e.g. Hinger et al., 2016) have asserted, migration governance is a practice concerned with materiality and spatiality in many respects. It is a machinery producing documents and papers, passports and fences; it creates refugee camps, reception centres and deportation centres. The temporary modular homes are another example of how migration management produces materiality and spatiality. However, they are also examples of how migration management and, in this case, settlement management spread to other policy domains. On the one hand, the buildings are material and spatial representations of the omitted housing variable in the dispersal and matching system described in the previous chapter. They enable the transfer from state asylum centres to municipal social and labour integration. On the other hand, they also expose a broader urban logic and what Alexander Klose has called an 'order of thinking' (Klose, 2015, p. x). The

²⁹ See for instance the news article 'Modulmotståndare fick applåder', published in 2016-12-13 in the local newspaper *Mitt i Haninge*. <http://ret.nu/Jw5OWL6Q>. Accessed 2017-11-22

³⁰ See, for instance, the thread on *Flashback* 'Nyanlända tvingas bo i tält pga Solna har en opartisk boendepolitik', from 3 November 2018.

container symbolises more than the shipping industry today. The emergence of a pop-up architecture with flexible modular building structures turns containers into ubiquitous objects that appear in temporary construction of all sorts. The modular container constructions' flexibility is one side of the coin, whereas precarity is the other (Harris, 2016). The rapid temporary buildings erected using temporary permits are solutions at the expense of the residents living in them, as I will explore further in the next chapter. As a result, while the flexibility of modular units momentarily solved the municipal administration's housing issue, the housing problem was still present for the tenants. The problem was merely deferred into the future. At the same time, these spaces of deferral engendered an extension of waiting commonly associated with life in asylum centres or camps. These circumstances emerged now again at the municipal administrative level due to the precarity, uncertainty and the exclusionary mechanisms in the housing market.

The emergency infrastructure and the 'hotelisation' of managing the housing crisis (Nowicki et al., 2019), leading to the emergence of entire temporary neighbourhoods, were accompanied by a parallel re-organisation of municipal bureaucratic administration and co-operation with various organisations. I argue that this process, which intended to create better conditions for settling down, at least temporarily, also accentuated a liminal post-asylum threshold. I will now turn to the municipality of Stockholm, where this accentuation appeared most palpable.

Transitional housing, not social housing

Magnus, head of the unit working with 'newly arrived immigrants' at SHIS, had pointed me to the facility in Fagersjö, which I described in the introduction to this chapter. SHIS, or *Stiftelsen hotellhem i Stockholm*, is a municipal foundation that provides transitional homes to the social services in the municipality of Stockholm. For decades, SHIS has assisted people excluded from the housing market for one reason or another. The municipal budget for 2016 appointed SHIS to help the social services to provide transitional housing for the 'newly arrived immigrants'. It started as a temporary project, but soon, SHIS got a more permanent role. As a result, the management at SHIS created a new branch to work with this particular group. Magnus would be in charge of getting the unit, called *VoN (Verksamhetsområde Nyanlända)*, in place. The task proliferated quickly, and with that, so too did the professionalisation of work geared towards 'newly arrived immigrants'.

SHIS operates in the municipality of Stockholm only. Therefore, the organisation's history and background concern only Stockholm city's management of groups at the margins of the housing market. However, SHIS's historical growth and development epitomise more than a marginal trend in Stockholm. It reflects a historical political crossroads between social housing and affordable homes available for all. Transitional homes supplement the political project, opting for accessible homes with high living standards for all. While social housing cemented economic divisions in the built environment, transitional housing worked as a temporary solution for those who were momentarily excluded from the housing market. Instead of opting for differentiated and segregated housing solutions, transitional homes, accompanied by social programmes, worked, supposedly, as a launching pad into the housing market. The emergence of temporary modular homes for 'newly arrived immigrants' and the evolution of *boskolor* need to be understood against this background.

Stockholm municipal council founded SHIS in 1963.³¹ Since then, the municipal foundation has provided dwellings to those who have had difficulty entering the housing market. The board of SHIS decided first to explore how to improve the living conditions in the doss-houses. As a result, by the end of the 1960s, SHIS constructed three new buildings with hotel apartments for single men and women. From the outset, SHIS was committed to offering social support in addition to housing and to preparing tenants for the housing market. Later in the 1970s, SHIS expanded its operations to include homeless people with substance-use disorders. The social health and care services deployed the doss-houses of now-improved living standards as a means of transit on their rehabilitation process. The purpose was to create a rehabilitation route with different steps that would empower people and enable them to live in hotel apartments and then integrate into the regular housing market. SHIS worked closely with the social services to get tenants on their feet and eventually out into the regular housing market. SHIS has always been a receptive organisation, adapting to needs defined by the municipal government. It means that its target group shifted according to what the local government deemed to be a group in need. As such, SHIS's work mirrors local welfare and housing policies.

As depicted in Chapter 3, the state introduced the so-called 'local strategy' in 1985 to involve more municipalities in the reception of refugees. This year

³¹ The historical overview of SHIS stems from a brochure that Magnus kindly sent to me. The brochure is called *Från möblerat rum till modern lägenhet, Stiftelsen hotellhem i Stockholm 1963–2013*.

marked a new era in SHIS's history. The municipal council appointed SHIS to organise transitional homes for refugees, mainly men that arrived without families. This task grew significantly during the Balkan war in the 1990s. To cope with the growing responsibility, SHIS deployed vacant hospital buildings and office buildings to house refugees, much like the time that proceeded after the events in 2015 and the enactment of the Settlement Act. However, SHIS had terminated this task by 1995, as many refugees moved back to the countries in the former Yugoslavia or into Sweden's regular housing market.

After a comprehensive investigation of SHIS in 1996, the city administration decided to make a clear distinction regarding responsibilities between SHIS and the social services. As a result, SHIS's work would, from then on, more clearly focus on the provision of transitional homes. However, despite the clear separation of responsibility areas, SHIS had to work with the social aspects of helping their tenants to leave the transitional homes and enter the regular housing market.

This brief historical exposé describes how SHIS targeted social adaptation and transit homes rather than social housing. Even if SHIS's work has similarities with social housing, the organisation has never defined their work as social housing but as social measures concerning housing. In Swedish, it is called *bostadssociala insatser*. A significant difference between SHIS's method and social housing is that their efforts do not target housing but people. When I asked Magnus to compare SHIS to social housing, he asserted that SHIS does not build social housing. Instead, Magnus stated, the dwellings SHIS deployed were predominantly part of the permanent housing stock. The temporary modular housing was an exception. Of course, in the early days, SHIS had constructed hotel apartments that were not part of the regular housing market, which are still used. Furthermore, SHIS did not expect or encourage tenants to stay in SHIS's apartments. Instead, during their time in the transitional homes, SHIS assisted them in adapting to the regular housing market. Magnus told me that the term social housing does not appear in internal documents or communications. However, SHIS uses the term occasionally when communicating with an international audience. I emphasise the distinction because there is a clear link between *boskolor*, which I will revisit in Chapter 8, and the idea of creating change in people rather than in the built environment.

Researchers Anna Granath Hansson and Björn Lundgren have identified two general traits that define social housing. First, the buildings are long-term

housing solutions for people with limited financial resources. Second, social housing is part of a system that offers below-market rents with some public or private financial support (Granath Hansson & Lundgren, 2019, p. 162). None of these traits applied to SHIS's transitional housing. In fact, the rents paid by 'newly arrived immigrants' were not always, but often, above-market rents.

The comparison between SHIS and social housing exposes an ideological legacy rooted in the early 20th century and a shifting character. The long era of the Social Democratic reign in Sweden, between 1932 and 1976, gave ample room and time for long-term societal reforms to improve the population's living conditions, which resulted in what until today is called *Folkhemmet* (Mack, 2017, p. 21). The concept alludes to the nation-state as a 'home' (*hemmet*) that embraces all people (*Folk*). The term worked conceptually as a metonym for Sweden's remaking of the country 'from a place of class and housing disparities to a new modern welfare state whose socioeconomic differences have ostensibly been levelled' (Mack, 2017, p. 22). The new political direction included extensive housing reforms, which would produce both jobs and high standard housing for all. The Swedish state and government were critical of social housing as a solution for the socially and economically disadvantaged, which was common in many countries in Europe. Instead of building ear-marked housing for different groups, standardisation of housing for all conveyed the political imaginary of a classless society and the growing middle class as the seed to a more equal society (Mack, 2017, p. 23). However, these housing policies did not eradicate the problem of poverty. People who could not enter the housing market still existed. Hence, organisations and other initiatives filled in where the state was absent. For instance, in 1932, a non-profit association called *Stockholms bospisningsförening* was founded in Stockholm to aid families and single people excluded from the housing market with lodging and food. SHIS replaced this non-profit later in the 1960s. The state could avoid social housing by building for the entire population and filling the gaps with temporary initiatives and solutions. Instead of having stigmatised tenements or slums, the temporary solutions pushed people into the regular housing market sooner or later without bolstering social hierarchies. At least, this was the idea.

The buildings that started to appear in 2016 for 'newly arrived immigrants' altered this image a bit. Except for the temporal limitations of the housing contracts and the building permits, SHIS's new facilities began to look much like social housing, delineated areas physically excluded from *folkhemmet*, the only difference being that they were expensive and temporary. Hence, they

resembled social housing but without security and stability. I argue that they were a materialisation of a post-asylum threshold. In the following section, I describe the organisational expansion of this threshold and the institutionalisation of deferral.

Institutionalising deferral

I met Magnus from SHIS twice. We met in his offices the first time, which he shared with two of his colleagues. The office was located on the ground floor in one of the hotel apartment buildings built during SHIS's early days. Both times, he brought up the almost unbelievably speedy work pace that characterised their work. He had been on the job for a little more than a year. His team consisted of around 50 employees in total. They focused primarily on finding temporary solutions to house 'newly arrived immigrants' and on recruiting more personnel. He struck me as a man that would accept a good challenge. Magnus said:

When we started, in 2017, we had six facilities. By the end of 2017 we were 18. There is nothing similar in this country. I have been to many conferences where I have talked to people and...*yeah, we come from this and this housing company and we are working with this.* Okay, and how many assigned [newly arrived immigrants] did you have? And you get the answer 58. And it makes you think. That many people I 'move' (my quotation marks) during an afternoon.

The use of the term 'to move' – not as oneself moving somewhere but moving other people – coupled with the quantification of people renders the image of an operation on an industrial scale. This vocabulary shares similarities with how people were described in the calculations of dispersal numbers as bricks to be transferred and matched. On this level, Magnus operated on the ground, finding places, refurbishing vacant offices and retirement homes or anything that was available that could be turned into habitable spaces. Magnus and his team were under a lot of pressure to deliver housing solutions, which they managed to do in an organised and efficient way. He took pride in this. Efficiency was a virtue and, as I will return to soon, words alluding to logistical arrangements were common lingo among the municipal officials I interviewed.

The second time I met Magnus, in March 2020, was almost exactly two years after our first meeting. He had moved on, becoming head of security for the entire SHIS, which meant dealing with safety issues in all the facilities and apartments that SHIS ran. He left the unit after splitting it into two branches, VoN1 and VoN2. In a document proposing this split addressed to the

management of SHIS, Magnus asserted that by the end of 2019, VoN would occupy 45–50 per cent of SHIS's total housing stock. In addition, the staff had already grown to 75–80 people, including the temporary employees. Also, Magnus claimed in the document that VoN would run more than 50 per cent of SHIS's entire housing stock with between 26 and 27 facilities divided into five to six sections. From an organisational point of view, the expansion of VoN had been a success in the sense that it had managed to deliver 27 facilities with homes to the 'newly arrived immigrants'. Moreover, the new areas with temporary modular neighbourhoods provided better houses than the initial emergency shelters. But also, as a result of the expansion of this organisation and the emerging complexes with modular housing, temporary or transitional housing was becoming increasingly ethnically differentiated and racialised, because 'newly arrived immigrants' did not reside in the same facilities as the other half of SHIS's tenants. As areas with temporary modular housing proliferated, this division became more accentuated, forming a physical post-asylum threshold.

The two new units, divided by sections and facilities, would now enter a new phase in 2020. At the time I spoke to Magnus, two new managers were being recruited. One was already in place. While Magnus's main task had been to find housing and construct new facilities, the two new managers would develop strategies to remove tenants from the homes and let other people from asylum centres move in. As previously mentioned, residing in SHIS's transitional dwellings required participation in activities to strengthen the tenants' chances of entering the regular housing market. When living in the SHIS homes, the 'newly arrived immigrants' had to participate in so-called *boskolor*, where SHIS offered them help in finding their next home. With temporary housing and *boskolor*, SHIS and the municipal administration developed professionalised routines to cope with the new law while at the same time circumventing and deferring the broader issue of housing shortages. The system of reception and accommodation was, thus, organised around the circulation of people.

The delegation of responsibility to SHIS mirrors a logic of continuous deferral. First, as previously seen, the state transferred 'newly arrived immigrants' to municipalities no matter the local housing availability. Second, in the case of Stockholm's municipality, the housing responsibility was allocated to SHIS, an organisation that does not offer permanent housing but transitional housing. Third, SHIS reallocated the responsibility to the tenants themselves. As a result, the municipal administration and local government substituted secure

housing with temporary homes and *boskolor*. This reallocation of responsibility and deferral of the housing shortage is partly a result of the reforms initiated in the 1990s, which I described in Chapter 3. Since the 1990s, a vast majority of the municipalities in Stockholm have privatised large shares of the public housing, basically, outsourcing the responsibility of housing provision to the private sector. With a reduced capacity to rapidly offer accommodation and proper settlement conditions, the municipality had to find temporary solutions while preparing the people for a harsh and exclusionary housing market. Hence, this deferral brings together the logic of migration management and austerity politics (see e.g., Dajani, 2021; Georgiou et al., 2020; Soederberg, 2019). It reproduces suspension and materialises waiting spaces commonly associated with migration and border technologies. Also, the deferral is connected to the retrenchment of the welfare state and what Dajani calls the ‘responsibilization of “resilient” individuals and communities’ that commonly characterise austerity politics (Dajani, 2021, p. 3). Reading migration management alongside austerity politics exposes, Dajani argues, how bordering practices are no longer occupied with the separation of the outside and the inside, but rather centre around ‘creating hierarchies, zones and boundaries in which people are regulated in various ways in shared space’ (Dajani, 2021, p. 7). Drawing from my research, the creation of hierarchies and zones of differentiation emerged from, on the one hand, migrant settlement management that entailed rigid mobility schemes, such as dispersal plans and matching systems. On the other hand, the hierarchies and spaces of differentiation also originated in *laissez-faire* operations and delegations, influenced by decades of marketisation, enabling a constant deferral of the housing shortage. The temporary modular housing epitomises this threshold between migrant management and the housing market, which produces a distinct sense of being suspended from life while also pushed into further mobility.

Conflicts of interests and ambiguity

The previous sections described and analysed the spatial and organisational development connected to the expansion of temporary modular housing, focusing on the municipality of Stockholm and SHIS. Alongside this development, a process of routinisation and stabilisation was underway. During my fieldwork, I attended conferences that collected experiences and expertise from the two years that had gone by since the enactment of the Settlement Act. One of them concerned the organisation of temporary accommodation. Another focused on social and labour integration initiatives and the joint work by municipal and civil actors. In addition, I regularly

attended meetings organised by cross-municipal groups. The group *Etablering Södertörn* drew together officials from neighbouring municipalities in the southern part of the county. Its equivalent in the northern part of the county was called *Koordination Norrort*. Both groups organised seminars and invited expertise from state agencies, where officials could share experiences and knowledge to improve the local reception and settlement. The meetings and conferences revolved around operative and practical issues such as settlement routines, the division of responsibility between different levels of public administration and regulations concerning the duration of housing leases. The discussions on practical matters and the implementation exposed organisational conflicts of interest and ambiguities connected to the duration of municipal responsibility. As I will show in this section, these conflicts and ambiguities that arose from the implementation of the Settlement Act mirrored the process of stabilisation and professionalisation that had taken form.

For instance, the time frames of the housing leases were not set in stone in all municipalities in 2018. As more and more local governments in Stockholm’s municipalities decided on a two-year rule for housing leases, the issue of removing the tenants from their temporary homes became an urgent matter. This was a frequent topic during the meetings in *Etablering Södertörn* and *Koordination Norrort*. To enable the removal of the tenants from the transitional homes, municipalities expanded the part of their organisation working to assist them in finding other homes. Hence, as a result of establishing routines, municipal administrations recruited people to aid the tenants in finding other homes, often in other parts of the country where some available housing existed. When attending one of these meetings, I learned that some municipal administrations had applied for funding from the CAB of Stockholm to finance these positions. However, this funding was earmarked for improving the reception capacity and local integration and settlement initiatives. During the meeting, the chairwoman informed the participants that the money distributed by the CAB could not finance staff who would remove the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ to other municipalities but had to be deployed in local integration projects. Some participants in the meeting had a hard time accepting that it would be possible to improve the capacity of reception and integration without available housing. An official asserted that this would lead to some officials working to remove the tenants from the city and others applying for funding for projects that aimed to integrate ‘newly arrived immigrants’ into the same municipality they were about to leave. In part, this confusion arose from the use of the term ‘newly arrived immigrant’.

In media and public discourse, the neologism ‘*nyanländ*’ (newly arrived [immigrant]) had been in sway for decades, often used as a heuristic without a clear definition. Moreover, it had diverse meanings in different laws and state documents, depending on the context.³² As an example of the impreciseness of the designation, in the state report called *Begreppet invandrare – användningen i myndigheters verksamhet* from 2000, which attended to the term ‘foreigner’, the ministry of culture defined the term ‘newly arrived immigrants’ as people who have immigrated to Sweden relatively recent (Ds 2000:43, p. 23). To sharpen the formulation, the report stated that a benchmark could be two years, commonly the length of the introduction programme. Later, however, the Act on integration measures for certain newly arrived immigrants (SFS 2010:197) confirmed that ‘newly arrived immigrants’ were eligible for integration programmes and financial benefits for 24 months, which gave the definition rigour. This was taken as evidence in many municipalities that after two years the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ were no longer ‘newly arrived’.

On the other hand, according to preceding documents and state reports, the Settlement Act intended to create conditions for all to have good homes at reasonable costs (Ds 2015:33, 2015, p. 25), prompting municipalities to offer permanent housing. Therefore, municipal administrations should provide conditions for the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ to settle down long-term, no matter how long they were considered ‘newly arrived’. Even though, as I assert in Chapter 3, the Settlement Act was mainly a law that strived towards accelerating transfers from asylum centres to municipal accommodation, efficiently integrating people locally was part of this objective. This was the explicit aim of the dispersal model and the matching system. For this purpose, the CAB distributed funding. However, since the law used the term ‘newly arrived immigrant’, municipal governments and administrations argued that the law applied to these people only for 24 months while enrolled in the integration programme. Hence, this ‘semantic lability’ (Herzfeld, 1992) made room for an interpretation that offering ‘newly arrived immigrants’ housing for two years was sufficient to comply with the law. This interpretation and the practice of two-year contracts gained legitimacy after a court case in 2018. An appeal against the decision taken by the municipality in Lidingö, Stockholm, to terminate housing contracts with ‘newly arrived immigrants’ after two years

was rejected by the Administration Court of Appeal. The argument of the appeal was that the termination of the housing contracts ran counter to the law’s intentions. The Administrative Court of Appeal rejected the argument because the law’s purposes were not explicit in the law itself, only in the report and the bill preceding the law³³ and should therefore not be considered in the court decision. As a result, the court case gave further legitimacy to the practice of two-years contracts. However, not all municipalities applied two years leases. The municipalities of Stockholm and Botkyrka offered, respectively, five- and four-year leases. Notably, the example of Botkyrka stood out from the rest. Here, the municipality provided families permanent homes after four years of living in temporary homes, which created severely unequal settlement conditions within the county. While families were offered permanent homes in Botkyrka, most municipalities offered two-year contracts. The municipality of Stockholm offered the tenants five years and the possibility to prolong the lease by two years. However, one of the managers at SHIS told me that they actively worked for an earlier move and encouraged tenants to find new homes within the first two years. After that, the manager of one of SHIS’s facilities told me it would become significantly harder to find a home considering that a steady income and a permanent job position were difficult to get. During the first two years when ‘newly arrived immigrants’ were enrolled in the integration programme, at least they had the state benefits coming in every month. Hence, according to practice, most municipalities in Stockholm strived towards a two-year rule of housing provision.

Furthermore, attending the conference *Bättre bosättning* in 2018 rendered visible another ambiguous dimension of the term. In the introduction address, the speaker discussed the ambiguity in terms of heterogeneity and multiplicity of people classified as ‘newly arrived immigrants’, asserting that they, primarily, were individuals moving to Stockholm. The speaker proposed a comparison with the term used by the social services, ‘users’ or the term inhabitants, or why not just *Stockholmare* to avoid any stigmatising categorisation. This short remark highlighted the liminal character of the term. On the one hand, it signified a state of being a governable object by necessity, a target for a rigid dispersal and settlement scheme, as seen in the previous chapter. On the other hand, it denoted a position targeted for welfare support in municipal integration or just an inhabitant as any other. According to this brief introductory comment, the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ were arguably regular residents in Stockholm who happened to be in need of social support. Magnus, from SHIS, also preferred the term *Stockholmare*. For him, the term

³² In November 2018, Marlene Burwick, from the Social Democrat Party, suggested in a private member’s motion about reviewing the disparate use of the term ‘*nyanländ*’ that a consistent use should be agreed upon. https://riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/motion/enhetlig-definition-av-begreppet-nyanland_H6021615. Accessed 2020-05-23.

³³ See Kamarrätten Mål nr. 4155-18 and Förvaltningsrätten Mål nr. 25142-17.

‘newly arrived immigrant’ served a pedagogical and communicative purpose. On the one hand, a distinction was undesired, and a categorisation seemed unnecessary for the sake of the organisation. Also, it produced a stigma and differentiation. Still, on the other hand, a distinction seemed called for to improve the organisation and to share knowledge as a communicative term. Magnus said:

We don’t use the term newly arrived [immigrant] in our work. We say tenants for the simple reason that we don’t want them to be categorised in that way. They are new *Stockholmare*, and that is how our rhetoric looks like when we talk to them. Then sometimes to make distinctions, we use the term newly arrived [immigrants], but in documentation, when we talk, we say tenants. They are tenants.

However, the term ‘newly arrived [immigrant]’ also was connected to significant re-organisations of municipal administrative work and a re-shaping of (sub)urban space. In the municipality of Stockholm, the expansion of temporary modular housing was coming along, creating small geographically detached neighbourhoods for the so-called ‘newly arrived immigrants’. SHIS developed *boskolor* especially targeting ‘newly arrived immigrants’. Moreover, *boskolor* were spreading to other municipalities and becoming standardised practice. The bureaucratic work and the spatial manifestations contained ‘newly arrived immigrants’ as a category and differentiated them from others.

In sum, the first emergency solutions, described previously, symbolised friction and inoperability in the dispersal and settlement machinery. By developing bureaucratic structures and, to varying degrees, improving the living conditions in the temporary houses, the municipalities gained a hold over the accelerated movement, transforming the friction into what looked like controlled mobility. The formalisation of structures strived to manage the acceleration of transfers from asylum centres while also coping with the housing market restraints. As a result, new thresholds, which pegged the ‘newly arrived immigrant’ to new (sub)urban places emerged.

Logistical vocabulary and the deferral of housing

Hence, the acceleration of transfers gave way for emergency solutions and, soon thereafter, an organisation to deal with temporary housing. As Magnus from SHIS had made abundantly clear, the speed in which they had moved people into the housing modules had little comparison in Sweden. The ensuing re-organisation and expansion of administrative units and the stabilisation of

an infrastructure of temporary housing re-articulated a threshold between asylum and citizenship. However, the emerging and developing bureaucratic practices and spatial materialisations did not create an entirely new liminal position. The position that ‘newly arrived immigrants’ embodied was not a novelty. Being on temporary residence permits while taking language course existed before the enactment of the Settlement Act. Instead, this re-articulation refers to a reinscription of the liminality as it took form against the housing shortage and fast labour integration. While the state designed the Settlement Act to create conditions for settling down, the local implementation of the law produced bureaucratic procedures that kept people on the move. The local implementation of the law in Stockholm, but also in other city-regions in Sweden, contained features described earlier as settlement logistics. This means that creating transfers, managing the speedy circulation of people, in practice, became the prime objective in the local implementation of the Settlement Act. The stabilisation created a post-asylum threshold and continuous mobility for the ‘newly arrived immigrants’.

The officials’ wording also indicated that the settlement process was primarily a logistical operation. The verb ‘to move people’, used by Magnus, alluded to a logistical scheme. The verb ‘match’, which was used many times by the officials at the SMA, was frequently used in street-level bureaucracy too. The use of these verbs aspired to an orderly and politically neutral emplacement of social positions, sustaining an illusion of accuracy and control (Hall, 2021, p. 34). Furthermore, using numbers and finding the optimised ‘match’ between numbers and spaces aligned smoothly with the logistical rationality described in the previous chapter, which conveyed a sense of professionalisation and uniformity between levels of administration. However, the vocabulary reflected also an organisational culture influenced by logistics. The logistical language in policy and organisational achievement goals gave way to a more spontaneous vernacular with affinities to the instrumentality of logistics. An example of this is how an official I met with spontaneously expanded the technological vocabulary, calling their accommodations their ‘hardware’. I asked the SHIS employee how they distributed the apartments to the ‘newly arrived immigrants’:

You mean, how they are matched? Well, we only tell them [Intro Stockholm] what hardware there is, and then they tell us...they look at it and tell us that they have a family...perfect. We place that one in there...so it is they who do the match. And then, we receive the match, we who work in the shop.

The official referred to the match between SHIS and Intro Stockholm,³⁴ which was an administrative unit in the municipal administration of Stockholm that was established in the wake of the enactment of the Settlement Act. Hence, Intro Stockholm coordinated the transfers from asylum centres to SHIS's apartments. The technical and logistical culture was widespread also in this organisation. It was reflected in, for instance, how Intro organised match-making as a sort of warehousing. An official from Intro told me that the standard for matching was 'ten square metres per head', and added that this could vary depending on the family constellations and the available apartments.

This logistical vocabulary and order of thinking are common features in humanitarian logistics architecture (see e.g. Cairns, 2003; Herscher et al., 2017; Scott-Smith, 2019). Furthermore, the vocabulary exposes an organisation that emulates the logic of warehousing, a term mobilised as an analytical metaphor and tool to describe the management of asylum seekers and refugees (see e.g., Ehrkamp, 2017; Vianelli, 2021). In the case of my research, warehousing refers to the logistics of managing speedy and seamless transfers rather than detaining and hampering mobility. It means that rather than securitising and containing migrant mobility, the warehousing intended to create a brief liminal stopover and circulate the 'newly arrived immigrants' out of the facilities. Hence, these spaces and the bureaucratic practices that emerged in the wake of the Settlement Act in Stockholm intended to momentarily solve a problem linked to housing and then steer the 'problem' away from the city. This organisation enabled the circulation of people and the deferral of the housing shortage. As a result, I argue that a post-asylum threshold arose within the nation-state as an extension to the sensation of waiting associated with the asylum procedure in asylum centres. In the following chapter, I will explore some consequences and experiences of inhabiting the post-asylum threshold.

³⁴ 'Intro', as many officials called the organisation, branched off from the social services and worked purely with the administration in welcoming 'newly arrived immigrants', the initial phase after being assigned to Stockholm city. 'Intro' coordinated and planned the arrival of assigned 'newly arrived immigrants' with the SMA. This administrative unit did not have the authority to negotiate the dispersal numbers, but it could propose an alternative arrangement concerning the monthly dispersal numbers to fit the availability of apartments.

Deferred lives in the post-asylum threshold

As seen in the previous chapter, the movement towards accelerated transfers from asylum centres to municipal accommodation, driven by match-making procedures between people and locations on the state level, resulted in a wide range of temporary housing in Stockholm and the institutionalisation of a post-asylum threshold. This threshold refers not only to material and spatial articulations. It also encapsulates a condition of non-belonging and in-betweenness, suspending people's time and deferring their lives (Fontanari, 2015). Hence, contrary to one of the Settlement Act's intentions, which was to relocate people efficiently and optimally to locations where they could settle down, the places that facilitated the transfer engendered hostile and unhomely environments which impeded the 'newly arrived immigrants' process of settling down.

While the previous chapter focused on the organisation and proliferation of administrative structures behind these threshold spaces, this chapter attends to the suspension of time and deferral of life associated with inhabiting them. In the first section, I focus on the sensation of being 'stuck in transit' (Picozza, 2017, p. 239) and the recurrent camp life existence. Rather than defining the camp or camp life from a socio-legal definition, I depart from the people's experiences. I will build this analysis, in particular, around Gabriel and Fareed's description of the temporary home; Gabriel and Fareed are two tenants whom I met when mapping the areas with modular facilities. By doing this, I argue that we see how the migration trajectory extends beyond the asylum process. Also, the chapter situates this condition amidst the collusion between the speedy, albeit circuitous, settlement process and an enduring housing precarity. This broadening of the analytical scope brings attention to

both informal and formal mechanisms of differential inclusion. Hence, the second section extends the analysis to the connections between the post-asylum threshold and the housing market by focusing on accounts of the exclusionary logic in the housing market. In this chapter, I argue that the in-betweenness of this threshold, combined with the pressure inflicted upon its inhabitants by the constant threat of removal, plays a crucial role in shaping the neoliberal self-reliant subject, which complies with and accepts the deferral of a proper housing solution. This argument will be explored further in the following and final chapter. But first, to understand the production of this deferral and self-reliant subject, paying heed to the threshold existence in the temporary modular housing is essential.

Back to camp life

The temporary housing modules were not homes and did not feel like homes. Many tenants I talked to experienced them as a step backwards rather than forward from the asylum centres to a life they had experienced in camps where confinement, suspension and insecurity imbued the everyday. These experiences challenge the notion of linear trajectories and ‘even flows’ from asylum centres to processes of settling down in cities and towns. Instead, they point to temporal complexities, interruptions and contradictions stemming from accelerated inclusive measures, on the one hand, and hampered ‘existential mobility’ and ‘stuckness’ on the other (Hage, 2009; Missbach, 2013). Also, the experiences challenge the conceptualisation of the camp as a spatial configuration at the border between nation-states and a straight line between non-status and status holders. Instead, camp life is articulated as an existential state of being connected to a multiplicity of temporal ruptures and tensions and ensuing uncertainty and deferrals. Rather than departing from a socio-legal framing of the camp, I draw from the experiences of Gabriel and Fareed to situate camp life within the ‘arrival city’ (Saunders, 2011). By doing this, I contrast the teleological notion of departure and arrival (Meeus et al., 2018). From the conversations with Fareed and Gabriel, and their way of describing their homes, the temporary modular houses appeared as a prolongation of the camp rather than sites of arrival.

Gabriel and Fareed lived together with 20 other men in a facility composed of two rows of red, wooden modular barracks. The facility was discretely located at the edge of a middle-class suburban residential area, detached and separated from the family houses. I had scheduled an interview with Gabriel, a 22-year-old Syrian. Gabriel showed me his room. It had a tiny bed wedged into one side of the room, a desk and a toilette, all cramped into a space of nine square

metres. Gabriel had, in addition, managed to squeeze a refrigerator into one of the corners. These were standard barracks which I had seen in several municipalities. Gabriel stayed in a room that an SHIS employee in a different facility had described to me as a replica of the cabins on the ferries between Stockholm and Finland. This was not the first provisional accommodation for Gabriel, who had been on the move for three years. It was just the current one in a chain of provisional shelters. In Sweden alone, he had stayed in two asylum centres before moving to Stockholm. Before that, he stayed more than a year in the basement of a cafeteria in Istanbul, where he also worked twelve hours, six days a week, with a monthly wage of 60 Euros, money he saved up for the trip to Sweden.

Gabriel did not know what he had agreed to when he signed the papers transferring him from the asylum centre to the municipality in Stockholm County. The papers were in Swedish; the interpreter seemed ill-informed or in a rush, giving unprecise summaries and encouraging him to just sign the papers. Gabriel thought he would be given a small apartment, or a studio at least. In his mind, with a residency permit, whatever he was offered by the SMA had to be better than being in an asylum centre. But he did not get the information about what kind of home he was being offered or how long he would be able to stay. In regards to living standards, the asylum centre was much better according to Gabriel. During the interview, Gabriel told me that his neighbour and friend Fareed wanted to talk to me. I had noticed a man in red sweatpants wandering up and down the hallway, the tap of his flip flops as he went back and forth from his room to the kitchen. Fareed was critical of the situation in the barracks, to say the least. He was told he would get a flat and that he would be able to bring his family. But upon his arrival, he understood that this would not be the case.

Kommun [municipal administration] called us there and tell us congratulations, we are now responsible for you. We have one flat for you because you have family and when your family coming, you will get the flat. After one month I come to this camp. And as you see, the room is 3 metres...so my family, actually can't come...because I have a bad situation.

You feel you are not a human. You are a dog. Because you put me in this room. And they know...the government. And...the *kommun* know that they can give us good room, a good house with kitchen, at least a big room with kitchen and a toilette. But these people...they are taking money from us. The government pay money to the *kommun* to take us, but he is taking that money and not giving us anything. Also, now, this guy [Gabriel] is working, and he pays skatt [tax] now for one year, more than one year. He pays skatt, he is working, from morning until night, when he comes here, he needs a good place to sleep. The

neighbours here, they live in houses... his dog has a bigger house than my room. I can take you and show you! His dog house is bigger than my room. I can't bring friends here... I am not a human being? Why you told the government, yeah, we will take this person if you don't have place? Just take the money from the government and you give me... put me in this camp? We are human, even if we are Arab.

We sat in the shared living room next to the shared kitchen on a worn-out leather corner sofa. Besides the couch and the table in front of it, the room was unfurnished. Fareed continued explaining, agitated about the situation in the barracks. He stayed in his room most of the time to avoid people and the everyday commotion. He avoided many of his neighbours, and he felt that many of the officials treated him as less than a human.

And here in this camp. This camp, but the same all the camps, we have drugs, we have marihuana, we have heroine, we have hashish, we have everything. And sometimes we fight, don't do this, don't do this, you say I pay rent, I do too. I don't care! This is not your business.

Fareed excused himself for his bad English. To compensate for our inability to fully communicate with each other, he recited dialogues and illustrated vividly with gestures. Fareed explained that he had tried to find a job to be able to move to another place. So far, he had not had any luck. All available jobs were in the service sector, in restaurants and the like. He had been to a couple of interviews, but nothing that had led to employment. Fareed thought that he was too old. He felt trapped in the barracks, sustained by integration benefits. Most of it, he used to pay the rent, which was equivalent to about 500 Euros a month. Even if the situation was bad here, Fareed emphasised that this camp was not unique. He had seen other camps where friends of his stayed, and they were all similar.

Fareed's account offers a transversal gaze on the camp as an experience not solely connected to legal status or to the camp as a spatial articulation at the frontier of the nation-state. Instead, the experience embodied by Fareed and others exemplify a threshold existence that transcended the distinct spaces of refugee camps, asylum centres, and now, transition homes. From the tenants' perspective, the conditions of temporariness, hampered mobility and uncertainty commonly associated with refugee camps, transit camps and reception centres (see e.g., Drangsdal, 2020b; Hyndman, 2019; Mountz, 2011), were reproduced through the local implementation of a supposedly inclusive settlement state policy.

The temporary modular houses were not camps because they were part of a formal state institution detaining people or keeping them from moving. In fact, it was quite the opposite. The municipal administrations offered the 'newly arrived immigrants' homes for a short period and forced them to move afterwards, keeping them on the move. The logistical process of settlement and the municipal administrative structures offering stopovers did, thus, not hamper people's mobility through captivity but rather by creating circuitous displacement (Bhagat, 2020) in which people were threatened by removal. The camp or camp life is, in Fareed's case, rather a disposition that keeps him from 'moving well' (Hage, 2009, p. 98). In Ghassan Hage's term, moving well refers to the emotional and existential dimension of mobility. The physical mobility involved in migration implies existential mobility, a desire to feel that one is moving according to one's desires. Fareed had plans and dreams of starting a small restaurant, a small business. But he had difficulty finding the motivation and energy when he could not plan the next few months ahead. In this case, immobility lies less in the restriction of movement and more in existential and social immobilisation. From this viewpoint, confinement and forced mobility are not opposites. Instead, they should be seen as operating in pairs, producing stagnation, control, deceleration, acceleration, immobilisation and forced hypermobility (Tazzioli, 2019, p. 3). In the case of the implementation of the Settlement Act, migrants' mobilities were obstructed partly by unclear rules, housing contracts and ensuing uncertain futures. Like Gabriel and many other migrants living in temporary homes, Fareed did not know precisely what he had agreed to when he signed. Fareed explained that when SMA called him to sign the papers for his relocation, he was not informed about the rules or his rights. But he understood that he would have to leave the asylum centre almost immediately and find someplace on his own if he did not sign. Since he had nowhere else to go, there were no options. It was not a matter of choice. On the other hand, he wanted to leave the asylum centre and reunite with his family as soon as possible. Staying at the asylum centre would not bring him closer to his family. However, he had been unaware that the transfer to Stockholm would bring other kinds of quandaries and further mobility and insecurity. Upon arrival at his temporary shelter, he had more papers to sign.

The municipality gave us more papers, sign here, sing here... We don't know what's in the papers at first. But then we understood that it said that they could kick us out when they wanted and that we could not say anything. We could not go to court... We didn't know about that! And the first contract, we signed for six months. Now...two months, two months and two months.

Fareed's lease was renewed two months at the time after the initial half-year lease. The discontinuity and insecurity kept Fareed in constant fear of removal and displacement, which elicited a double relation to the temporary substandard home. While Fareed and many in the same position as him were upset and disenchanted by their housing conditions, they lacked alternatives and feared eviction. As I will show in the next section, this stopover did not automatically prepare the way into the housing market. It was more likely that the tenants of the temporary housing would have to leave Stockholm or stay and continue a precarious existence in structural homelessness.³⁵ This uncertainty, accentuated by the municipal squeeze inflicted upon Fareed and his neighbours through two-month leases, elicited a desire to hold on to this place. This paradox was not uniquely experienced by Fareed. In fact, it was one of the more common sensations among the people I talked to. This contradiction was never more evident than during the protests and political mobilisation against evictions that I followed during my fieldwork. During a week or so in November 2018, tenants from an area with temporary housing modules erected tents outside the facility under the banner 'we won't move!', demanding the right to stay put in their high-rent yet substandard temporary homes. This shows how widespread the forced reaction to stay put in substandard housing was among the people residing in the temporary housing. In Fareed's case, staying in the barracks meant that he could not reunite with his family and had to forcibly reconcile with being in a state of deferred and suspended life. On the other hand, he had no other options in sight. Without a steady income, preferably permanent employment, finding another apartment would be almost impossible. This kept Fareed captive in the camp.

Moreover, the two-month prolongation precluded Fareed and his neighbours from continuity and establishing social networks; it fragmented their everyday life. The imminent threat of displacement deprived them of the 'stillness' required to build community relationships (Gill, 2009). Fareed and Gabriel and many of the tenants I talked to could not anticipate what would happen in the next few months. According to Fareed, the destructive environment in the 'camp' stemmed from this uncertainty, which resulted in a lack of motivation.

The description of the camp life in the temporary barracks is similar to what Elena Fontanari describes as the 'threshold'. Although they are not places of detention, they convey a sensation of confinement beyond the spatial articulation of captivity. Thresholds are, accordingly, a condition of suspended

time, non-belonging and in-betweenness (Fontanari, 2015, p. 716). In the case of the temporary homes, the sensation of confinement did not originate in the politics of detention but rather in the desire to hold on to these places as a reaction to the circuitous management of migrant settlement (Bhagat, 2020). Since it appeared that the alternative was further mobility and structural homelessness, hanging on to the temporary homes was a better option. The following section will describe how this disposition connects to external factors and multiple frames of formal and informal exclusion and inclusion.

'Without an address, you have nothing in Sweden'

The interview with Fareed highlighted also the discrimination in the housing market. While he explained the situation, he simultaneously gave Gabriel a lot of praise:

You know, Gabriel is the best here, he is perfect in Swedish, he is clever, he has a good education, he found a job and is working now. He helps the people here. He translates documents and helps out. He is the best around here but he has no *fast* [permanent] job... If you find an apartment, and you are Swedish the landlord would choose you! Because he [the landlord] doesn't like Syrians, he like European people, he like Swedish people. He doesn't like Syrians or Iraqis or Eritreans. Even if you have money.

The interview excerpt rendered visible the connection between the precarisation of the labour market and the discriminatory housing market. Private landlords could easily dismiss all 'newly arrived immigrants' because they had no permanent employment. But Fareed and many I talked to knew that this requirement also functioned as a pretext for ethnic and racial discrimination. They felt and heard the xenophobic undertones in the landlords' replies.

Most of the people living in the temporary housing I talked to had some kind of part-time job alongside their Swedish courses, which were part of the introduction programme. Some left the introduction programme and took full-time jobs instead. One of my interlocutors told me that he had been recruited to the construction sector with the promise that he would get a permanent position. Instead, his temporary job contract was renewed repetitively, and then one day, his employer said that due to a recession, they would not be able to prolong his contract as they had promised. For many of the 'newly arrived immigrants' as for many people in general, permanent jobs were hard to come by. And without a permanent working contract, accessing the formal housing market, consisting of either home ownership or rentals, was impossible.

³⁵ Structural homelessness denotes people who, for structural reasons, have difficulties accessing the housing market and are forced to live in overcrowded, short-term housing solutions (Socialstyrelsen, 2021, p. 26).

To get a bank loan for an apartment or a family house, you must have a steady and well-paid job and capital for the down payment. Since stable, well-paid jobs were hard to come by, the residents in the temporary housing modules had no choice but to try the rental market. However, entering the rental market could be as demanding as getting a bank loan. The formal rental market relies on a queue system. Therefore, the longer you have waited, the greater the chances of getting a rental. Because of the marketisation and privatisation in the housing market discussed in Chapter 3, the rental housing stock in Stockholm had shrunk significantly. This has resulted in a situation where Stockholm's inhabitants generally queue between ten and twelve years or even more, and on rare occasions less, to get a rental apartment. In addition, a steady income well above the rent is often required to get hold of a rental. Hence, after two years in transitional dwelling solutions and without a regular well-paid job, the rental market was seldom accessible. In short, the residents in temporary housing were excluded from home ownership and the rental market and were referred to the secondary and the informal housing market. Similar to the regular housing market, the secondary housing market had increasingly become a dog-eat-dog-world with sky-rocketing rents and exploitative landlords. Even if many of the tenants in the temporary homes worked double shifts to afford the high rents in the informal market, private landlords often would either reply with hostility or not reply at all to 'newly arrived immigrants'' rental inquiries. As a result, even as their time in the transition shelters approached the due date, they were simultaneously being forced to enter a housing market that excluded them too. The following excerpt comes from an interview with Saad. It illustrates how the interplay between labour precarity and the housing market exacerbated the conditions of settling down.

Saad had previously worked as an Arabic-English interpreter and translator and had a good ear for languages. On the first day of the language classes in the integration programme, his teacher told him Swedish was much too advanced to join the basic Swedish classes. During his time at the asylum centre, Saad studied alone, following YouTube-language channels. Hence, he continued with the more advanced language course. After half a year, he began studying to become an assistant nurse. Saad had less than two months left in the programme when his housing contract with the municipality expired. He explained that he had followed the integration plan and instructions; he had done what was expected of him and more. Still, the municipal administration would make no exceptions, and Saad had to leave.

I'm done in two months, the twenty-second of December I'll be done with it all...what do you call it? Fully trained. What else do they want? Okay, I work, I pay taxes, I'll be done in two months but it is not enough...when it comes to my home...okay...so if they kick me out on the streets, how should I continue with my training? How should I continue with my work? It is impossible. They say: go look for a sublet, go look in the black market.

In combination with studying, Saad worked in a nursing home for the elderly, where he was paid by the hour. Therefore, his paycheck would vary monthly depending on the hours he got at the nursing home. As mentioned, the employment contract played a crucial role in searching for housing in the secondary market. Since Saad did not have a fixed job contract, landlords would often reply with hostility to his rental applications. He explained that they would say: 'don't talk to me, don't send me dm's if you don't have a steady income'. In addition, Saad said, when the landlords found out that he was a *nyanländ*, they asked Saad if he could read and would say that they wanted a steady income and a month's rent in advance, at minimum. In some other cases, they required up to three months' rent in advance.

I said to many I talked to that okay, one month in advance I can pay, even three months' rent in advance before I move in! But a steady job? A fixed income! That means permanent employment! That I do not have. It is difficult. Okay, you're right, I will pay you rent on time every month as you say, on the date you decide, one or two months before. These are the rules in regards to these contracts. I will follow the rules of the contract. But you say you want a steady income? A lot of people don't have that!

While Saad felt he had done everything in his power to meet the requirements of the municipal administration and the demands of the integration programme, it seemed impossible to do enough. Saad had even followed the advice from municipal officials to sign up for housing queues in small municipalities in the north of the country. For instance, he registered with housing companies in Härnösand, more than 400 kilometres north of Stockholm, but the companies told Saad to ask for help in the city where he was registered. In turn, in Saad's municipality, the officials had told him to be more active in his search for housing; he should look more broadly and be creative.

They say: you have to leave, just leave! They don't bother with the consequences. They don't check anything. You had your right to two years of housing, *halas!* That's it. But it doesn't work like that. You'll have people who don't have anywhere to go, what will they do? They won't go to school; they won't continue their jobs. You'll be homeless, and without a job, without anything! What will these people do? What will the societal

consequences be? If they are politicians for real, this is what they have to focus on. What will these people do who don't have a home? If you don't have an address, you got nothing in Sweden!

The account showcases the exclusionary and exploitative conditions in the secondary informal housing market. At least in Stockholm, the formal housing market was merely a mirage. Two years in the housing queue was far from sufficient for accessing the rental market or saving up money for a down payment. In the cases of Stockholm municipality and Botkyrka, the 'newly arrived immigrants' had a better chance since the local administrations offered longer housing leases. But on the other hand, staying for four or five years in a small room did not allow the 'newly arrived immigrants' to reunite with their families. This created a situation in which the residents in the temporary homes had to carefully analyse their options. Either they moved to a smaller town and to an apartment where they could possibly reunite with their families, but where they would have difficulties finding employment, which would be risky if the person had a temporary residence permit,³⁶ or, they stayed put in Stockholm, relying on their slowly growing network, taking precarious jobs and struggling with housing. Often the host municipality assisted 'newly arrived immigrants' with the former, finding an apartment in another town. To this end, municipal officials were compiling a list of landlords and housing companies that accepted 'newly arrived immigrants' with integration benefits for housing. These were always outside Stockholm County.

The dispersal and circuitous management of resettlement worked in tandem with landlords trying to exploit the lack of housing. Although not thoroughly studied, the Swedish Agency for Public Management (SAPM) suggests that private actors have systematically taken advantage of the country's uneven distribution of available housing. Landlords, mainly private, in smaller towns with available apartments frequently reach out to municipalities with housing shortages and offer to house people who cannot access the formal or secondary housing market in the city where they are staying (Statskontoret, 2020, p. 44). Along these lines, a report from the CAB of Örebro shows that private actors buy properties and rent out apartments to 'newly arrived immigrants' and other economically vulnerable groups.³⁷ The landlords expect rents that the tenants

they target cannot afford. Interviews with some of these landlords show that they have misunderstood the regulations and are under the impression that the social services will pay the rent no matter how high they are (Statskontoret, 2020, p. 44). Furthermore, SAPM asserts that the apartments rented out to people collecting integration or social benefits are often substandard and short-term. Accordingly, landlords continue to offer apartments that municipal administrations have deemed unacceptable for housing (Statskontoret, 2020, p. 36). Hence, 'newly arrived immigrants' who took the offer and moved to substandard apartments in smaller depopulating towns were not guaranteed stability. Probably, they would have to move soon again.

'Newly arrived immigrants' are status holders, and the Settlement Act is an inclusive policy. Yet many of those impacted by the new law were subject to subordination, discrimination and segregation. The term differential inclusion captures the condition of being included and at the same time being subject to social stratification. The term does not only take into account the interplay between formal inclusions and exclusions but pays attention to the interplay between formal and informal processes and practices (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, pp. 159–162). For instance, on the one hand, the regular housing market's exclusionary character stemmed from years of privatisation and marketisation. The migrants' exclusion from the housing market did not explicitly derive from a formal or legal exclusion but from a temporal bordering. Simply put, they had not been in the country long enough to be able to access it. On the other hand, the secondary housing market that grew out of the implementation of decades of housing policies was informally exclusionary insofar as it was receptive to racial and ethnic discrimination. Furthermore, these formal and informal exclusionary mechanisms were connected to global developments and the concentration of capital.

As research on the financialisation of housing has shown, global venture capitalists extract profit from a growing housing demand in the formal housing market through, for instance, what researchers have called 'renovictions' (see e.g. Baeten, Westin, Pull, & Molina, 2017; Polanska & Richard, 2019). This adversely affects migrants' chances of entering the more competitive and harsher rental market. Local private actors in the informal housing market follow suit, exploiting those who have already been excluded from the regular housing market. This exploitation operates through both differential and exploitative inclusion processes. For instance, Fareed and Saad had experienced how they were rejected by private landlords in the secondary market in Stockholm. Hence, they were excluded from the formal and informal

³⁶ As stated by Sofi Jansson-Keshavarz and Vanna Nordling (2022, p. 11), by creating insecure housing solutions in which people constantly have to move, migrants with temporary residency permits are precluded from stable conditions required for settling down and ultimately finding a permanent job, which is demanded for permanent residency.

³⁷ SAPM refers to the CAB of Örebro's report *Social dumpning i Örebro län* from 2019 (Statskontoret, 2020, p. 44).

housing market unless they could pay three months' rent in advance. Private landlords are in a position where they can take advantage of both the housing shortage and the 'newly arrived immigrants' vulnerable position, or they can just exclude them. In the meantime, as described by SAPM, landlords in municipalities with a shrinking population and limited labour opportunities offered the 'newly arrived immigrants' with integration benefit apartments in run-downed properties, creating a differentiated and segregated housing system building on neoliberal and exploitative market structures.

As already mentioned, the processes of differential inclusion involve an interplay between housing precarity and labour precarity. Because the 'newly arrived immigrants', to a great extent, were channelled to the low-skilled labour market and precarious working conditions, they were consequently dependent on the informal housing market with insecure living conditions and short-term leases, or without any contract at all. The opening account in the introduction chapter supplements Fareed's and Saad's accounts of how this interplay could unfold. These accounts were not exceptions but part of a 'normalisation of the precarious' (Hunter & Meers, 2018, p. 21, cited in Lombard, 2021, p. 1). The temporary modular houses were not only stopovers into precariousness. As I will discuss in the final section of this chapter, they became a threshold in which its inhabitants were squeezed through the constantly shrinking room of manoeuvre. This position is vital to keep in mind when reading the last chapter of this dissertation, where I explore the bureaucratic practices encouraging and 'motivating' tenants in the temporary homes to adapt to the precarious system, allocating the structural problem of housing and the solution to the 'newly arrived immigrants'.

Squeezed in time and space

In Chapter 5, I described how the match-making procedure was not really between the 'newly arrived immigrants' and municipalities, in which the preferences and characteristics of each side were paired together. Instead, I argued that the people categorised as 'newly arrived immigrants' were seen as objects to be transferred from one place to another. The match was between the state's and the SMA's priority to shorten lead-time, on the one hand, and the calculated ability of municipalities to incorporate people into the labour market, on the other. The even flows referred to how many 'newly arrived immigrants' could be placed in particular locations for an optimal dispersal nationwide. It was less about creating conditions for settling down and more about circulation and efficient transfers. The accounts in this chapter illustrate this point. Fareed's and Gabriel's arrival in the barracks with little knowledge

about what they had agreed to when signing the housing contract demonstrates the involuntariness involved in the matching procedure.

This chapter has dealt with some aspects of what it means to inhabit the threshold created to manage these transfers. These stopovers were thresholds substituting for housing. They functioned as momentarily solutions while the housing issue was deferred for later. Fareed described his life in the barracks as camp life and felt he was treated as an animal or a dog by the municipal administration. According to Shahram Khosravi, 'the vulnerability of border transgressors is best demonstrated by their "animalization"' (2010, p. 27). Khosravi writes that the vocabulary associated with border regimes combating 'illegal migration' is full of animal analogies. I would argue that the logistical lingo and the operationalisation of the logistical logic have the same dehumanising implications. As discussed in Chapter 5, this vocabulary and rationality symbolise the management of what is described as 'flows' or 'waves'. In this last section, I will expand on some logistical logic traits to further analyse how the post-asylum threshold operates.

In the *Aesthetics and Politics of Logistics*, Hamed Khosravi, Taneha Kuzniecowa Bacchin and Filippo LaFleur suggest that the architecture of logistics 'generates an operational space' (2019, p. 23). Simply put, they write: 'It is what it does' (2019, p. 23). In short, logistical architecture stores and circulates objects. Logistical space is very much kin to infrastructure and the production of circulation and mobility. As elaborated in the theoretical chapter, logistics is the art and science of managing people and things efficiently and optimally (Neilson, 2012, p. 322). Preferably, logistics, as a science, aims to circulate objects with as little warehousing as possible. Hence, the warehousing is not the primary objective. Instead, logistical sites, such as warehouses, terminals, distribution centres and ports, are necessary evils and a means to an end. This is to say that logistics do not strive to create storage or transportation hubs. Instead, the primary goal of logistics management is to diminish circulation time, not to create more logistical sites. From this perspective, logistical sites are always undesired space. The more logistical stopovers that materialise, the higher the costs of circulation and the lesser the efficiency. The development of the book printing technology serves as an illustrative example to prove my point. What is a more emblematic representation of the logistics fantasy than print-on-demand? A copy of an object is produced instantly and delivered on-demand, without storage and with minimal steps in-between. 3D printing might serve as another example of this fantasy. Instead of circulating parcels of an object assembled and then

distributed, the same artefact could be printed on location and on-demand. Hence, these steps in-between are necessary evils and not part of the logistical fantasy of seamless flows. In addition, the materialisation of logistical space produces potential arenas for delays. These sites enable friction and interruptions in what usually is imagined as an efficient organisation of flows. It is only the function of logistics that is desired – the optimal circulation. Its materialisation in space is a temporary necessity. However, an eradication of in-between spaces altogether seems impossible. Still, it is an innate objective of logistics rationality.

If not possible to get rid of entirely, the science and rationality of logistics aim to minimise logistical sites, compressing space and time for optimal circulation.³⁸ This logic of eradicating space is critical to understanding the relationship between the post-asylum thresholds and further precarity and exploitation. The excerpt from my interview with Fareed demonstrates how he and many others in similar situations in the barracks lived in cramped spaces. As William Walters and Barbara Lüthi suggest, people find themselves ‘in cramped space when the way ahead is traversed in all directions by blockages, boundaries and limits, be they social or material’ (2016, p. 362). The situation depicted by Fareed and his way forward seemed limited; he felt captured and pushed simultaneously, as if he were squeezed into a box smaller than the houses built for the neighbour’s dog. Similarly, Saad had tried his best to leave the temporary dwelling but without any luck. Still, the municipal administration forced him to leave. Thus, the tenants were spatially compressed in minimum living areas while also being subjected to a temporal vice. I argue that this temporal pressure squeezed the tenants into accepting further mobility as the only solution.

Logistical management of resettlement produces warehousing of people. Vianelli sees warehousing as a critical feature in the contemporary management of asylum seekers in Sweden, Italy and Europe in general. It is an art of governing comprising three key elements: depersonalisation, victimisation and (im)mobility (2021, p. 44). At the core of this management is the attempt to ‘govern asylum seekers through their objectification’ (Vianelli, 2021, p. 47). While this definition of warehousing captures some

³⁸ Paradoxically, logistics space keeps proliferating and expanding, creating logistics cities (see Cowen, 2014; Easterling, 2014; Rossiter, 2014), industrial areas and economic zones consisting of warehouses, ports and container parks that concentrate global flows and circulation, but where logistics workers also increasingly reside. This assertion is inspired by Mezzadra and Neilson and their reading of Marx. Capital expands ‘the spatial orbit of its circulation’ while striving for an ‘annihilation of space by time’ (Marx, 1973 in Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013, p. 132). This seems to create a proliferation of logistical space.

dimensions of settlement management, what I highlight in this section is circulation.

The local management of settlement used circulation as an end in itself. On the state level, circulation meant enhancing the movement from asylum procedures and asylum centres to municipal accommodation and labour integration. On the municipal level, by contrast, circulation meant a push away from municipal transitional accommodation. The removal aimed primarily to get rid of a problem, not to solve the problem. The temporary modular houses were transitional places to facilitate and sustain the acceleration of movement from asylum to, hopefully, labour integration.

I argue that the temporal squeeze works as a disciplinary measure forcing the tenants to adapt and accept the precarious conditions in the housing market. It prompted them to solve the situation the best they could, to be ‘creative’, as an official told Saad. The protests and the political mobilisation against the eviction, occupying the homes until they were formally evicted, was one reaction to this squeeze. However, more frequently, the tenants were left with no choice but to leave the transit homes and Stockholm County.³⁹ In the next chapter, I will demonstrate how (in)voluntary mobility took form through municipal housing assistance and *boskolor*, which encouraged and, in practice, forced the tenants to remove themselves from the transitional homes.

³⁹ I could observe this in my empirical material but it is also confirmed by the SAPM (Statskontoret, 2020, p. 42).

8

Boskola – relocation and deferral

Time was about to run out, Hanna ascertained. After two years of living in the temporary housing solutions, the first ‘newly arrived immigrants’ who had been relocated in 2016 to the municipality where Hanna worked had to move. She and her colleagues had to find ways to move people from their temporary housing solutions to other options in the housing market. During a meeting with *Etablering Södertörn*, Hanna said it was high time to intensify the work with the *boskola*. By then, *boskolor* had spread to many municipalities in Stockholm. They aimed to introduce the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ to the Swedish housing market and inform them about tenants’ rights. Moreover, *boskolor* taught the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ about Swedish ways of living, coaching them about housekeeping and recycling, for instance. The end goal of *boskolor* was to incorporate the tenants of the temporary homes into the housing market. The municipality of Stockholm and SHIS had perhaps most systematically put *boskolor* to work. Almost immediately after they arrived in the Stockholm’s municipality from asylum centres around the country, SHIS enrolled them in the *boskola*, prompting them from early on to find new homes. Magnus from SHIS told me that this was part of the organisation’s core mission.

Hanna was one of the officials I had the most contact with during my fieldwork. She had a piercing gaze and talked with a firm voice, always forthrightly describing her work. Still, there was something in her tone and frankness that hinted at a scepticism. Without flickering her eyes, she told me about the challenges she experienced as a municipal official vis-a-vis her relationship with the ‘newly arrived immigrants’, giving the impression of a strict non-biased municipal official. Yet Hanna clearly seemed emotionally

invested. Early on, I detected a conflict between her role as a municipal representative, carrying out policy, and her more friendly and caring relationship with the tenants she would have to help leave. Hanna worked in one of the county's smaller municipalities, which had recruited her in 2016 to establish bureaucratic routines for the work with reception and settlement of 'newly arrived immigrants'. Since the municipality was small, being in charge of the job entailed dealing with various tasks, ranging from correspondence with the SMA, SPES, housing companies and private landlords to more mundane issues such as buying kitchen utensils, showing the new municipal residents where to find the grocery store and just offering emotional support. In the same stringent way, Hanna told me that she had considered turning off her phone during the evenings and nights. She was getting too many calls late in the evenings, which was something that was not necessarily included in her job description. Hence, for Hanna and her team, it seemed as if developing new administrative routines also involved a practice of drawing a line between the private and the professional, demarcating personal and impersonal matters. The *boskolor* were part of creating new routines and bureaucratic structures. In particular, they would enable the transition out from the temporary homes.

This chapter attends to *boskolor* and how they unfolded in one of Stockholm's municipalities. I start with a section more generally describing them and their relation to the circulation of people and the deferral of the housing shortage. Then, the chapter moves on to an ethnographic analysis of the housekeeping instructions and the housing guidance offered by this particular municipality. At the core of this analysis is the conflation of formal and informal, private and professional, which produces an instrumental ambiguity and elusiveness as a 'side-effect' (Ferguson, 1994). Even if the analysis foregrounds one particular site, it demonstrates how the execution of state policy, and its translation into bureaucratic practices, produces multiple, often contradictory, side-effects (Mitchell, 2006), that become productive instruments in themselves.

I argue, thus, that *boskolor*, in their production of ambiguity and elusiveness, become instrumental elements in the circuitous resettlement management that works in tandem with temporary housing solutions. While transitional housing provides accommodation for a limited period, *boskolor* transformed the problem of housing shortages into an individual issue, reallocating the responsibility to the 'newly arrived immigrants'. Moreover, I argue that this reallocation of responsibility lies more in the design and performance of the bureaucratic practices, producing the side-effects, and less in the actual content.

Learning to dwell in transit

The *boskolor* play an essential role in the municipal resettlement of 'newly arrived immigrants'. Before I turn to the analysis of the *boskolor* where Hanna worked, I will offer a more general overview of their main traits and situate them among a broader technique of transitioning people out from temporary accommodation. Because the municipality of Stockholm and SHIS had the most developed and systematised *boskolor* in the county, I will start there.

In general, *boskolor* consist of two parts, educational and practical, both actively aiding the tenants to find a new home, and thus moving them out from the temporary houses. The educational part teaches the 'newly arrived immigrants' about the living conditions in Sweden and the housing market in Stockholm and Sweden at large. For example, it informs the 'newly arrived immigrants' about the formal and informal market, different forms of tenancy and the average waiting time to get a rental in Stockholm and other parts of the country. This part also includes more practical knowledge about the importance of maintaining the apartment and about Swedish behaviour and manners. The second part involves helping the dwellers move to a new home. Preferably, the municipal administration should offer this assistance as early as possible. This service varies in form depending on the size of the municipalities and the resources at their disposal. Often, municipal administrations have drop-in sessions where tenants can come to search for apartments and write letters to the landlords. Some municipalities keep track of the number of flats the tenants apply for. In many cases, the municipal administrations require tenants to search for apartments in the entire country, not only in Stockholm, and to report back.

The two parts are interrelated insofar as good comportment and letters of recommendation from the landlord (i.e., the municipality) can enhance the tenants' chances of getting housing. To get a good reference, the tenant has to have an immaculate record of paying rent on time, maintaining the home, being a respectful neighbour and carrying out the trash and recycling. According to many officials I talked to, 'newly arrived immigrants' had a different perception of what a home is compared to Swedes. Some officials and SHIS employees claimed this was particularly true for those who arrived through quotas and resettlement from refugee camps. They often lived under entirely different circumstances and needed basic instructions about, for instance, how the laundry machine, stove, and fan worked. But it was also a question of social

codes and behaviour. During the interview with Magnus, he brought up child care as an example.

Many of them come from cultures where child care is done differently. I am not saying this is right and that is wrong, rather it is about clarifying that this is how it is done here. They are much more inclined to leave their children alone. And that is something we react to in Sweden. Then we are obliged to file a report of concern...if we see four-, five-year-olds running alone in the corridors and the parents are nowhere to be reached...this is something we talk to them about.

Magnus made it clear to the dwellers that they eventually had to adapt to the Swedish system, culturally and legally, to be competitive in the housing market. Sooner or later, the dwellers would have to leave their temporary homes and find new ones on their own. And when it was time for them to move, landlords would ask for references from previous landlords when considering a rental inquiry. According to Magnus, landlords would ask about the tenants' behaviour and whether the applicants paid rent on time. Therefore, the practical and social aspects of *boskolor* could potentially influence their future possibilities of finding a home.

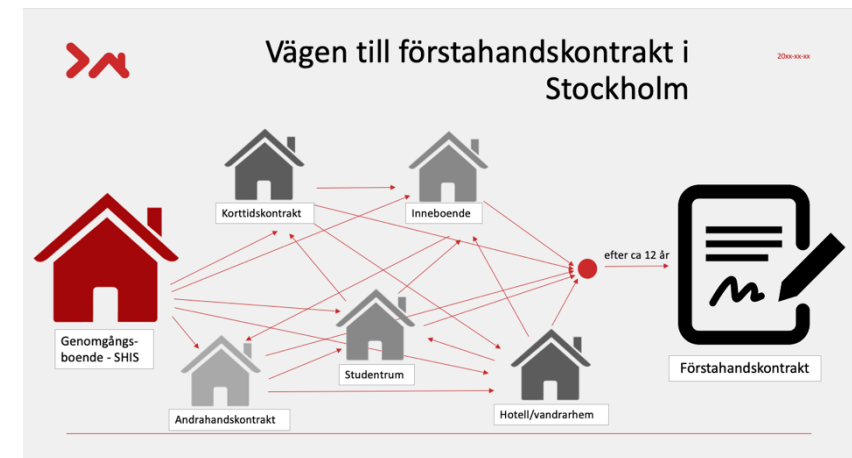
As concluded in Chapter 6, and as statistics shows,⁴⁰ most municipalities in Stockholm, if not all, rely on transitional dwellings with temporary leases. The *boskolor* supplement the temporary homes by parachuting the tenants into the housing market after the contract with the municipality has expired. By removing the tenants, other 'newly arrived immigrants' from asylum centres could move in. Even if this strategy characterised Stockholm County and the major city-regions, and not the entire country, it affects more than half of the totality of people transferred from asylum centres to cities and towns across Sweden.⁴¹ Whether it was the formal or informal market, *boskolor* strive to

⁴⁰ The CAB of Stockholm stated in a report from 2020 that 65 per cent of all municipalities in Sweden offered state dispersed 'newly arrived immigrants' permanent homes, either to all of them or to a varying degree. In comparison, in Stockholm County, ten per cent of the municipalities offered permanent homes (Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2020a, p. 38). With 26 municipalities in the county, two or three municipalities offered permanent solutions to all or in particular cases. However, these numbers fail to give us a precise picture. For instance, the municipality of Botkyrka offered permanent homes to families but not to single households, which would include Botkyrka within these ten per cent. And Botkyrka was, according to many of the officials I interviewed, the most generous municipality in the county. Tyresö was another municipality with a similar policy aimed at including the 'newly arrived immigrants' in the local regular housing market. The official I talked to in Tyresö told me they offered families apartments while those who had arrived alone lived in container modules. Hence, based on my interviews, no municipality provided permanent homes to all 'newly arrived immigrants' per default.

⁴¹ More than 50 per cent of the dispersed people from asylum centres between 2016 and 2019 arrived in the three larger city-regions with a housing situation similar to Stockholm's (See *förordning (2016:40) om*

prepare tenants in the temporary homes for a housing market in which they have to move around for several years before they can access a stable home. Unless they are willing to move to a small municipality in the countryside.

Figure 8. The path to permanent contract in Stockholm. The image comes from the slides that SHIS uses in the *boskola*. This slide illustrates the different kinds of homes the tenants most likely would encounter before they, after 12 years, could get a permanent contract (*Förstahandskontrakt*). *Genomgångsboende SHIS* = transitional housing. *Korttidskontrakt* = short-term contract. *Andrahandskontrakt* = sublet. *Studentrum* = student housing. *Hotell/vandrarhem* = hotel/hostel. *Inneboende* = lodger.



The *boskolor* I describe in this chapter target 'newly arrived immigrants' who live in transitional housing. Often, the assistance results in the tenants leaving the city and the county. However, municipal methods of 'assisting' people to move from one municipality to another are widespread and include other economically and socially disadvantaged groups. This form of circuitous management is in Sweden commonly referred to as 'social dumping' or 'social export'. The pejorative term refers to municipal procedures of assisting groups excluded from the housing market to find temporary or permanent homes in other municipalities. The concept refers to the dumping of social expenses connected to a person to another municipality, i.e., dumping of people. The SAPM promotes instead the bureaucratic and technical term 'active participation in resettlement in another municipality', which is defined as

fördelning av anvisningar till kommuner). The three city-regions are Stockholm County (Stockholm), Skåne County (Malmö) and Västra Götaland County (Gothenburg).

action facilitating the removal of a person with financial support to an accommodation in a different municipality, either within the county or outside, without the person's explicit consent (Statskontoret 2020, p. 17). It is tricky to identify when this happens because the assistance offered is designed so that groups living in precarity and in structural homelessness have difficulty turning down the help. Hence, the active participation would most likely occur in a grey area. Should it happen, it violates the Social Service Act, which explicitly states that municipal officials must not take decisions affecting service users without their permission (Statskontoret, 2020, p. 7). The previous chapter illuminates such precarious conditions. The resident's experiences of being squeezed between, on the one hand, the steadily and quickly approaching due date of the housing lease and, on the other hand, the seeming impossibility of accessing either the formal or the informal housing market in Stockholm affected their susceptibility to accept aid and leave Stockholm. The *boskola* serves as an example of how active participation in resettlement in another municipality occurs in a grey area. The remainder of this chapter attends to how the *boskolor* unfolded in the municipality where Hanna worked.

'Broadening the horizon'

I sat with Rikard to learn more about the actual practice of directing people to other parts of the country. Rikard worked as a labour market secretary, but for some time now, he had also assisted the 'newly arrived immigrants' in finding a new home. He had his office on the first floor of the municipal building, just next to the entrance and the waiting room where I sat most days during my visits. He had to pass by me whenever he was going for coffee, lunch, meetings or if he wanted to chit-chat with his colleagues. Then, with a grin, Rikard would say something like: 'Well, here you are again'. I conducted the interview in his office, where he usually met with 'newly arrived immigrants' to help them find a new home.

Rikard told me that all assistance started with what the 'newly arrived immigrants' wanted. Even though the municipality had begun demanding that 'newly arrived immigrants' start looking for apartments in the entire country, Rikard did not help them search for apartments in, for instance, Umeå, if they wanted to stay in Stockholm. It was not his responsibility to force them into anything. Instead, he played a more supportive role in the municipal administration. 'Help to self-help is rule number one in our municipality', he declared. In most cases, the people he talked to wanted to stay where they already resided, or, at least, within Stockholm County. As part of his supportive role, he guided the 'newly arrived immigrants' to websites such as

Market Place on Facebook and two Swedish sites, *Kvalster* and *Blocket*. In addition, he asked to see the letters of application and the correspondence between the people he assisted and the landlords to see how they were managing. Unfortunately, the letters would not solve much. Ultimately, Rikard knew it came down to the applicants' income and employment situation. Still, he said, the municipality had started to require reports from the 'newly arrived immigrants' to assess their capability in writing letters and applying for apartments. Another strategy was recommending to 'newly arrived immigrants' landlords who explicitly accepted tenants on integration benefit. A neighbouring municipal administration worked on an inventory with all the landlords in the country that matched these requirements. Unsurprisingly, none of them was located in Stockholm County. Hence, Rikard said, the only option for those who wanted to stay in Stockholm was the secondary housing market. He confirmed what I had already heard from other officials and 'newly arrived immigrants'. Private landlords subletting their homes or rooms in their homes in Stockholm could basically pick and choose. In some cases, Rikard explained, they wanted two-month's rent in advance, which could be a sum of 20 000 Swedish kronor, around 2000 Euros. In addition, a steady job position was often required, which excluded many of the 'newly arrived immigrants'.

In his role as a supportive municipal official, Rikard motivated and encouraged tenants in the temporary homes to try imagining themselves living elsewhere than in Stockholm. The officials had few tools to influence the local housing market, yet they had to provide a stable housing solution for 'newly arrived immigrants'. Instead, he and his colleagues had to encourage the people to see possibilities beyond Stockholm. But the officials had to do this without coercion. Rikard explained that the municipality had yet to find a method to clarify for 'newly arrived immigrants' that they were expected to search for apartments in the entire country. At the same time, the municipality had to be empowering and supportive. Rikard's part was the soft side of the process. Hanna had to convince them the hard way, as I will demonstrate soon. 'My part is the fun part, motivating them, encouraging them. I am the good guy while they are the bad guy', Rikard said. Towards the end of the interview, I asked Rikard what his experiences with this work had been. Rikard let out a deep sigh and answered, 'It is an impossible task, precisely because people want apartments in Stockholm and are unwilling to broaden their horizons'.

These two sides of the process, the soft and the hard, produced ambiguity. On the one hand, the municipality motivated and encouraged them, underlining that they were free to choose. Extending the realm of possibilities to imagine

another life somewhere else was part of broadening the horizon. On the other hand, the municipality also had to clarify that it was the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ responsibility to search for a home in the entire country. In other words, ‘broadening their horizon’ was, it seemed, a requirement. A related expression I often heard was ‘*hjälp till självhjälp*’ (help people to help themselves, self-help). Another official I often talked to during the drop-in sessions told me that the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ started looking for apartments too late. They needed help and guidance so that they could ‘help themselves’. The expression derives from a more general contemporary form of governing rationality or governmentality (Foucault, 2007). The notion of self-help relies on the idea of freedom and individuality, on the ability of self-modification and improvement, in which governance spreads out in society through various technologies (Rimke, 2000). In this context, self-help implied the capability of helping oneself out into the housing market, not limiting oneself to a few options in the vicinity.

Also, the expression of broadening one’s horizon points towards conflicting perspectives. From Rikard’s point of view, the phrase means that the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ have to imagine leaving Stockholm. Quite literally, the use of the concept referred to a broadening of a geographical imaginary. In contrast, for the tenants, it means that they have to adapt to the municipality’s demand and suppress their own will and move from Stockholm. Thus, for them, this means a narrowing rather than broadening. Around this conflict emerges the practice of removal in which, ultimately, the tenants ‘voluntarily’ decide to leave the municipality.

Housekeeping and maintenance

One of the takeaways from the anthropological literature on bureaucracy and paperwork is that documents and registers can be analysed beyond their content (see e.g. Hull, 2012a; Hull, 2012b). Studying the practices of enacting objects such as documents, files and registers can be as insightful as analysing rituals. The housekeeping instructions were extensions of the bureaucratic paperwork, a different bureaucratic process of conveying information. Hanna had been appointed to execute state policy, which involved building a bureaucratic unit and creating routines and structures. This inevitably included documentation and paperwork, but it also entailed more practical forms of conveying information.

The housekeeping instructions took place in temporary vacant apartments that the municipality had access to. All ‘newly arrived immigrants’ were obliged

to take the tour at the beginning of their arrival in the municipality. It was part of the municipal policy. Dagar was in charge of the session this particular day. He arrived from Syria as a refugee in 2015 and had managed to find a temporary position at the municipality. We were a group of around 10 people participating in this session. Dagar stood in the hallway handing out a loosely bound compendium composed of printed sheets with pictures of radiators, stoves, fans and refrigerators accompanied by a short text. An interpreter joined soon, and Dagar could begin welcoming us and explaining shortly what the tour was about.

We moved to the cramped hallway where Dagar began with the distribution board. Some participants gathered around Dagar as he explained how the fuses worked. He pulled down one of the circuit breakers to demonstrate what would happen in the case of a short circuit. He pulled it up again. Other participants had installed themselves in the living room and started a lively conversation. The hallway was not big enough for the entire group anyway. But I also interpreted the lack of engagement as disinterest and a refusal to play along. The interpreter translated and wrinkled his forehead at the few listeners gathered around Dagar, disturbed by the background chatter from the living room. A participant asked why the fuses got overheated so often when he cooked. The interpreter translated, and Dagar answered: ‘Well, perhaps too many of you cook dinner at the same time, putting too much pressure on the fuses’. The short instant of interpretation following the question was just long enough to leave room for chatter and disturbance. The next station was the fire extinguisher. Since the apartment was not equipped with one, Dagar settled with just pointing at the picture in the compendium, also losing interest in what he was doing. He rushed through the instructions and continued with the fire alarm. ‘The battery costs 50 kronor, and it is of utmost importance that you test the battery once every month’, Dagar said, letting a moment of silence follow while piercing his gaze on the participants to emphasise the gravity of the matter. However, instead, the pause gave more room for chatter. Dagar moved on to the instructions for the laundry machine. He rushed through the description and explained where to put the washing powder. He was pushing the pace as he and the interpreter were losing patience with the group’s lack of interest.

The tour in the apartment continued building up frustration and irritation among all involved in a steady crescendo towards a climax. Dagar and the interpreter were frustrated due to the disturbances while they continued their instructions on maintenance. Dagar was now describing how to clean the

kitchen's stove and fan. The participants' body language and their reluctant approach to the entire event seemed to suggest that they, too, were frustrated – and quite likely humiliated by the level of intellect. As far as I could imagine, as an observer, it was difficult to see how these instructions on housekeeping and maintenance would help the dwellers on their way to a permanent home. It all seemed farfetched. Putting it in a broader context, the stress people were subjected to must have added to their frustration. In this light, the recalcitrant behaviour displayed by the participants was not merely a sign of disinterest but also a form of refusal to engage and participate in a system that made little sense, which now forced them to attend this round of housekeeping instruction.

A sudden shift in attention occurred when Dagar arrived at the instructions for the toilet. The participants, who until now had been indifferent, stopped chattering abruptly. Water, heating and ventilation seemed to be a hot topic. The dwellers had a lot of questions about heating and warm water. Since the tanks were small, the hot water disappeared after ten minutes. 'Why do we live so many people cramped in these small apartments where there isn't enough hot water? Not even two people can have showers in the morning without running out of hot water', a participant complained. Another explained that he sometimes heated water for showering on the stove. 'Is it possible to regulate the radiators? There seems to be a connection between the radiators and the showers', yet another participant speculated. 'No!' Dagar exclaimed firmly. 'It is strictly forbidden to regulate the radiators. We are not even allowed to touch them', Dagar said.

The participants continued hurling questions and comments toward Dagar, confusing the interpreter, who now was having difficulty keeping up with the pace. I lost track of what was being discussed. Many participants switched from Dari to Swedish, confusing the interpreter who started translating the questions to Dari. The sudden interest from the participants stemmed from an urge to seize the opportunity to bring forward complaints about their living conditions, not to pay attention to the housekeeping instructions about cleaning the bathroom.

'Are you writing this down?' Latif, a participant I had met previously during my visits to the municipality, asked. 'You say that you will raise these issues with your boss but will you remember?' he continued. Dagar's gaze wandered as he tried to keep track of all the questions posed simultaneously, then said, with what I registered as a brief, hesitant tremble in his voice, that he would remember, that he knew all of the participants so that it would be easy. In this

final exchange, it seemed to me that the frustration and irritation turned into a form of compassion. The spirit lightened up suddenly when Dagar wrapped up. Some laughter was heard. One of the participants approached Dagar putting his arm around his shoulder, asking him if there was something Dagar actually could do. His experiences of being in Sweden had been marked by events like this. Nobody was able to do anything, he claimed. There was always someone else responsible; it was never the person you spoke to, he explained to Dagar, who lowered his head in resignation.

The housekeeping instructions accumulate to other similar experiences of dealing with the authorities, producing an effect and creating a bureaucratic awareness. This awareness consists of learning that power is located at an unreachable distance. Moreover, it teaches the 'newly arrived immigrants' that the local bureaucracy invents procedures and practices that do not always meet the ends. Many times they are experiments with unprecise outcomes. One of the prevalent points about bureaucratic artefacts, such as documents, files and paperwork in general, is that it controls and socialises their subjects (see e.g. Coutin, 2003; Horton, 2020; Tuckett, 2018). This occasion was no different. However, it was not the content that had this socialising dimension, even though it had this explicit objective. Instead, it was the recurring interactions with bureaucracy, of which this was one, that had a subtle yet effective disciplinary output. In all its banality, the interface created through the *boskola* was teaching the dwellers what could be called, following Lipsky, a 'political lesson contributing to future political expectations' (see Auyero, 2012; Lipsky, 1984). In short, the lesson was that power was elusively distributed to people out of reach and that the system operated through people who were not accountable. The system was everywhere, yet nowhere. Therefore, expectations of what officials could do to help should be downplayed.

Furthermore, as seen in the example, this awareness arose also through what David Graeber calls 'interpretive labor'. According to Graeber, interpretive labour consists of two elements. The first element is a 'process of imaginative identification as a form of knowledge' (2012, p. 118). Within relations of domination, Graeber states, it is often the subordinated who takes the task of figuring out how the social relations actually work (2012, p. 118). This means that the subordinated have to figure out the social anatomy and what lies beneath the explicit layer of power structures. The participants in the case above tried figuring out the social relations and who was in charge of the bureaucratic apparatus by questioning Dagar and challenging his role in the power hierarchy. From this inquiry, they understood the elusiveness of the

bureaucratic machinery. Graeber calls the second element ‘sympathetic identification’. The term refers to imagining and incorporating the perspectives of those above in the power hierarchy (2012, p. 119). By figuring out the layers underneath the explicit scene, the participants understood Dagar’s perspective and sympathised with his role in the event.

The described event was instrumental, not primarily because the municipality informed the tenants about how to take care of their homes but rather as a bureaucratic performance adding to previous experiences of impotence and elusiveness. Adding this event to the municipal encouragement to broaden the horizon, the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ understood that self-help was demanded because the municipality had limits to what they could do.

House of paper

Between the housekeeping event and the housing counselling, I spent much time sitting in the waiting hall by the reception. One day I heard a man exclaim while waving goodbye on his way out: ‘Paper, paper, paper, I will build a house out of paper!’ The short exchange of words and gestures between him and Hanna unfolded in the waiting room. I had not taken part in the conversation between the man and Hanna, but his exclamation stuck with me somehow. The metaphor conveyed a powerful image. My interlocutors frequently mentioned the obsessive amount of impenetrable paperwork and documents. Dealing with various forms of papers, contracts and documents often laid the ground for my interactions with them. In many encounters – me in the role of the researcher, a sometimes confusingly similar role to state and municipal representatives – our conversations ended up grappling with various paperwork issues, sorting them out and trying to render them intelligible. As I grew up in Sweden, I have learnt to navigate, so I had to deal with papers as little as possible. Conversely, migrants are almost always forced to deal with extensive bureaucratic paperwork. Confronting the frontiers of the nation-state always entails engaging with papers and documents, whether at the borders, negotiating access by declaring papers or faking them or destroying them (Horton & Heyman, 2020; Keshavarz, 2019; Nakueira, 2019). Later, enrolled in integration programmes, migrants continue to be confronted with the state’s frontier. Paper itself reproduces and actualises the state (Hull 2012a; Hull 2012b), renders the boundaries visible, and extends them into internal borders (Könönen, 2018). Even if I thought I was helping out, migrants are the real experts on bureaucratic practices. The exclamation metaphorically captured my interlocutors’ experiences with paperwork and bureaucratic procedure.

I find the paper house metaphor insightful in two aspects. First, it illustrates the homogeneity of the bureaucratic artefact. Notwithstanding the variation of papers, documents and contracts that my interlocutors had to deal with, the exclamation reduces the variations to a functional uniformity, a building block, which they would use to build a house. In this sense, there was no difference between various genres of paper, documents and contracts. It was all paper. What unified them was their ambiguity and intervening character. My interlocutors and interviewees often told me they were unsure what they were signing. In the case of signing housing contracts, their situation left them with few alternatives. So, what did it matter? This lack of knowledge was particularly prevalent in how many had learned the hard way about the duration of their housing contracts accounted for in the previous chapter. They had signed the housing contracts on arrival at the municipality and learned about the consequences afterwards. Secondly, ‘paper’, in the sarcastic exclamation, would not work as a building material for houses. No matter how obvious this statement is, it complements the first point. The fragility of paper would never lead to the completion of a home. This translates to the symbolic meaning that paperwork would rarely result in what the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ hoped for. It was an empty promise. Instead, papers and documents filled a bureaucratic need and served as tools for developing administrative routines.

Ambiguous counselling

After spending some time at the municipality, I became more acquainted with Hanna’s quirks. Slowly, I realised why she encouraged me to join the meetings between her and the tenants in the temporary homes. Hanna would come down to me in the waiting room and, with eyes wide open and a trembling voice barely able to disguise her excitement, say that she had an appointment with an outspoken and very critical person and I should come along and listen. Whereas in many cases, officials told me about the challenges and problems they were confronted with, Hanna wanted me to see how some of these challenges materialised and how the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ reacted and criticised the municipal work. She wanted me to understand the complexities that arose in her work.

Sometimes these meetings aimed to patch the last pieces together before the tenants moved on. In other instances, the tenants were called in to initiate a moving process. These meetings revealed the stickiness of executing policy work. They demonstrated how emotions were deeply entangled in implementing state policy. However, attending these conversations came with ethical challenges. By being present, there was a risk that I would exacerbate

an already asymmetric power relation between Hanna and the ‘newly arrived immigrants’. I had permission to join from all participants, but since Hanna gave me access, I feared I would be perceived as a representative of the authorities. Despite this ethical consideration, I chose to join. I argue that these meetings are essential to reflect on because they showcase the softness and ephemerality of internal border structures. They demonstrate how the inner frontier materialises in simple interactions and in connection with a bureaucratic ‘affective potentiality’, producing anxiety, uncertainty and sometimes hope (Tuckett, 2018, p. 93). Furthermore, as I will show in the next section, some of these meetings illustrate the grey areas in which active participation in the resettlement of ‘newly arrived immigrants’ occurred.

One dark and freezing afternoon, Hanna and I took the bus from the municipality into the city after a day’s work. She explained to me the difficulty of communication. She did not know if the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ understood the seriousness of their expiring housing contracts. The municipality offered housing for two years, and her job was to remind them that their time was up soon and help them find a new home. They understood, yet she was not quite sure. Hanna speculated that she might have been too welcoming and helpful when they had arrived. Therefore, Hanna was not sure that the tenants understood that the municipal administration would evict them if they did not move. This remark described an ambiguity in her work, a problem of drawing a line between the considerate official-cum-friend Hanna and the rigid authority she represented. According to her, the tenants believed she could bend policy to their advantage. In some cases, this had turned out to be correct. I could understand where this ambiguity and insecurity stemmed from while attending a meeting between Debitu and Hanna.

In silence, Debitu, Hanna and I took the elevator to the second floor, where the conversations took place behind glass doors. The room was stripped down to a table and some chairs. Hanna phoned an interpreter who translated between Tigrinya and Swedish through the speaker. I asked for consent, and then the conversation started. This time, Debitu had not been called to the office to be reminded of her expiring housing contract. Her son, who recently had turned 18, had managed to find a sublet in the county of Stockholm. They would be able to stay there for some time. Debitu sat quietly in front of Hanna, staring down at her fiddling fingers beneath the table while the interpreter on speaker phone translated what Hanna had said. Debitu said she worried her son would drop out of school now that they would move. Hanna had made an appointment to check in on Debitu and help her with some last things. Debitu

told Hanna that she had been like a sister and did not wish to burden her anymore. After a short pause, Hanna continued reminding Debitu that she would have to clean her apartment before moving. ‘Certainly’, Debitu replied. ‘It is important’, Hanna emphasised. ‘We don’t want you to receive an invoice afterwards for bad cleaning’. The second reason why Hanna had made the appointment with Debitu was that Debitu had forgotten to submit her activity report. This report had to be submitted monthly to the SPES through a digital platform for her to receive her integration benefit. Usually, if a person enrolled in the integration program forgot to report their activity, they were warned and punished by withdrawing the economic support. The introduction benefit is counted per day of activity. This means that the sum would differ from month to month depending on active days (days of work or/and studies). If you missed reporting, you would get warnings. The first warning implied that one day’s payment got revoked, the second warning, five days, third warning, 10 days. Debitu and Hanna sat quietly, this time for a bit longer than a short moment. Debitu lowered her head. Eventually, Hanna said that she would help Debitu formulate an excuse as to why she missed reporting her activity and let her off the hook.

The communication continued in staccato. The information had to be processed and translated continuously. Most conversations between the officials and the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ were assisted by an interpreter on speaker phone. The moments of silence and ensuing void that followed as the information was processed by the invisible interpreter left us with a few seconds of contemplation. These moments were thick with information and helped convey meaning beyond the discussed practicalities. The compassion that had built up during the time Hanna and Debitu had known each other was exhibited through quick exchanges of eye glances during the silences. This silence exposed the margins of manipulation and negotiation. The façade of bureaucratic work hides a production of arbitrary conduct where the line between the personal and impersonal is blurred (Fassin 2015). As proved, Hanna could bend the system a little bit. This arbitrariness and management of policies caused ambiguity.

Reallocation of responsibility

Regarding housing, the municipality had less leeway. Instead, Hanna and her colleagues had to prompt the tenants to start thinking about their options early. As a result, tenants were called in to initiate the moving process. During these meetings, the municipal administration would offer the tenants in the temporary homes an apartment somewhere in the country. Often, it would be

in towns and small municipalities where private landlords and housing companies accepted ‘newly arrived immigrants’ with introduction support. In addition, the municipal administration would ask the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ to sign a paper that stated that they had offered the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ an alternative solution. This agreement was different from the offer itself and had three related functions. First, it was an intervention in the relationship between the officials and the ‘newly arrived immigrants’. It aimed to do away with the ambiguity between the officials and the ‘newly arrived immigrants’. The paper declared that this is how far the municipality could stretch to help the ‘newly arrived immigrants’. Second, the paper was also a declaration towards the state and the level of authority above the municipal administration and local government. It stated that the municipality had fulfilled its responsibility and offered an alternative home after the transitional period. Third, it was a tool to reallocate the housing responsibility to the ‘newly arrived immigrants’ and relieve the municipality of the burden. This gesture seemed to suggest that not much more could be expected from the authorities.

The agreement worked similar to what Matthew Hull has called ‘ritualised practice’ in bureaucratic work. The ‘ritual’ here, as in Hull (2003), refers to an action of formalisation. The agreement aimed to establish a relationship between ‘discourse and things in the world’ (Hull 2003, p. 291). The paper itself did not state anything that could not be communicated orally. It simply said that the tenant in the temporary home had been offered another apartment. By signing this paper, the tenants declared that they were aware of the offer. According to Hull, signatures moor discourse in the world by locating a statement in space and time (Hull, 2003, p. 294). Often, we will see slots with date and place next to signature in contracts and agreements. However, the content was secondary for the ‘newly arrived immigrants’. Judging from the meetings I participated in, they seemed to treat this piece of writing as other contracts and documents, as ‘paper, paper, paper’, a bureaucratic intervention that probably would not improve their situation. Hence, the paper performed something of more importance than the information it conveyed.

For example, Nour was called to meet with Hanna to discuss her housing situation. Nour had been in the municipality for a bit longer than a year and had just started to befriend people and gotten used to the area when Hanna offered her an apartment. By coincidence, when talking to an interpreter, Hanna had heard about a vacant apartment in Hofors. Hofors is a small municipality with around 10 000 inhabitants, close to Gävle. Gävle is located two hours north of Stockholm by train. Nour did not know anyone there. Hanna

said that it was a two-room apartment, and even if it was a sublet, she could stay there longer than in the temporary home she was staying in for the moment. She could move there and start afresh in a proper apartment instead of living in the container home. Nour did not think twice before turning it down. She did not read the agreement when Hanna stuck it in front of her and asked her to sign. Nour just signed. Hanna explained what the agreement implied. Then she added that Nour would still be welcome to pass by during drop-in hours and get help. In this sense, the paper did not change much more than asserting that the municipality had tried to help. The agreement drew a line between the formal and the informal roles, alleviating the ambiguity through a formalising ritual. The paper stated that the tenant had been offered an apartment and that they had received all possible help from the municipality. Since Nour turned down the offer when she signed the paper, she still needed to solve her housing situation. As a result of signing the agreement, the municipality had reallocated the responsibility of finding a home.

The ‘newly arrived immigrants’ could sign and accept the offer. Or they could sign and turn it down. A third possible path was to decline the offer and not to sign the agreement, which was a rejection of the agreement and, in this case, a refusal to give the piece of paper any validity. This was precisely what happened in a session with the couple Omar and Jamila.

The meeting was scheduled for late afternoon, and Omar and Jamila brought their five-year-old boy to the meeting. Jamila was pregnant with a second child. This time, Hanna’s colleague Astrid joined. The family had been living in Sweden for the past three and a half years and in Hanna’s municipality for barely two months at the time of this meeting. They had been called in for the same housing offer in Hofors, which still was available. Omar and Jamila still had the two-year contract, but if they took the offer in Hofors, they would have the possibility to settle down properly, according to Hanna. Then, they could begin anew without being troubled or stressed by moving again. Hanna framed the offer as an opportunity.

‘It is a possibility to start over, having your baby without thinking about the next move’, Astrid filled in. ‘Your contract will be terminated here. Who knows, perhaps you will be able to stay longer in Hofors, and your children will not have to change schools. This is why we think this is a good offer for you’, Hanna said. Omar looked at his wife. He seemed a bit puzzled after hearing what the interpreter said. ‘Are we allowed to stay here two years or not?’ Omar asked. ‘We don’t want to move to Hofors’, Jamila explained. ‘We

don't know anything about Hofors'. Omar said their plan was to stay the two years and then see where they could move. A short silence followed, changing the tone of the conversation. This was supposed to be a gesture of goodwill.

'You will not get more help from the municipality. This is what we can offer', Hanna concluded. 'But why only this offer? Some people have lived here longer than us but still haven't got any offers. Why do you not offer this to someone else? And then we can wait for another one later on', Omar asked. Astrid continued saying that they had their children's interests in mind, moving around for them was not ideal, and here was an opportunity to settle down for good. Astrid reasoned that the kids wouldn't have to change schools all the time.

'We have been moving around for the last three years, one year here, one year there. It is okay to be here for two years. And also, what you offer in Hofors is a sublet. It does not guarantee that we can stay there. We can get a sublet here as well', Omar said. 'Well, the landlords require more here. Often you need a steady income if you want to find anything here. So, we just need to clarify what you guys are turning down', Hanna said.

'Yes', Omar interrupted the interpreter as he was about to finish translating. 'We know what we are turning down. We don't want to move to Hofors. Gävle, Fredriksberg, Sollefteå, Helgum and now here; enough, we can stay here for two years', Omar concluded firmly. Hanna and Astrid pulled up the agreement and asked Omar and Jamila to sign the paper, the same one that Nour had signed.

'We will not sign any papers. We say no but will not sign anything. You can offer us something else when our time is up. You have been quick with this offer. Why don't you offer us this after two years?' Omar asked. 'We only have your best interests at heart', Astrid said. 'We think about your children, that's why. If this apartment came up on *Blocket* today, probably around a hundred people would apply. As it stands today, it is difficult to find an apartment in Sweden'.

'There are permanent contracts, many of them in Norrland', Omar argued back. 'Yeah, but to get one, you need a steady income. This offer might allow you to settle down while you and your wife make yourself a home and find a job. If you don't want it, you need to sign here'. Astrid then slipped the paper over to Omar on the other side of the table. 'There are thousands of sublets on

Blocket. You should ask after two years. I promise you, no refugee will accept this offer', he continued. 'If this is your decision, the offer will go to someone else. It is important for us that you know that we are not doing this to get rid of you. You can stay here, of course. We just happened to get this offer now and thought of you', Astrid concluded.

As the meeting led to an end, confusion concerning the agreement arose. Omar and Jamila refused to sign the paper. What this meant was unclear. Astrid and Hanna could not force them to sign it. Nor could they force them to move to Hofors. However, the refusal had led to a change of tone. While in the case of Nour, Hanna had pointed out that she still could get help during the drop-in sessions, even though she had signed the agreement, in this case, Omar and Jamila would not get any further assistance. Not only did the rejection undermine the role of the agreement as an intervention and a reallocation of responsibility, but it was almost like calling out a scam. The paper itself did not hold legal status. Instead, it was a tool to formalise the relationship between the municipal administration and alleviate the ambiguity while reallocating the responsibility to the tenants. This agreement would either relocate the tenants to another municipality or make them believe they were accountable for their housing situation.

As I have described in this section, paperwork such as agreements and contracts function not only as bureaucratic artefacts with a clear-cut administrative function. They are also 'affectively loaded phenomena' provoking emotional reactions (Navaro-Yashin, 2007, p. 81). The paper, i.e. the agreement, was intended to create pressure, motivating the tenants to leave the municipality. Also, the housekeeping instructions had an emotional effect beyond the practice's explicit intention to teach the tenants how to maintain their homes. Hence, I argue that the bureaucratic practices have a disciplinary effect that originates in the performance of how these procedures are enacted rather than their explicit content. The *boskolor* taught the 'newly arrived immigrants' about bureaucratic elusiveness and how to navigate different tonalities and bureaucratic smokescreens.

In continuation, this chapter demonstrates how bureaucratic inventions and practices were vital for the circuitous management of tenants in the temporary homes, extending their circulation from asylum centres to municipal accommodation and further forced mobility. I argue in this dissertation that the circulation of people and deferral of durable solutions are integral methods in managing migrant settlement. A red thread that runs through the entire thesis

is that the acceleration of movement required practices that substituted real solutions while constantly deferring the problem further down the road. In this chapter, the practice that substituted for and engendered the deferral of a durable solution was the *boskola*. In the concluding chapter, I will gather all these practices described in the empirical chapter and summarise their relation to the logistification of migrant settlement management.

9

Conclusions

In this concluding chapter, I summarise the dissertation's main findings and highlight the arguments I have advanced throughout. As mentioned in the methodological chapter, the ethnographic focus of this dissertation derives from an *absence*: Sweden's lack of affordable and accessible housing for 'newly arrived immigrants'. And so, the dissertation has orbited around this lack by placing at the forefront – describing and analysing – the practices that have replaced/substituted for housing in the wake of the enactment of the Settlement Act. These practices took various forms depending on the scale of operation and level of administration. But they all related to the housing shortage directly or indirectly. Departing from this absence, this dissertation brings attention to the intersections between migration and housing. In a somewhat pointed formulation, it articulates this relation in the following way: Due to the lack of housing, 'newly arrived immigrants' were increasingly stuck in asylum centres in Sweden after the 'summer of migration' (Hess et al., 2017) in 2015, which resulted in the introduction of the Settlement Act. Due to the lack of housing, municipal administrations in Stockholm had to offer temporary homes to 'newly arrived immigrants' who had been transferred from state facilities after the enactment of the Settlement Act. Due to the lack of housing, municipal organisations and street-level bureaucrats developed practices that pushed 'newly arrived immigrants' to other cities and towns. And finally, due to the lack of housing, 'newly arrived immigrants' who arrived at municipal accommodations experienced never-ending forced mobility.

From the lack of housing emerged the circuitous settlement management in which transitional homes replaced permanent ones while deferring the housing shortage to the future. At the same time, these practices transformed the housing shortage into an individual matter, ultimately placing the burden on the 'newly arrived immigrants'. Hence, the dissertation has analysed the

procedures that allowed for the acceleration of transfers from asylum centres to municipal accommodations to incorporate them into labour faster than if they had remained in asylum centres. I have referred to this acceleration as the logistification of settlement management. In doing so, this dissertation explores the relationship between the logistification of settlement and the practices of deferral. Subsequently, the dissertation argues that the logistification of migrant settlement depends on several practices that defer the consequences of scarce accessibility to housing for ‘newly arrived immigrants’ arriving in Stockholm. Furthermore, it argues that this deferral produces a post-asylum threshold that is connected to the interplay between the precarious housing and labour markets. In the next section, I will describe these arguments in more detail, relating them to my research aim and empirical domains as presented in the introduction. Following that, the chapter expands on a particular paradox that originates from my findings. Lastly, the chapter ends with suggestions for future research.

Instead of housing – deferral

As Mezzadra and Neilson and the literature on the logistification of migration management stress, migration controls and borders are not devices blocking movement. Instead, they are parameters that enable the channelling of global flows, including people (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2012, p. 59). Hence, the logistification of migration focuses epistemologically on the relationship between capital and migration management and on the temporal management of flows. The Settlement Act is, at its core, a legal tool for temporal pacing of movement. Accordingly, it aimed to accelerate the pace of mobility from asylum centres to labour incorporation. The dissertation has explored the practices of evasion and deferral that substitute for the housing required to enable the acceleration through three empirical domains: 1) the calculations of dispersal and the matching system at the state level, 2) municipal management and the dwellers’ experiences of temporary accommodation and resettlement in Stockholm, and 3) the professional and social dimension of the encounters between street-level bureaucrats and ‘newly arrived immigrants’. By exploring these empirical domains, the analysis deepens our understanding of the relationship between the logistification of migration settlement management and practices of deferral. Subsequently, this provides insights into the logistification of migration and how it unfolds and mutates across levels of operationalisation. Before I present my conclusions, I will revisit these domains and the ethnographic analysis.

I analysed the first empirical domain in Chapter 5, which attended to the dispersal model and the matching routines. Together, they form the operational core of the Settlement Act. The dispersal and matching system is built and constantly updated around the idea of even and streamlined flows from asylum centres to cities and towns where ‘newly arrived immigrants’ are most likely to find an occupation. The dispersal and matching system’s purpose is to shorten the lead-time between asylum and labour and to minimise the waiting period in asylum centres and thereby the costs incurred by asylum facilities and protracted labour integration.

The dispersal and matching system is based on a temporal split-vision. While the strategy focuses on flows in the present time, the dispersal scheme is based on a long-sighted vision that builds on long-term calculated probable outputs. The transfer in the present is induced by long-term forecasts of settlement and labour incorporation. The number of ‘newly arrived immigrants’ dispersed to Swedish municipalities builds on predictions of where they will stay. However, future prognostications of settlement patterns are almost impossible to make. From revisiting the history of Swedish dispersal and settlement policies, it is clear that monitoring and predicting future settlement patterns is practically impossible (Chapter 3). The prediction becomes even more challenging when housing availability is taken out of the equation. Instead of adding available housing as a variable, the government orders the SMA to calibrate the weight variables at their disposal to compensate for the absent one. They fine-tune the labour variable by developing and adjusting sub-variables without the ability to see long-term results. I argue that these calibrations are acts that substitute the absent variable.

Thus, instead of addressing the root cause of the logistical knot, the state deploys the dispersal and matching system to circumvent the housing shortage in three steps. First, by focusing on the statistical and calculative improvements and calibrations, the dispersal model shifts attention from the long-term outcomes to the present issues of transfers. The calculative rationality underpinning the dispersal model focuses on mathematical and numeric descriptions of reality, translating complexities into reductive calculations and allocating reliability to a technical mathematical system. This move offers an immediate solution in the present. Second, the dispersal and matching system produces a fantasy of efficiency and optimality, represented by logistical and numeric representations, which, on the one hand, create managerial visions and, on the other, constructs people as homogenous objects transferred from one place to another. Third, through this technological solutionism (Amoore

& Piotukh, 2016, p. 15), the state and the agencies operationalising the law circumvent and defer the housing shortage into the future and the next administrative level. This means that the calculations paradoxically integrate the very uncertainty and unpredictability that they aim to eliminate in the first place. The unpredictability is deferred to the future and allocated to the municipal administrations. The shift of temporal attention enables the deferral of this uncertainty.

Chapters 6 and 7 analysed the second empirical domain. These chapters attended to the practices of replacing housing on the municipal level and the experiences of living in temporary accommodation. These chapters departed methodologically from using the temporary modular houses as representations of the logistification of settlement management to exploring the municipal organisation and the dwellers' experiences. In Chapter 6, I extended the analysis to the perpetuation and expansion of municipal organisations surrounding the temporary homes, which produce a post-asylum threshold. Chapter 7 described some of the tenants' experiences living in temporary modular houses. Here, the analysis expanded on the production of the post-asylum threshold and its connections to the housing market primarily and, secondarily, the labour market.

Similarly, the municipal administrations and the local governments in Stockholm County have a split temporal vision. They solved the acute problem of accommodation to undergird the fast transfers from asylum centres in the present while deferring long-term solutions for resettlement. Instead of housing, the municipalities in Stockholm offered emergency accommodation, such as hotels and hostels; they offered workers' barracks, container homes, and modular houses. Moreover, a parallel reorganisation of municipal administrations accompanied the spatialisation of the post-asylum liminality. Hence, these practices do not solve the long-term housing issue that settlement requires. Instead, they defer the housing problem in three steps: First, by offering different types of transitional dwellings, such as temporary modular homes, the municipalities solve the most acute accommodation problem and enable transfers from the asylum centres. Second, they create bureaucratic expertise in Stockholm County, reinforcing the circuitous management of settlement. Much like the state practices on the first empirical level, bureaucratic knowledge-production on the second level emulates the terminological form of logistics and efficiency. Also, this production leads to further categorisation of 'newly arrived immigrants' in a way that is intimately connected with the logistical logic. Third, the ensuing housing deferral

produces a post-asylum threshold, reinscribed against the housing and labour markets. Uncertainty is again inscribed in a future projection. This uncertainty materialises in the temporary homes. Departing from the tenants' experiences, the dissertation shows that the organisation of temporary modular homes prolongs the sensation of the migration trajectory and reproduces conditions referred to as 'camp life'. Furthermore, living in temporary dwellings, combined with the pressure inflicted upon the inhabitants by the constant threat of removal, plays a crucial role in shaping neoliberal self-reliant subjects, who comply with and accept the deferral of a proper housing solution. The post-asylum threshold consists of a prolonged camp existence while simultaneously ushering tenants into continuous precarity.

Chapter 8 explored the third and final empirical domain, namely, the encounters between street-level bureaucrats and 'newly arrived immigrants' at the end of the deferral process—that is, at the point where the responsibility for housing is reallocated to the 'newly arrived immigrants' or/and to another municipality.

When the temporary leases expire, the municipal administration assists the tenants in moving from their homes to housing solutions in other parts of the country. To explore this empirical domain, the final chapter focused on the *boskola* in one of Stockholm's municipalities. Unlike the practices studied in the other two empirical domains, the logic underpinning *boskolor* lack a future vision. As this is the final instance of the deferral process, the municipal administrations focus only on removing 'newly arrived immigrants' from municipal accommodations. This does not solve the long-term housing problem for the tenants. Instead, these bureaucratic practices defer the administrative issue connected to the local housing shortage through a three-step model: First, *boskolor* prepare and inform tenants about the conditions in the housing market while encouraging them to look for homes outside their assigned city. Second, *boskolor* contain a set of bureaucratic practices that create bureaucratic expertise but also bring about an awareness of the elusiveness and unreachability of authority. Both these steps focus on adapting individuals to fit the neoliberal housing market, which encourages continuous circulation. Third, normalising the circulation of people and allocating responsibility to the individual enable the deferral of a structural housing issue.

Through these empirical domains, this dissertation argues that the logistification of settlement management implies several practices that sustain the acceleration of transfers from asylum centres to municipal

accommodations. Of course, these practices take shape differently depending on the domain of operationalisation and resources and tools at hand. But as I have described in this section, they proceed in three general steps. The first step allows immediate action to alter a specific condition and solve a defined problem in the present time. In Bear's terms, this is a technology that changes the temporal course of an event (Bear, 2016). In my empirical case, it involves the acceleration of transfers of 'newly arrived immigrants' from A to B to diminish costs associated with state asylum facilities and drawn-out labour incorporation processes. The second step seeks to stabilise the immediate action and make it reliable, building on bureaucratic expertise and logistical rationality of efficiency and optimality. This knowledge production can be conceptualised as what Bear calls episteme, which refers to forms of knowledge that attribute meaningful representation to action (2016). And lastly, these two steps allow for the deferral of the blockage, initially stopping the immediate action of transfers.

Also, I argue that the deferral of the housing problem engenders a post-asylum threshold in which people are forced into further circulation. The temporary homes are stopovers that extend the migration trajectory within the nation-state. Interestingly, the circulation of people would arguably prevent them from settling down and entering the labour market, which is a central objective of the state and the Settlement Act's *raison d'être*. But, throughout this dissertation, I have shown how the deferral of stable housing solutions produces hypermobility and a post-asylum threshold, keeping the 'newly arrived immigrants' from proper conditions of settling down.

Based on my conclusions, we should ask whether this circuitous management is part of the logistification of settlement or if it is a sign of malfunction. Framing it differently, if the logistification of migration aims to time the pace and rhythm of migrant mobility to fit labour demands and capital growth, how is it that the implementation of the Settlement Act, conversely, disrupts 'newly arrived immigrants' in their quest to find jobs and/or to start educational programmes? I would argue that the internal hypermobility and uncertainty that follows from the implementation of the Settlement Act do not function solely as an impediment and an exclusionary mechanism. Instead, hypermobility and uncertainty create precarity within an inclusive scheme. Simply put, people are included in precarious housing and labour markets, where continuous circulation operates as a filtering mechanism between asylum and integration, stratifying and segregating the population. Those who cannot find homes in Stockholm will have to move elsewhere. But there also

will be others clinging on to Stockholm who are left in structural homelessness working on temporary job contracts. The circulation filter works like a g-force, flinging off people who cannot hold on. Hence, the implementation of logistical migrant settlement management, which requires the deferral of housing, results in circuitous management and differential inclusion. It systematises the deferral of a structural problem and allocates the solution to the individuals who must now cope with it.

Deferral – the management of uncertainty

In this final discussion, I will address one particular paradox that emerged from my findings and was mentioned in passing in the previous section. While implementing the Settlement Act resulted in various forms of routinisation, standardisation and professionalisation – all striving towards control and predictability – it also incorporated uncertainty. The most obvious example of this is the dispersal model, which constantly aimed for precision while evading the significant determinant of housing. Consequently, the dispersal calculation incorporated uncertainty into future prognostication of settlement patterns. Thus, the deferral of the consequences of the housing shortage is also a deferral of uncertainty. This resulted in what I already described as the post-asylum threshold from the perspective of the 'newly arrived immigrants'. But how should we understand the incorporation of uncertainty from the management's view?

I find this paradox illuminating and evocative because the state enacted the Settlement Act and the dispersal model to control and monitor mobility and migrants' future settlement patterns. Yet, implementing the new law required constant deferral of the lack of housing availability, which created uncertainty and precarity that parliamentarians already foresaw when passing the new law in early 2016.

One way of understanding uncertainty is to acknowledge its unavoidability. The implementation of the Settlement Act builds on delegation of responsibility and control. The SMA is in charge of dispersal, and the municipal administrations provide homes. Decentralisation and the delegation of responsibility rely on several actors complying with their tasks. One can assume that delegation and decentralisation of control cause some unpredictability and uncertainty. The implementation of the Settlement Act tolerated some uncertainty as long as it did not delay the transfers from asylum centres to municipal accommodation. Chapters 5 and 6 highlighted how the transferal of 'newly arrived immigrants' and even flows were the main

priorities of dispersal. Finn, who was in charge of implementing the Settlement Act on behalf of the SMA, described how municipal administrations tried to delay the process and how he and his colleagues had to invent methods to secure the transfers. And according to a report by the SNAO from 2021, the state and the SMA had been successful. The report asserted that the Settlement Act led to shortened lead-time from asylum centres to municipal accommodation. Also, the new law's implementation involved more municipalities in the reception of 'newly arrived immigrants' for integration. Additionally, the dispersal and matching system assigned 'newly arrived immigrants' to municipalities with a large breadth of job. This means that the law reached its primary objective to accelerate the transfers to municipalities where 'newly arrived immigrants' would have greater possibilities to find jobs (Riksrevisionen, 2021, pp. 63–64). But whether it led 'newly arrived immigrants' to settle down is beyond the report's scope. However, this dissertation and other recent reports suggest that the acceleration of transfers led to new thresholds and fragmented and forced mobility, which delayed the settlement process (see Ershammar, 2022; Länsstyrelsen Stockholm, 2020; Statskontoret, 2020).

Therefore, the uncertainty that derives from the state's and the municipalities' management of migrant settlement is instead a question of where the responsibility to solve the housing problem is allocated and who has to deal with it. Exploring practices of deferral demonstrates that the logistification of migrant settlement tolerates uncertainty that concerns migrants' conditions of homemaking and settling down. In fact, from the state and the management perspective, this tolerable uncertainty might even be productive. In comparison, Carl-Ulrik Schierup and Martin Bak Jørgensen argue that precarity is not a 'systemic error' but rather what renders subjects vulnerable and, thus, exploitable (Schierup & Jørgensen, 2016). Similarly, the uncertainty ingrained in the logistification of settlement does not have to be a counterproductive side effect. Accordingly, it produces the 'right' sort of uncertainty to create 'vulnerable' and docile labour subjects and tenants, susceptible to the neoliberal housing and labour markets. Hence, the hypermobility that follows the implementation of the law creates a neoliberal disciplinary effect, pressuring the 'newly arrived immigrants' to accept a condition of constantly being on the move.

The uncertainty arising from the deferral of the housing shortage offers an analytical point of view that connects migration management and the transformations of capital production, in which never settled and mobile

people dependent on easily accessible jobs are susceptible to temporary and unstable employment contracts. Subsequently, the study of how the Settlement Act takes shape across different empirical domains connects the logistification of migration management and differential inclusion. The acceleration of settlement without assuring necessary support in the form of a stable home leads to states of precarious inclusion, structural homelessness and docile labour subjects.

Finally, this discussion highlights that settlement management entails triage, sorting and arranging the order of problems and the solutions, deferring unfinished solutions and allocating the ensuing insecurity and uncertainty to the 'newly arrived immigrants'. Here, it is crucial to distinguish between an uncertainty coupled with being responsible for finding a home, on the one hand, and the insecurity stemming from coping with a housing deficiency, accepting the predicament of continual forced mobility as a state of being, on the other.

Further research

I am now reaching the end of this dissertation. The previous section aimed to broaden the findings from the ethnographic analysis and spur further curiosity by discussing the incorporation of tolerable uncertainty in the system and the management. My dissertation has primarily focused on the management of migration and settlement, its underpinning rationality and the practices of deferral ingrained in the system. The dissertation's main contribution lies in its analysis of how the logistification of migration management operates in the threshold after the asylum procedure but before citizenship, during the period when the subject is labelled 'newly arrived'. While the anxiety and stress connected to inhabiting this post-asylum threshold and living in temporary homes, constantly threatened by circular displacement, came out clearly in many of the conversations I had with the tenants, how people dealt with the uncertainty and precarity would add valuable insights to this account. Many empirical intersections offer interesting points of departure. For instance, the impact of and relationship between educational background, gender and age; whether a person has temporary or permanent residency; country of origin; and language used in accessing housing and jobs are all possible entry points. Here, the types of jobs available and the length of employment contracts must be considered. In addition, a more detailed study of the connections between temporary housing contracts and job contracts warrants more attention. For example, returning to the prologue, four years after I met Alexander for the first time, he is still struggling to find a stable job and a long-term housing

solution. He copes through various forms of temporary housing contracts, alternating between affordable student housing and exploitative informal housing contracts. Alexander enrolls in student programmes to access student housing while he takes temporary job positions. When his time runs out in the student apartment since he has not completed his courses, he sublets an expensive room or apartment in the informal housing market until he can reaccess student housing. This is an example of how people navigate the housing market in Stockholm while accumulating years in the housing queue. Alexander does not have a family. People with families need other strategies to stay in Stockholm. Hence, an investigation of the period that follows the two years in temporary municipal accommodations, and of how people navigate the housing and labour markets as post-‘newly arrived’, would provide knowledge about the conditions of migrants in the housing and labour markets. Also, it would add insights into the circumstances of marginalised groups in society beyond the migrant/citizen divide because these conditions apply broadly to the Swedish population as a whole.

Moreover, the insecure conditions of living in temporary homes enact creative counterstrategies and methods of resisting the production of hypermobility. ‘Newly arrived immigrants’ are not only victims of the logistical settlement system. An analytical perspective on how migrants cope with inflicted uncertainty could include everyday strategies to counter the constant interruptions of forced mobility and evictability (van Baar, 2017). Chapter 8 touches upon some acts of resistance. Omar’s and Jamila’s refusal to sign the agreement stating that they had been offered an apartment by the municipality illustrates an act of resisting forced mobility. A more subtle example is the recalcitrant attitude of the participants to the housekeeping instructions.

Furthermore, an analytical perspective on how people cope with and/or resist hypermobility could involve research on the ways people create social networks and make themselves at home in temporary and uncertain living conditions (see e.g. Brun & Fábos, 2015). Also, this perspective would benefit from a focus on strategies of resistance. For instance, I could see in my fieldwork that political mobilisation engendered a space in which people established relationships, which provided a fertile ground for homemaking practices. In alignment with this observation, I would like to end on a more positive note: the creation of a social centre.

In November 2018, tenants of one of the temporary housing facilities in Stockholm County organised a tent protest after several political

demonstrations against the local government’s temporary housing policies. Although the political mobilisation did not result in better conditions for the tenants, many people involved in the protest, including some of the evictees, tenants from neighbouring municipalities with similar housing predicaments, and independent activists, continued organising, which resulted in the creation of a social centre. Today at the centre, the syndicalist labour union works on labour-related issues for unorganised workers in, for instance, the gig economy. The social centre is also home to an activist housing group that mobilises against the financialisation of the housing market and renovictions. Lawyers also volunteer there, giving legal advice on issues of migration and asylum rights. The centre today is a social and political space where people organise across municipalities on interrelated political matters. Both Alexander and I have been active in the centre to various degrees. At the social centre, we became better acquainted and ultimately friends. The political mobilisation emerged from the margins of the welfare state, between housing, labour and migration policies, and it created a social space at the edge of the increasingly logistical neoliberal state, focusing on efficient circulation and just-in-time productivity.

Under våren 2016 började omgjorda containrar, baracker och olika typer av modulbostäder dyka upp i Stockholm. Dessa tillfälliga bostadslösningar var delvis ett resultat av den nya bosättningslagen som trädde i kraft i mars 2016, som kommuner runt om i Stockholms län erbjöd så kallade ”nyanlända invandare”. Bosättningslagen, eller ”Lag (2016:38) om mottagande av vissa nyanlända invandrare för bosättning”, som är lagens formella namn, hade precis antagits av Sveriges riksdag. Dess huvudsakliga uppgift var att fördela ”nyanlända invandrare” med uppehållstillstånd jämnt i landet så att de snabbt kunde skrivas in i etableringsprogram och komma i arbete. Bakgrunden till lagen var, å ena sidan, den snabba ökningen av asylsökande i Sverige under hösten 2015, å andra sidan, att kommuner i allt mindre utsträckning visade sig villiga att ta emot ”nyanlända invandrare” för bosättning. Detta ledde till att många med uppehållstillstånd blev kvar på asylboenden. Flertalet kommuner hävdade att bostadsbristen hindrade dem från att ta emot ”nyanlända invandrare”. Förutom att etableringsprocessens startpunkt fördröjdes, ökade antalet asylboenden nu runt om i landet i rask takt. Bosättningslagen syftade till att minska väntetiderna på asylboenden, effektivisera bosättningsprocessen och reducera antalet asylboenden och därmed också få ner de snabbt eskalerande statliga utgifterna. Bosättningslagen skulle skapa ett effektivt bosättningssystem genom vilket ”nyanlända invandrare” skulle komma i arbete snabbt efter asylprocessen.

Vid tiden då lagen gick igenom var den landsomfattande bostadsbristen ett obestridligt faktum. I riksdagsdebatten som föregick voteringen, lyftes risken att utan en övergripande och långsiktig plan över hur bostadsproblemet kunde förbättras, riskerade bosättningslagen enbart att flytta problemet till kommunerna. Trots att det rådde konsensus gällande bostadsbristen i Sverige, röstades lagen igenom med stor majoritet. De temporära modulbostäderna var således ett utfall av både bosättningslagens intentioner och decennier av bostadspolitik som resulterat i en nationell bostadsbrist.

Att påskynda ”nyanlända invandares” bosättning är en del av vad som inom migrationsforskningen allt oftare kommit att betecknas som en logistifiering.

Från detta perspektiv, har forskare noterat att migrationshantering och gränsteknologier inte enbart etablerar barriärer och exkluderingsmekanismer utan att de också skapar praktiker som filtrerar migration genom att kontrollera och styra dess temporala mönster i syfte att matcha ”flöden” med arbetsmarknaden och efterfrågan på arbetskraft. Den typen av migrationshantering ömsom inbromsar, ömsom påskyndar människors rörelsetakt. Bosättningslagen är i sin kärna en temporal hantering och en acceleration av migranternas rörelser från statligt asylboenden till kommunalt boende. Samtidigt bygger accelerationen på ett förhållande av bostadsproblemet. För att möjliggöra snabba förflyttningar från asylboenden till kommunalt boende skjuts bostadsproblemet framåt i tiden. Implementeringen av bosättningslagen ger istället upphov till tillfälliga lösningar som temporära modulbostäder och andra byråkratiska praktiker som ersätter långsiktiga bostadslösningar och gör accelerationen möjlig. Dessa praktiker står i fokus här.

Den här avhandlingen undersöker framskjutningspraktikernas logik och form efter bosättningslagens inträde utifrån tre empiriska områden: 1) distribueringskalkyler och matchningssystem på statlig nivå, 2) hanteringen av bostadslösningar på kommunal nivå och erfarenheter av att bo i tillfälliga modulbostäder samt, 3) möten mellan frontlinjebyråkrater och ”nyanlända invandrare”. Dessa empiriska områden undersöker samtidigt relationen mellan framskjutningsmekanismer och logistifieringen av bosättning.

Logistifieringen av migration är ett teoretiskt begrepp, flitigt förekommande inom kritisk migrationsforskning i syfte att beskriva en utveckling som ägt rum i migrationspolitiken och migrationshanteringen det senaste decenniet och i synnerhet efter den så kallade flyktingkrisen 2015. Samtidigt som EU:s migrationspolitik och gränskontroller hårdnat, har en gränspolitik som bygger på att kontrollera migranternas rörelser tagit form. En slags logistisk hantering av människor genom ”hotspots”, ”mottagningscentra” och ”transitcentra” har vuxit fram. Strategin fokuserar på att kanalisera och styra migrationen samt att matcha människor på flykt med arbete. Logistiska idéer, språkbruk och tekniker har haft inverkan på utvecklingen. Det teoretiska perspektivet härrör från utvecklingen med en utökad logistisk hantering av människor och söker kasta ljus på relationen mellan migrationshantering och kapitalistiska förändringar. Det logistiska perspektivet på migration fokuserar också på relationen mellan inre och yttre, mellan länders yttersta gräns och exkluderingsmekanismer som sker inom dess gränser. Således belyser den här

avhandling relationen mellan den logistiska hanteringen av migration och bosättning och dess konsekvenser i mötet med bostadsmarknaden i Stockholm.

Studien bygger på nio månader av fältarbete i Stockholm mellan 2018 och 2019. Fältarbetet utgjordes av deltagande observation och semistrukturerade, öppna intervjuer med både boende i modulbostäderna runt om i länets 26 kommuner och med statliga och kommunala tjänstemän. Jag deltog i språkcaféer, konferenser och möten med kommundjäre, observerade en boskola i en av Stockholms kommuner, samt följde och deltog i politisk mobilisering och protester mot vräkningar av ”nyanlända invandare” i modulbostäderna. Min epistemologiska utgångspunkt har tagit avstamp i att belysa implementeringen av bosättningslagen i Stockholm utifrån flera perspektiv och nivåer. Avhandlingen fokuserar på praktiker som dels erbjuder ett substitut till bostäder och dels förskjutit bostadsbristen på framtiden samt de konsekvenser dessa praktiker ger upphov till. I korta drag har metoden byggts på att identifiera och beskriva praktiker som opererar i avsaknaden av bostäder samt analysera dem utifrån deras underliggande logik.

Efter de första kapitel med inledning, bakgrund, teori och metod, tar sig kapitel 5 an det första empiriska området och fokuserar på den så kallade distributionsmodellen och matchningsrutinerna mellan staten och kommunerna. Distributionsmodellen är ett kalkyleringsverktyg genom vilket Migrationsverket och Arbetsförmedlingen tar fram ett fördelningsunderlag för jämna flöden och en effektiv bosättningsprocess. Genom att väga statistiska variabler, söker distributionsmodellen att anvisa ”nyanlända invandrare” till kommuner där de har störst möjlighet att bosätta och etablera sig. Eftersom distributionsmodellen utesluter tillgängligheten till bostäder som variabel, pågår ett ständigt arbete med att utveckla övriga variabler i sökandet efter maximalt precisa uträkningar för att kompensera för den osäkerhet som bostadssituationen för med sig. Distributions- och matchningssystemet tar fram fördelningsstalen genom uträkningar kring sannolika framtida bosättningsmönster. Eftersom dessa är ovissa och oberäknliga, visar jag i avhandling att uträkningarna inte nödvändigtvis leder till effektivare bosättning och jämna flöden. Istället skänker uträkningarna bosättningslagen teknologisk och matematisk legitimitet, skapar en byråkratisk expertis och en till synes tillförlitlighet, samtidigt som osäkerheten som härrör från bostadsbristen, hölls i dunkel och förskjuts till framtiden och till nästa administrativa instans – kommunerna. En logistisk rationalitet speglas i språkbruket och i idéerna av effektivitet, teknologisk neutralitet och snabba förflyttningar av människor, vilka reduceras till objekt eller siffror. Den

tillsynes effektiva hanteringen av anvisningar och de förkortade ”ledtider” mellan asylboenden och kommunalt boende skymmer bostadsbristen som således kan skjutas fram i tiden.

Kapitel 6 och 7 beskriver och analyserar avhandlingens andra empiriska område. I båda dessa kapitel ligger fokus på hur avsaknaden av bostäder tar form. I kapitel 6, beskriver och analyserar jag hur en infrastruktur av tillfälliga bostäder etableras. Den materiella och organisatoriska manifesteringen av genomgångsbostäder för ”nyanlända invandrare” etableras och institutionaliserar en logistisk cirkulation av människor och ger upphov till en ny slags liminalitet, en tröskeltillvaro mellan asylprocessen och etablering. I kapitel 7, beskriver jag hur denna tröskeltillvaro och existens, förhåller sig till och formuleras i relation till bostads- och arbetsmarknaden. Tillsammans, framhåller dessa kapitel att etableringen av tillfälliga modulbostäder skapar en byråkratisk organisation på kommunal nivå där ”nyanlända invandrare” slussas runt i en prekär bostads- och arbetsmarknad. Implementeringen av bosättningslagen leder inte nödvändigtvis, som avsett, till snabb bosättning och etablering utan resulterar istället i en upplevd hypermobilitet och att bostadskrisen skjuts på framtiden. Även på kommunal nivå är den byråkratiska vokabulären färgad av logistiska begrepp och tankemönster, vilket speglar idén av snabba och effektiva förflyttningar av människor. Operationaliseringen av dessa idéer möjliggörs genom att den ursprungliga bostadsproblematiken skjuts upp och förhalas.

Kapitel 8 analyserar det tredje empiriska området. Här vänds den analytiska blicken mot boskolor och i synnerhet hur en boskola tar form i en av kommunerna i Stockholm. Boskolan är en praktik och arbetsmetod som kommuner i Stockholm använder för att informera ”nyanlända invandare” om bostadsförhållandena och bostadsmarknaden i Sverige och i länet. Boskolan söker också utbilda hyresgästerna om hur de bör ta hand om sitt hem. Syftet är att lära de boende att anpassa sig till Sveriges bostadsmarknad och uppmuntra dem till att söka en ny bostad, inte sällan vidare ut i landet. Kapitlet visar hur Boskolorna fungerar som sista instans av förskjutningen där det yttersta ansvaret för bostad förflyttas till de ”nyanlända invandrarna”. Detta sker inte enbart via boskolans explicita intentioner utan också i praktikens tvetydiga byråkratiska utformning.

Avhandlingens huvudargument är att påskyndandet och effektiviseringen av bosättning såsom den operationaliseras i Stockholm, är beroende av förskjutningspraktiker. Dessa tar sig uttryck på olika sätt beroende på i vilket

led av den administrativa kedjan de uppstår, men avhandlingen visar hur de opererar i tre steg. Först löser de ett givet definierat problem i nuet. I bosättningslagens fall handlar det om att förhindra att fler ”nyanlända invandrare” fastnar i asylboenden genom att tvinga kommuner att ta emot anvisade personer. I följande steg skapas strukturer och rutiner som ger operationen stringens, legitimitet och byråkratisk tillförlitlighet. Detta löser inte problemet i grunden utan skapar en parallell organisation där den tillfälliga lösningen professionaliseras och etableras som den permanenta ordningen. Dessa två steg möjliggör förskjutningen av det ursprungliga problemet tills det i det tredje steget slutligen landar i de ”nyanländ invandrararnas” knän, då formulerat som ett individuellt problem att lösas av en enskild person. Följaktligen, ger detta upphov till hypermobilitet och skapar en liminalitet efter asylprocessen som utkristalliseras i relation till bostads- och arbetsmarknaden.

Implementeringen av bosättningslagen har i Stockholm lett till en kontinuerlig cirkulation av människor samtidigt som bostadssituationen lämnas åt marknadens logik. Avhandlingen visar hur en vardaglig företeelse ur individens perspektiv som förskjutning, är en oundgänglig del av en systematisk logistifiering av bosättning i Sverige. På så sätt bidrar avhandlingen till att fördjupa kunskapen om implementeringen av bosättningslagen och dess konsekvenser i Stockholm. Den visar att bosättningslagen rangordnar problemformuleringar och lösningar där möjligheten och villkoren som krävs för människor att göra sig hemmastadda, åsidosätts och lämnas åt marknadsliberala krafter. Således visar avhandlingen hur statlig och kommunal styrning, tillsammans med privatiseringen och finansialiseringen av bostadsmarknaden är del i skapandet av ett fragmenterat samhälle där bostads- och arbetsmarknaden tillsammans skapar fördjupade prekära tillstånd bland ”nyanlända invandrare”. Avhandlingen utgör också ett teoretiskt bidrag till migrationsforskningen och i synnerhet den som utgår från logistifieringen av migration som teoretiskt och epistemologisk utgångspunkt, genom att beskriva hur logistifieringen tar form via statliga och kommunala byråkratiska strukturer och dess efterverkningar innanför landets gränser.

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