

Immigrant Justice in an Era of National Borders:  
Multi-Level Governance and Advocacy in the U.S. and Greece

by

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## ABSTRACT

This project seeks to explore how organizations work toward refugee and immigrant integration through forming different types of coalitions and strategic networks. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to identify when coalitions emerge between refugee organizations and immigrant rights groups in order to examine their development, from how the coalitions broadly conceive of refugee and immigrant rights, to how they organize resources and information sharing, service provision, policy advocacy, and policy implementation. The project is guided by the question: What explains the formation of coalitions that advocate for both immigrant rights and refugee rights? Through examining the formation and development of these coalitions, this thesis engages at the intersections of immigration federalism, refugee studies and human rights scholarship to reveal deeper complexities in the politics of immigrant integration. The project sharpens these three scholarly intersections by three multi-level jurisdictions – California and Arizona in the United States and Athens in Greece – and by employing comparative analysis to unpack how national governments and federalism dynamics shape coalition building around immigrant integration.

## DEDICATION

First, to my brother Bryan who has always shown me what can happen when you are willing to work hard for what you want in life. Thank you for being one of my closest friends and for all the long phone conversations where it's always likely we laugh at least once over an obscure reference to pineapples.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The United States is experiencing not only a crisis on the southern border but also a significant crisis in its refugee and immigration policy. Since 2016, the Trump administration has systematically targeted Central American migrants in order to both demonize them and to prevent them from submitting asylum applications in order to be recognized as refugees. As of January 2019, there are ongoing efforts to force certain migrants seeking asylum in the United States to wait in Mexico for their asylum claims to be heard. This represents an important shift in US policy and practice, which has historically allowed the majority of migrants to enter the US while their asylum cases are processed. This policy has been strongly critiqued by immigrant advocates as well as human rights groups that have expressed great concern about sending already vulnerable migrants to camps across the border, citing Mexico's current and historically high levels of extreme violence. Further, it is just one in a series of actions from the Trump administration that have targeted asylum seekers and immigrants in the United States and prompted action and protest from advocacy groups across the country (Vellegas and Simple, 2019)

While occurring on a larger scale, ongoing immigration crises in key European Union member countries provide an important juxtaposition to immigration issues in the United States. Migrants seeking asylum in European countries are likewise held indefinitely in camps while waiting for their claims to be heard, both without rights and often without due process. EU policy and bureaucratic delays prevent many of these migrants from moving onward to final destination countries and leave migrants in limbo within a system that was never intended to benefit them. In EU border countries like Greece, governments are now forced to deal with the reality of long-

term solutions for immigrants and refugees who are unable to return to their home countries and are prohibited from moving forward to other destinations (Pai, 2018).

### *Conflict over Integration*

Both of these ongoing crises illustrate the deep conflicts that exist in discussions over immigrant and refugee rights between federal, state and local advocacy groups. Refugees are often considered to be exclusively controlled under national policy, with local level assistance on service provision. As the conflicts and politicization of refugee policy heighten, federalism—or the relationship between the federal and state levels— becomes much more important for understanding both the resettlement process and the rights of asylum seekers. The way in which the immigration crisis is discussed and addressed at the federal level has created a conflict in immigration policy itself, where states, municipalities and localities have increasingly become more involved in welcoming or restricting the rights of asylum seekers and immigrants in their communities (Colbern and Ramakrishnan, 2018).

This speaks to the way the rights of some migrants (like refugees) might be protected while others (like the undocumented) are not. This protection often depends on location (such as which state or city) and the stance local government and advocacy organizations take in protesting federal immigration policy in advocating for the rights of not just refugees but all immigrants. These conflicts prompt closer examination of both how we conceptualize immigrant and refugee advocacy organizations, as well as the relationship between immigrant and refugee rights.

In both the US and the EU, much of the conflict revolves around integration, and the provision of long-term rights for refugees and immigrants. In EU border countries like Greece, much of the focus has historically centered around immediate service provision for refugees, a

struggle which faces further spatial complications due to people moving between multiple EU member countries. The goal for many migrants in Greece is to ultimately move to final destination countries and seek refugee status or a pathway to citizenship there, rather than in the initial country of arrival (Pai, 2018). For this reason, many groups operating in Athens have placed much of their focus on time sensitive concerns such as immediate crisis response and lifesaving services, rather than long term integration policy or immigrant rights.

My research indicates that this is changing; the municipality of Athens, Greece, in particular, is developing a National Integration Strategy for refugees in the city. This illustrates a significant shift toward a focus on the long-term rights of immigrants rather than just immediate service provision for refugees. The changing context of immigration in Greece provides a lens with which to think about the growing tensions between local groups and local coalitions pushing for services and rights for immigrants in the context of a restrictive international landscape.

In the United States, the debate over immigrant and refugee rights has deep and historical roots. Immigrant rights have been defined differently throughout history and were not always seen to be the same as present day understandings. For example, undocumented migrants have been seen in the past as undeserving of advocacy, even by immigrant rights and advocacy groups of the time (Colbern, 2019; Colbern, 2017). This shifted in the 1980s with the sanctuary movement for Central American asylum seekers, who arrived in the US seeking asylum from violence in their home countries but were denied refugee status (Tichenor, 1994; Tichenor, 2002; Colbern 2019.) Today, understandings of immigrant rights and long-term advocacy goals have expanded significantly to include developing communities that welcome immigrants, provide them access to services and rights such as driver's licenses or in-state college tuition, or working

to help them develop a civic voice and ability to advocate for themselves as invested and long-term community members. Significantly, these advocacy efforts now include both documented and undocumented immigrants, rather than just immigrants and refugees here legally (Colbern and Ramakrishnan, 2018).

### *Immigration Federalism*

These examples serve to illustrate the significance of the separation and intersections of refugee federalism and immigration federalism in the context of multi-level governments. It is important to note that refugee and immigration scholarship represent a vast field of study. While often discussed separately in both research and practice, the intersections and disconnects between the fields are areas where this research seeks to create dialogue and discussion. Refugee federalism is a comparatively newer term without the more robust literature and research surrounding immigration federalism. Nevertheless, a clear distinction of these terms in context is significant. Refugee policy is integration that is controlled by the federal government, with a limited consultative role on the part of individual states in terms of local handling of the resettlement process (Johnson, 2017; Pritchett 2017).

This is distinctive from the restrictionist or enforcement orientation of the federal government toward unlawfully residing immigrants. State and local policy responses to such restrictive legislation are often more robust and conflict based through regulation and policy passed at the state level and fall under the field of immigration federalism (Johnson, 2017; Pritchett 2017). As immigration scholars Gulasekaram and Ramakrishnan (2015) suggest, “Immigration federalism is a variegated landscape with room for states to maneuver on both restrictionist and integrationist policies” (*supra* note 14, at 201). State level policy responses range from sanctuary or welcoming initiatives which protect undocumented immigrants, to

policies granting them due process, worker protections, health care access, education access, and driver's licenses, among others (Colbern, Amoroso-Pohl and Gutierrez, 2019; Colbern and Ramakrishnan 2018).

*Conceptual Intersection: Rethinking Advocacy Coalitions*

At the same time, scholarship generally thinks of these two fields as completely separate and distinct. Refugee policy has historically centered more on resettlement while waiting for asylum hearings—both legal processes overseen by the federal government. Immigration federalism covers complex processes related to integration and illegality, with more space for states and local governments to create and weigh in on policy (Colbern and Ramakrishnan, 2018).

As my research indicates, ongoing political crises are increasingly pushing groups that have historically worked in silo, like resettlement organizations and immigrant rights groups toward more collaboration and partnerships between groups. This makes it increasingly important to create a dialogue between the refugee and immigration federalism research. Important dynamics are missed when the fields of refugee federalism and immigration federalism are examined separately, or conflated rather than differentiated.

One of the goals of this research is to explore the intersection between refugee federalism and immigration federalism in the context of advocacy coalitions and the power they are able to gain in order to influence local and state level policy. Importantly, the intersection between these two fields isn't always stable. Well established relations under immigration federalism can inform the development of refugee federalism, and vice-versa. This makes the intersection between the two important to understand, but also dynamic with multiple pathways of development. By examining the intersection through the ways refugee resettlement organizations



and immigrant rights groups share resources and information, we are better able to identify and understand how they leverage their coalitional power to impact local and state policy.

In order to explain and understand these intersections between immigrant rights and refugee rights, it is important to look at both coalition formation and coalition strength. In doing so, this research answers questions on how groups and coalitions are able to operate within and have a broader impact on policy change at the local and state levels. Conceptually, examining formation and strength enabled me to critically examine the intersection between immigration federalism and refugee federalism through a comparative approach in order to draw out the dynamic relationship between immigrant advocacy and refugee rights in a federalist system of governance.

### *Outline of the Research*

The following chapter introduces the literature and overviews intersections between work in refugee studies and work in immigration federalism. To accomplish this, my work draws from a diverse scholarship that examines interagency communications and resource sharing practices, political mobilization, and conceptualizations of the rights of refugees and immigrants. Chapter three details my research methodologies for unpacking the intersections between refugee and immigration federalism and for examining the varying understandings of refugee and immigrant rights. To do this, my research employs a focused comparison of three case studies developed from in depth semi-structured interviews and policy histories. Multiple, in depth case studies allows for thick description of coalition-building dynamics and revealing dimensionality in the concept of immigrant rights.

Chapters four and five detail individual case studies in two US cities— San Diego, California (a “sanctuary”) and Phoenix, Arizona (a location for many restrictionist immigration

policies) in the context of immigration federalism in the United States. Chapter six places these two locations in comparative context and allows for these case studies to provide analytical leverage for advancing key insights into the weaknesses, best practices and different tactics used to address the concerns of refugee resettlement and immigration. Chapter seven provides case study details from interviews of refugee resettlement, immigration, NGOs and municipality-level actors conducted in Athens, Greece, and examines the immigration conflict in an international system of multilevel governance.

Importantly, all three case studies capture key intersections between organizations themselves, refugee and immigrant serving organizations, and reasons for collaboration and partnership. In both the descriptive single-case and comparative case study approaches, the thesis draws out how federalism dynamics enable and constrain local organizations and then places their work within a broader policy context by situating it in conversation with ongoing current events and the dynamics of federalism and systems of multilevel governance. My comparative analysis strategy focuses on drawing out 1) case-specific patterns followed by 2) broad patterns across cases, in order to provide descriptive analysis of how coalition building and organizational responses to the ongoing immigration crises is enabled and constrained in diverse national and federalism contexts.

Finally, chapter eight utilizes a typology of advocacy coalitional strength in order to drive comparison across cases and begin to examine how advocacy movements in refugee federalism and immigration federalism work together and utilize coalitional power in systems of multilevel governance, both in the United States and Greece. In doing so, this research identifies two distinct pathways to the intersection of refugee federalism and immigration federalism with the goal of broadening the work of immigration and refugee scholarship in terms of how they

theorize advocacy in complex, multi-level governing structures, and give voice to groups and organizations that are operating within that structure.

## CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The scholarship on refugee studies and immigration federalism has grown in isolation from one another, but there are compelling reasons (theoretical, conceptual and empirical) for studying how refugees and undocumented immigrants and their respective organizations and policies intersect and disconnect. My aim is to better understand the ways in which resettlement and immigrant rights groups choose to work together or form long-lasting coalitions in order to shape local or state policy related to immigration. By addressing this empirical puzzle, the research highlights how the rights of varying classes of immigrants (e.g., refugees, asylees, undocumented immigrants) are perceived to originate and examines how ‘rights’ are conceptualized at different levels of governance and across various organizations.

While both refugee and immigration scholarships examine social movements and partnerships, they are addressed and made visible primarily in the immigration literature, where the concept of advocacy has grown around robust ideas about immigrant rights, unlike in refugee studies. Refugee studies is also largely focused on outside of the United States, and this scholarship tends to focus on immediate service provision, rather than the way groups partner with immigrant rights organizations. It is often assumed that refugees have a broad set of rights at the international and national levels, making service provision the primary gap that state and local governments and private actors help to fill. This is not always that case and the level of rights differs across varying refugee groups. Placing the refugee and immigration federalist scholarships in conversation with each other allows this thesis to highlight important intersections between these two fields.

By examining the ways similar organizations are addressing resettlement, integration, and the rights of refugees and immigrants in different contexts, we are able to bridge refugee scholarship's traditional focus on global and national level analyses with one that focuses instead on the state and local level. Current efforts to address the growing concerns of immigration often examine policies and practices in place at the national level. Meanwhile, the needs and rights of many immigrants and refugees are actually determined at the local level by non-governmental organizations, non-profits, and community groups. Within federalism, collaborations and resource sharing is occurring within states and localities, often in conflict with national agendas and policies.

The thesis' design facilitates the analytical shift from a focus on national-level policy and coordination in immigration enforcement in order to examine how local-level actors shape resettlement and the rights of refugees and immigrants. This includes goals of moving from immediate service provision to protecting rights through long term integration efforts. By doing so, this thesis further aligns refugee studies with the emerging immigration federalism scholarship, which has examined restrictive and progressive immigrant policies at the state and local levels with as focus on undocumented immigrants. I bridge the two literatures, while also exploring the disconnects between state and local features of refugee federalism and immigration federalism.

For the purposes of this research, the following review of the literature is organized in a manner which illustrates the way scholarship currently categorizes discussions over rights and advocacy within the refugee and immigration federalist fields. This aims to both engage the literatures in order to have them both speak to each other, as well as to illustrate the important separations and intersections between them.

## *Refugee Federalism*

Understanding the history of the studies of refugees is a crucial foundation for beginning this work. Over the past 50 years, refugee studies has emerged as a field of study distinct from that of migration and immigration research. Significantly, this distinction has led to a certain type of political humanitarianism, which has often served the needs of the geopolitical and hegemonic state more than refugee and immigrant populations themselves (Chimni, 2009). Modern states are expected to balance the ethical concerns of providing aid to refugees with the political concerns of the state in a time of increasing perception of threats to national security, which often directly impacts the services and reception available to refugee populations (Gibney, 2004).

Increasing need from global refugees has resulted further in an often-problematic classification system where “refugee” as a terminology is legally applied to some groups of migrants but not others, creating a dichotomy between those granted refugee status and internally displaced persons or economic migrants (Black, 2001). This concern over who is deserving of refugee status recognition is especially important. Central American asylum seekers fled to the United States in the early 1980s, but were largely denied recognition as refugees – causing a sanctuary movement to emerge (Colbern, Amoroso-Pohl and Gutierrez, 2019). This problem continues to persist in the United States, leading to important variation in immigrant integration at the national, state and local levels in how refugees and immigrant rights are conceived and practiced. As my research illustrates, it is also visible across Europe and the Mediterranean.

Labels such as “refugees,” “migrants,” or “internally displaced persons” are often driven by policy, and not only are they often analytically meaningless terminologies but can also create issues with attempts to separate distinctive classes of migrants. As policy-established labels, they are more reflective of the system that created them than the needs of the population they attempt

to describe (Scalettaris, 2007). They perpetuate a confusing system in which legal refugee status can provide benefits (i.e. government assistance they are entitled to) as well as depictions of refugees as victims without agency (Ludwig, 2016).

The creation of such often arbitrary categories draws attention to the need to more thoroughly understand the reasons for migration as well as the experiences of refugees themselves. Additionally, it requires discussion of how lacking attention to these details impacts experiences of refugees and policies that shape the field of refugee resettlement (Skran & Daughtry, 2007).

### *Human rights*

As discussed, ongoing crisis in immigration (Pai, 2018) have made it clear that the human rights of many refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants is being shaped at the local level within the federalist system (Colbern and Ramakrishnan, 2018; Colbern and Ramakrishnan, 2020). At the same time, the majority of human rights literature has a strongly national and international focus and scope, and often fails to examine the way human rights are addressed at the state and local level. Often discussed in relation to human rights, refugee studies has taken on a similarly strong national or international focus, with little focus on federalism (Sikkink, 2017). Typically, scholarly discussions are focused on shaping nation state behavior rather than the sub-state level, dismissing what is happening in refugee federalism at the local level, as well as the conflict between levels of governance that is ongoing in contemporary human right crises.

Broadly speaking, we can understand human rights to be ethical demands of protection that are afforded to each individual by nature of being individual human beings. These include the right to live free of fear and to be treated with equal dignity and respect (Sen, 2004). While universal human rights are legally protected under international law, the rights of varying classes

of immigrants and refugees more often link with citizenship rights, in ways that deny most measures of human rights to non-citizens (Gundogdu, 2015). Most refugees fleeing their home country enter secondary or third countries as “asylum seekers,” or a person falling into temporary category of non-citizen who then needs to prove refugee status in order to receive safety and protections (Bhabha, 2002). Receiving asylum status does automatically provide access to aid and assistance or broader sets of rights, which are all set under national or sub-national laws. More problematic, given the scale of the broader migrant crisis, those who are given asylum status are few and far between; the majority of applications are denied. In this way:

“...(W)hile thousands of applicants gain refugee status or some form of subsidiary humanitarian protection, tens of thousands live in a limbo of illegality without access to basic civil rights, or are incarcerated for years as they await a decision on their cases, and hundreds of thousands are rejected, unable to gain access to a forum where the adjudication of refugee protection can be made in the first place” (Bhabha, 2002, p.161).

In short, the refugee system as it exists now creates a dichotomy of sorts, where some migrants are legitimized as deserving of refugees status with a range human rights, while the rest are denied basic human rights on the basis of their citizenship status or reason for migration (Bhabha, 2002). Many asylum seekers and refugees find themselves in a precarious position of effective rightlessness, where —due to a lack of citizenship in their host country or current country — any sense of legal personhood is often unrecognized. Although this lack of citizenship does not automatically entail a loss of legal rights, personhood is severely undermined in the context of asylum and immigration. This can be seen in the normalization of deportation and immigrant detention by the modern state (Gundogdu, 2015).

Still, human rights are very limited within national and federalist contexts. Recent scholarship has increasingly conceptualized bridging the gap between understandings of a universal human rights and the political and social rights of citizenship in a democratic society



(Ballin, 2014). This perspective advocates bringing citizenship to the center of national immigration policy in ways that illustrate the universal rights of migrants and immigrants, as well as the limitations of human rights as a means through which to conceptualize protection. A foundation of protection based on human rights alone often lacks enforceable power and can instead be vague, especially in the context of international law. This makes it important to ground conversations about human rights protections in discussion of citizenship law, and to demonstrate the link between lack of citizenship and the denial of the basic human rights of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees (Estévez, 2012).

This is a large part of what national citizenship laws are better able to guarantee. FitzGerald and Arar (2018) address this more explicitly by calling attention to the ways that “Without citizenship rights, most of the world’s refugees must rely on precarious claims to human rights and incomplete humanitarian protections” (p399). This research aims to build upon these concepts to address the intersection of citizenship and human rights conceptualizations and build a critical view of human rights as sufficient means of legal protection. Further, this illuminates the role of federalism in shaping the way national state and local policy may speak to human right concerns and prioritize the rights of some migrants over others.

### *Human Rights as Refugee Federalism*

The categorization of refugees and migrants has historically been separated in both policy-making and immigration studies. As discussed, there is little overlap between the fields of refugee studies and international migration studies. New research by David FitzGerald and Rawan Arar begins to bridge this literature in important ways, by stressing the often-arbitrary ways an individual is labeled as a refugee based on geographical boundaries or the entity by whom they are being persecuted have lasting impact on not only the person but also global

immigration policy (2018). The process of classifying different groups of migrants — in both research and policy — is significant because it can illustrate how some demographics of migrants or refugees might be prioritized or disadvantaged based on the label assigned to them. For example, the term “refugee” might be both beneficial as a legal category but discriminatory as a social label — it provides a measure of legal protection while stigmatizing the individual as a victim lacking agency (FitzGerald, & Arar 2018).

This speaks to literature examining the differences and similarities between migrants and refugees as well as whether the perceived divide between the two is a social construction. Research suggests both groups organize migration through social networking, however the composition of these networks and the effect such migration has on the individual’s social identity diverges significantly. Furthermore, the state plays a larger role in the inclusion of refugees into their host country through both the types of services provided as well as level of state involvement (Hein, 1993). Refugee services by nature tend to focus more on immediate service provision than they long term rights or advocacy efforts in this direction.

Both migration/immigration studies and refugee studies developed out of specific historical moments with the goal of meeting political or humanitarian needs. Understanding the origins of each research field is instrumental in ensuring the tools that make each approach valuable are better integrated and utilized (FitzGerald, & Arar 2018). By examining the history of these fields, we can recognize that “the origins of these classificatory struggles are critical to understanding contemporary disputes about the scale of refugee crises, appropriate policy responses, and the suitability of different research tools to understand the phenomenon.” (FitzGerald, & Arar 2018. p400). Examining the way refugees and immigrants may receive

distinctive and potentially unequal services is one of the areas of scholarship my research intends to illuminate.

### *Immigration Federalism*

Immigration scholars have only begun to think about federalism over the past fifteen years (Varsanyi, 2010; Gulasekaram and Kamakrishnan, 2015; Colbern and Ramakrishnan, 2020). Traditionally, immigration scholarship (much like refugee and human rights scholarship) has had a strongly national and international focus and highlighted immigration law as exclusive to the federal government rather than looking at the role of sub-state actors due to the plenary powers of the federal government (Ngai, 2004; Tichenor, 2002). As state and local governments began to become more involved in passing immigration policy after the 1980's, scholars began to shift their focus to local actors within the immigration federalist system as well as the role of advocacy groups (Colbern and Ramakrishnan, 2018). This potential gap in the scholarship is important to keep in mind in discussions of the history of immigration scholarship and conversations about the role on local level governments in shaping immigration policy.

As my research emphasizes a deeper understanding of the ways groups focus on immigrant and refugee rights, it is crucial to build upon a contextual and historical understanding of immigration. The immigration process is often framed in the light of inclusion into a given society. But for the purposes of this work, the history of immigration and the rights possessed by citizenship are best understood as processes of defining what it means to be a foreigner in comparison to a naturalized citizen (Parker, 2015). Disadvantaged groups within state boundaries once shared similar legal limitations and certain exclusions with outsiders. It has only been with “the creation of formal citizenship among the domestic population, a clearer distinction between

those who are citizens and those labeled aliens, as well as with the rise of a powerful centralized state, that we have come to conceptualize immigrants in the manner of a uniquely disabled legal subject” (Parker, 2015, ii).

This framing illustrates how immigration policy developed in United States government since World War II is based on restriction rather than inclusion. Defining the “illegal alien” against the citizen has left an impression on twentieth-century American ideas and practices about citizenship, race, and the nation-state (Ngai,2004). Illegal immigration is now one of the most pressing and controversial topics in American politics. Building an understanding of how legal and illegal immigrants have been defined, incorporated into society, and dealt with by the state is crucial in efforts to understand the population and environment that immigrant rights groups and refugee resettlement organizations often operate within (Motomura, 2014).

Research has further shown that the “way governments react to immigration exerts a powerful influence on understandings of citizenship and the ability [of immigrants] to be politically active” (Bloemraad, 2006, p4). Further, infrastructure of community organizations, local government, and social networking play a significant role in how immigration is shaped on the ground while at the same time being influenced by government policies (Bloemraad, 2006). This research speaks to the need to further develop this area of scholarship through the goal of better understanding the politics of immigration at both a federal and local level.

### *U.S. Immigration Law*

In the United States, immigration policy and determinations originate at the federal level, yet states are legally allowed—in many cases, expected—to take an active role in resettling refugees and immigrants in their communities. While anti-immigration legislation typically runs counter to federal law, state efforts to integrate and welcome refugees are allowed legally. This

gives states the ability to take a larger role in national level immigration debates by promoting positive and innovation immigration policies at the local level (Elias, 2016). Despite federal preemption of local immigration restrictionist laws,<sup>1</sup> the ability of states to engage on immigration policy has nevertheless resulted in states opposing or inhibiting the integration and resettlement of varying classes of immigrants in their communities. In this way, it is clear that in local immigration policy, the ability to promote inclusion may also create exclusionary outcomes in certain localities (Johnson, 2017).

The presence of potentially differing immigration policy at both the local and federal level speaks to the need to understand the role each entity plays in shaping the environment of immigration and refugee integration in the United States. Currently the array of immigration policy and enforcement throughout the country could best be termed a “multijurisdictional patchwork” made up of both state and federal regulation (Provine, Varsanyi, Lewis, & Decker 2016). The complicated array of immigration policies, current and ongoing political challenges with federal comprehensive immigration reform (CIR), as well as how and why immigration policymaking is often delegated to states and localities, best explains what immigration scholars have called the 'new immigration federalism' or the joint role of the state and local government in immigration enforcement (Gulasekaram and Ramakrishnan, 2015).

This jurisdictional patchwork of immigration enforcement has a direct impact on local police and county sheriffs throughout the US. It also influences the work of resettlement groups,

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<sup>1</sup> Citing Gulasekaram and Ramakrishnan's *The New Immigration Federalism* (2015), this work uses the term immigration restrictionist to refer to “a range of policy positions geared toward greater immigration enforcement, increased state or local participation in that enforcement, decreased ability of unlawfully present persons to access public goods and benefits, and fewer discretionary possibilities to permit continued unlawful presence” (7). Specifically, this is done to illustrate the opposing or pro-immigrant position many groups are choosing to take promoting increased and fuller integration for immigrants in American society for both documented and undocumented immigrants.

immigrant rights organizations as well as the populations they work within—immigrants, the communities where they reside, and their relationship with different levels of the federal government (Varsanyi, Lewis, Provine, & Decker 2012). Recent research has indicated that despite an increase in federal involvement in immigration concerns, neither order nor control have been brought about as a result. Local law enforcement, states and municipalities are asked to take a leading role, without any clear and consistent rule or guidance from the federal government, which has only added to the complexity of the problem (Provine, Varsanyi, Lewis, & Decker 2016).

Significantly, this means that the impact of immigration is felt most deeply in the communities where migrants settle. More often than not, states, cities and municipality policy play the biggest role in the way federal immigration law is enforced or not enforced, as in the case of sanctuary cities. In some instances, this has taken an active form where such localities work to resist efforts of federal immigration enforcement officers to identify and deport immigrants (Garcia & Manuel, 2014). State and local level policies related to immigrant integration can both compliment national-level immigration policies and directives, as well as serve as substitutes for immigration policies that have been forced to stall at the national level (Colbern & Ramakrishnan, 2016).

### *Coalition Building*

Given the multifaceted nature of immigration policy and enforcement, it is increasingly relevant to shed light on the political environment resettlement and immigrant rights groups work within. It is also key to understand the ways they share resources and network through multiorganizational coalitions in order to create broader impact. This research defines a coalition as any time two or more organizations join forces to work toward a common cause or goal. By

this definition, coalitions can take the form of a partnership between just two groups or be extended to refer to more complete networks of groups or organizations — as long as these groups retain separate organizational structures (Van Dyke, McCammon, & McCammon, 2010).

Until recently, little research has examined what makes coalitions form or be successful (Tattersall, 2010), making this research a significant contribution to existing gaps in the literature. While the causes of coalition formation are complex, there is agreement that most tend to be created in response to external antagonistic political contexts or ongoing political threats. Furthermore, a mutual lack in political power in combination with connecting social ties, ideologies, group opportunities, or threats can all impact the type and strength of coalition formation (Van Dyke, McCammon, & McCammon, 2010; Post, 2015; Tattersall, 2010). Joining together to form coalitions to work toward mutually beneficial goals may provide the mechanisms by which marginalized groups and interests can access the policy arena in meaningful ways (Post, 2015).

This may take the form of direct advocacy on behalf of certain populations or policies, or by giving groups a louder voice with which to communicate with elected officials in order to provide them with significant information or express concerns (Burstein, & Linton, 2002). A coalition's ability to do this successfully depends on its ability to successfully “leverage heterogeneous relationships and resources; mutuality, trust, and respect in partnership; political capacity; and “bottom-up” pathways to participation for grassroots constituencies” (Post, 2015, p271).

Failure to do this efficiently can strain relationships between the participating groups, as well as detract from their overall impact. Due to the often-episodic nature in which coalitions form, divisions within the group around identity or class lines can be created in ways that

reinforce “continued marginalization of issues that uproot conventional power dynamics, like police violence, economic inequality, and gender justice” (Adam, 2017, p.i). Research has indicated that the ability of groups to overcome potential issues such as these may revolve around external and antagonistic political threats creating a strong enough reason to ignore previously insurmountable ideological differences and join forces with new groups (Van Dyke, McCammon, & McCammon, 2010).

Exploring how and why groups choose to stay connected without the presence of strong external political forces is an area not discussed in detail in existing literature. It is also an area where my research stands to contribute. Because advocacy coalitions involve building strong relationships between grassroots groups, nonprofits and state officials, they are often imbedded in efforts to impact policy (Colbern and Ramakrishnan, 2020). This advocacy becomes the center of how this study focuses on federalism and the policy within it. Further, it aids this research in examining the way advocacy coalitions enable a shift in refugee federalism (immediate services provision) to immigration federalism (long term rights and integration).



### CHAPTER III: METHODS AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This work is grounded in qualitative research methodology, which seeks to: a) add depth rather than breadth to a topic; b) learn about how and why people behave, think and act the way they do; c) study micro and macro level occurrences; and d) discover rather than verify (Ambert, Adler, Alder, & Detzner 1995). Further, this research also builds on a comparative case study research methodology, which aims to “control whether generalizations hold across the cases to which they apply” (Sartori, 1991, p244). Per Gerring (2004), case study methodology can be defined as “an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of similar units” (p342). For the purposes of this research, a unit can be further defined as specific geographically bounded location that is experiencing a specific phenomenon, or the ongoing crisis in immigration (Gerring, 2004).

By focusing the research on localities that differ significantly in terms of the nature of their policies on immigration yet find themselves faced with similar immigration concerns, I have chosen to focus on the “systems that differ as much as possible and yet do not differ on the phenomena under investigation” (Sartori, 1991, p250). Following Beach and Pederson’s (2013) theory of process tracing, I am able to create a theory to explain causal mechanisms that exist across all three of my identified cases. By developing generalizations about causal relationships between cases situated within my typology, this research is able to maximize national comparisons (through Phoenix and Athens) as well as across typology comparison (San Diego). Significantly, in doing so this research “compares mechanisms that have contributed to producing the same outcome” across similar but distinctive cases (p156). This has allowed me to examine more deeply of the politics of refugee resettlement and immigrant integration, as well as a better understanding of the significance and development of coalitions and their impact on

immigration policy that would not have been attainable through the examination of a single location or case study.

By utilizing a comparative case study analysis between cases, this research unpacks multilevel dynamics of governing and federalism that might go unnoticed without the systematic comparisons built into both my interview instrument and overall analytic approach. As I will discuss in the following pages, I use several different research methods to address and answer my research questions. These methods included semi-structured interviews, analysis of interview data in the context of ongoing current events, and comparison across cases utilizing a typology of coalitional strength. Using multiple methods of inquiry allowed me to ensure that I was addressing my research questions both accurately and as completely as possible (Ravitch and Carl, 2016).

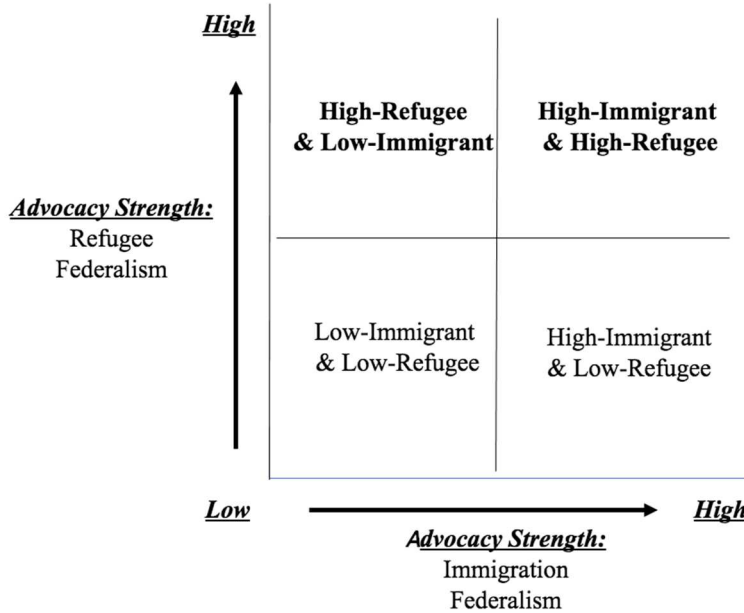
### *Research Question*

Throughout my research I sought to explain and understand how the formation of coalitions that advocate for both immigrant rights and refugee rights illuminate the intersection between immigration and refugee federalism. This question shaped and guided my interviews in each location, as well as the direction of my analysis. Significantly, the concepts of coalition formation and coalition strength are related, yet at the same time distinctive. Examining both together allows me to examine both advocacy coalition formation (providing within case analysis), as well as advocacy coalition power, (grounding my comparative analysis between locations). In doing so, this research better illuminates both how groups and coalitions are able to operate, as well as their broader impact and strength in advocating for policy change at the local and state levels. This focus enabled me to critically examine the intersection between immigration federalism and refugee federalism and to rethink how we conceptualize both

advocacy organizations themselves, as well as the relationship between immigrant advocacy and refugee rights in a federalist system of governance.

*Typologies of Advocacy Coalitional Strength as Comparative Strategy*

Figure 3. 1 Typology of Advocacy Coalition "Strength"

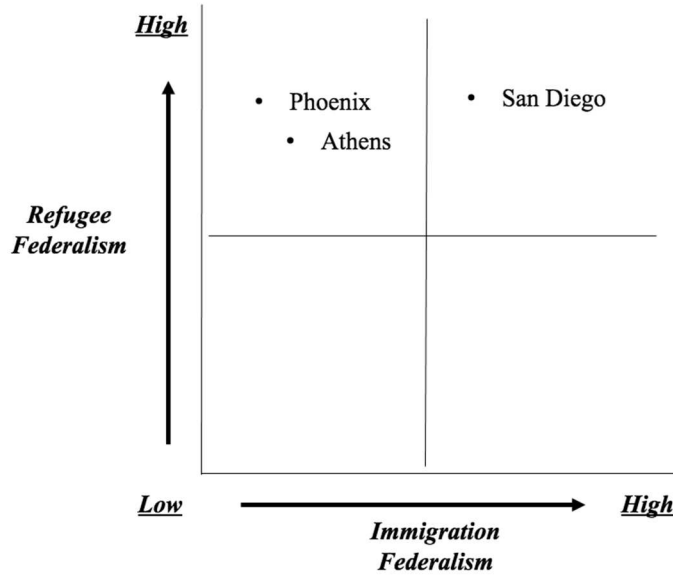


One of the primary goals of this research is to explain different types of intersections between immigration federalism and refugee federalism in the context of advocacy coalitions. To do so, I approach this intersection through developing a typology that facilitates classifying and then comparing cases on how coalitions vary in shaping refugee rights and immigrant rights, and to then situate these intersections in a broader policy context. The typology sets up my comparative design. Through interviews, I identify how groups connect and form coalitions. From here, I am able to situate this information within the context of policy and ongoing political events, and begin to unpack the work of advocacy groups in both refugee and immigration federalism. Utilizing the typology allows me to situate coalitions for comparative purposes in

order to better understand how federalism and multi-level governance impact coalitional power across locations. I primarily focus on two quadrants or typologies: 1) high-refugee and low immigrant coalitional power; 2) high-immigrant and high refugee coalitional power.

*Site Selection Justification*

Figure 3. 2 Classifying Cases of Advocacy Coalition Strength



Phoenix was selected due to Arizona’s prominence in both implementation of regressive immigration policies as well as its geographic location as a southern border state. Additionally, as I was based in Phoenix for the duration of my graduate studies, I was provided with the unique opportunity to conduct interviews in person with groups located in the region. San Diego was also selected because of its proximity to the border, compounded with the fact that California has become a hub for some of the most progressive immigration policies in the United States. Arizona and California have continuously been in the spotlight over the 2017-2018 time period, as the United States has faced the crisis at the Southern Border and repercussions from

the regressive immigration policy implemented by the Trump Administration (Coppola and Polleta, 2018).

Athens, Greece is a unique city to include in this comparison because of its role as a major European entrance point for asylum seekers and refugees. This influx of migrants has strained an already vulnerable economy and social safety network (Strickland, 2018), making the actions of groups working to address the needs of refugees and coordinate services of critical importance. The coalitions that have formed between the municipality and organizations operating in the field of refugee resettlement within the of Athens provides a unique area in which to examine many of the dynamics this research is interested in.

I identified initial organizations for contact in each location through convenience sampling with the goal of best representing groups operating at the national, state, local and grassroots levels whenever possible. Additional organizations were identified and interviewed through snowball sampling, as interviewees suggested additional connections and organizations to reach out to for context and comments.

In summary, each location is a city on or near an international border where an immigration crisis is ongoing. Phoenix, San Diego and Athens are all cities with large immigrant and refugee populations and are situated within systems of multi-level governance. In San Diego, advocacy coalitions have had significant impact impacting policy at the state and local level in both the immigration and refugee fields due to support from the state and local government. In Arizona, my research indicates that coalitions across the refugee and immigration fields are beginning to emerge, yet restrictive state policy has burdened the work being done in immigrant focused advocacy. Finally, in Athens, the political context has until recently been more

restrictive for efforts in long term rights for immigrants, and instead, prioritizes short term service provision for refugees. These dynamics are illustrated above in Figure 2.

*Target Groups*

Table 3. 1 Groups Interviewed

<b>Location</b>	<b>Contacted</b>	<b>Interviewed</b>	<b>Response: No Interview Capacity</b>
US (National)	N=13	N=3	N=6
US (Phoenix)	N=7	N=3	N=0
US (San Diego)	N=4	N=1	N=0
Athens, Greece	N=12	N=5	N=0
<b>Total</b>	<b>N=36</b>	<b>N=12</b>	<b>N=6</b>

Throughout my research process, I worked with several distinct groupings of individuals. The first consisted of individuals working with government, NGO’s, grassroots groups and coalitions in both Arizona and California in the United States, as well as the city of Athens in Greece. This included speaking to representatives from each group who traditionally acted as media contacts or handled the sharing of information with the public in some capacity. I considered these individuals as leaders in this field due to their role in sharing information between organizations and with the public. With the exception of two interviews—Unidos USA and government officials in Arizona—I spoke to one representative from each organization.

In Greece, this took the form of interviews with representatives with the Athens Partnership as well as the Athens Coordination Center for Migrants and Refugees, both of which

exist and operate as coordination centers for the many groups working in the field in Athens. I also spoke with representatives with Solidarity Now, one of the primary NGO's operating in Athens. I also interviewed a representative with Humanitarian Initiatives Bridges, which operates at a more grassroots and individual needs-based level. Finally, I also included a representative with the United States Embassy in Athens Greece who acts as a liaison between U.S. Policy directives and on the grounds groups in the city of Athens, as well as a representative with the UNHCR based in Athens. As a researcher based in Greece for eight consecutive weeks, I was able to attend community gatherings, events, and trainings organized by groups working to address the refugee crisis.

In the United States, I spoke with government representatives in Arizona, the International Rescue Committee in Phoenix, Arizona, and the grassroots group Alliance in San Diego. Significantly, while I only interviewed Alliance in San Diego, they were able to provide me with greater detail than most single organizations as they house two of the biggest coalitions in San Diego—The San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium and the Southern Borders Community Coalition. I also interviewed nationally networked organizational representatives, including Catholic Charities, We Are All America, and Unidos USA, each of which operate at both the national, state and local levels. These groups were identified through research of key organizations operating in the refugee resettlement field in the United States and represented in news media as being currently active on immigration crises.

In both Greece and the United States, after groups were identified, I sent emails to each organization asking for their participation in an Arizona State University master's thesis project and explained how I would utilize their assistance (Appendix III). Interviews were scheduled via email, and all US interviews outside of Phoenix based groups took place and were audio

recorded over the phone with participant consent. All interviews in Greece were conducted in person.

### *Gaining Access*

In all forms of qualitative research, it is vital for researchers to consider how they will gain access to their targeted population (Ravitch and Carl, 2016). In my case, this took different forms for groups I interviewed in Greece versus research done in the United States. As an outsider in Greece, I was able to highlight my sponsoring organizations in order to gain access and credibility with groups I wished to interview. As a researcher under the umbrella of the Global Development Lab with USAID, I was able to claim affiliation with USAID that opened doors with potential organizations and helped to establish my status as a formal researcher. I was also able to draw on my connections with Solidarity Now, my in country sponsoring organization and one of the largest and most recognizable non-profits operating in Athens. This gave me access to both government groups and the network of non-profits working with immigrants in the city and its surrounding areas.

In the United States, I was able to draw on my status as a master's student doing research under the supervision of Arizona State University. This allowed me to establish credibility ensure research participants that I was operating under the guidelines of the Institutional Review Board. It also enabled me to provide research participants with recourse to contact either my direct supervisors or the school if they had concerns with me or my project, which I believe helped to create trust between myself and my research participants during our interviews. Finally, several of the organizations I reached out to were familiar with my thesis advisor—Dr. Allan Colbern—from previous work and research he had conducted. My ability to draw on that



connection for initial contact with these groups further aided me in establishing my reliability as a researcher.

### *Semi-Structured Interviews*

I conducted in depth, semi-structured interviews with 12 organizations. This included 5 interviews in Athens, Greece and 7 interviews with local and national groups in the United States. Interviews are a vital component of qualitative research because they allow the researcher to gain important depth and insight into the experiences and perspectives of others, and further explore how *what* people say when faced with certain questions matters (Weiss, 1994; Ravitch and Carl, 1996). In this way, interviews enable the researcher to gain answers for a broad array of questions including those related to “a) experience and behaviors; b) opinions and values; c) feelings; d) knowledge; e) senses; and f) background or demographics” (Ravitch and Carl, 2016:153).

For my own research, I developed a comprehensive interview guide (Appendix I) and constantly reframed questions throughout the research process as my focus and direction developed. Participants frequently responded to all the subsections of my interview instrument during the flow of conversation, which prevented me from having to probe interviewees for more detail for further information. This allowed me to keep the tone of the interview conversational and to mark off categories and subsections as participants touched on them during interactions, which averaged between 35 and 70 minutes in duration. All participants were assured that I would keep any information confidential if required and that I would remain in contact with them throughout the writing process as needed.

Data collection spanned May-December of 2018, and as I gained insight and focus during the project, I constantly honed my research questions in order to make sure that they remained

both impactful and answerable in ways that would contribute to important gaps in current understanding of the immigrant and refugee resettlement process. This type of reflexive and iterative research is a key aspect of the qualitative research process (Lareau 1996; Curtis, Gesler Smith and Washburn 2000).

### *Analytical Strategy for Interviews*

My use of interviews were designed with interpretivist framing and ethnographic approaches to research in mind, but were grounded in policy contexts, current events and the broader political context related to federalism. While I sought to allow interviewee an openness and flexibility in responding, I also sought to gain comparability across cases and on how they represented themselves and described both the work they do and their perspective on ongoing political events. This allowed me to engage broadly with why organizations are working on issue areas rather than focusing on specific policies within issue areas.

I was then able to place these interviews within a comparative context by putting them in conversation with immigration policy and ongoing immigration crisis under systems of multi-level governance. Through an ethnographic use of interviews, I developed within case analyses, drawing out how an advocacy coalition forms, operates and coordinates on the ground at the intersection of immigrant and refugee rights. Interviews of the cases are then placed into a comparative framework to make across case analysis that goes beyond case-oriented analysis to reveal pathways or causal mechanisms. By situating interviews within key federalism and policy contexts, I identify patterns in advocacy coalitional strengths on both immigrant rights and refugee rights that vary across cases.

### *Data Saturation*

With the large number of refugee and immigrant focused groups operating in both the United States and Greece—as well as the difficulties discussed in reaching many of them—it is likely that I could have continued data collecting efforts indefinitely. However, as a graduate student I was limited by practicalities such as funding and time. Because of this, I continued interviews until I felt data saturation had been achieved. The ‘data saturation point’ is a standard in qualitative research that aids researchers in developing intentional sample sizes—regularly found after interviews with around 12 research participants (Guest, Bunce and Johnson, 2006). Bowen (2008) stated that data saturation is achieved “when the researcher gathers data to the point of diminishing returns, when nothing new is being added” and that further “it is the point at which no new insights are obtained, no new themes are identified, and no issues arise regarding a category of data” (Bowen 2008:140).

As I progressed with my interviews, I knew I had reached this point as participants began to echo the same information about the networks they connected with and expressed similar perceptions about barriers and challenges faced by their work and connections with different groups. As an indicator, at the end of one of my last interviews I listed the groups I had spoken with to date to my interviewee and asked if there were other organizations that I should be contacting as well. She responded, “Actually no, not that I can think of. It sounds like you are talking to all the right people” (Jean Beil, Catholic Charities Interview, December 28, 2018). This corroborated my existing sense that I had reached a point of data saturation with the groups I had been in contact with during the data collection period of my research.

### *Coding*

My main data for analysis consisted of personal field notes, detailed interview notes and interview transcripts. All of my transcribed interviews were uploaded into NVIVO data coding software and reviewed for an initial analysis of general ideas and content. I then worked through each transcript individually and coded each one by hand through the NVIVO software using Saldana's (2016) understanding of thematic coding as "a short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language based or visual data" (Saldana, 2016:4).

These codes included key phrases that that allowed me to group together common threads across all interviews, including themes such as "Perceived Barriers to Organization", "Types of Coalition" "Methods of Communication" "Challenges of Coalition" "Reason for Coalition Formation" and "Duration of Partnership". All coded segments, key words and phrases were organized into lists stored in NVIVO that I constantly referred back to. I then made a final pass through all coded segments and identified main themes that spoke directly to my research questions and enabled me to reach my final research conclusions (Saldana, 2016). I also identified and maintained a running list of significant quotations and comments that better illuminated my overarching themes and final assertions (Ravitch and Carl, 2016; Emerson et al, 2011).

### *Research Challenges*

My primary challenges in conducting this study have been those of timing and political context, both of which proved challenging to mitigate. I began this research in Athens, Greece in May of 2018 during a time period where Greece—along with other Mediterranean countries like Italy— has found itself bearing the brunt of migrants arriving from overseas. Over 28,000

migrants arrived in Greece during 2018, while at the same time the 2016 EU deal with Turkey has severely limited the number of refugees able to move onward to the rest of Europe. Asylum seekers are required by EU law to lodge their application in the first EU country they arrive in which has placed additional burdens on the Greek economy and social services, many of which have yet to recover from the Greek economic crisis (Henley, 2018).

These factors have directly impacted the resources and capacity of groups working to address the needs of migrants and their communities in Athens, and certainly played a large role in the capacity of such organizations to make staff available for interviews and meetings with outside researchers such as myself. In the United State, 2018 has been a year of turmoil in immigration policy, as the Trump administration has consistently sought to change and redefine legal immigration. From the first week the Trump administration took office it has aggressively pushed a campaign of anti-immigrant sentiment and policy, beginning with the travel ban for refugees arriving from Libya, Iran, Somalia, Syria, Yemen, North Korea and Venezuela (Associated Press, 2018). This has been followed by an aggressive cap on the number of immigrants admitted to the United States, a shocking policy of family separation at the Southern Border (Associated Press, 2018, and as of February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019, a call to declare a state of emergency at the southern border (Savage and Pear, 2019).

Many of the groups I initially contacted for interviews during my research process have been directly involved in these immigration battles and have had already insufficient resources stretched even thinner by their efforts to respond to the Trump administration's anti-immigrant stance. It is worth noting that of the twenty-six US based organizations I reached out to via email, six of them responded to me directly to indicate that they had no resources to spare for interview requests at the moment, citing increases in workload resultant from national

immigration policy decisions made over the past year. These limitations indicate that it is possible for certain perspectives and lived experiences to go unrecognized in this study, or for experiences that do not highlight a universal reality for many of these groups to be highlighted in my final report.

That being said, I have done my best to address these concerns through employing intentional sampling in order to locate groups with the most background and context to best address my research questions (Ravitch and Carl, 2016; Biernacki and Waldorf 1981). Most importantly, sampling was used to structure my empirical data collection, rather than designed for the purpose of making a causal or explanatory analysis. My primary concern in selecting interviewees was that they were conceptually comparable across cases and useful for making descriptive inference about the intersections occurring within-cases and across-cases. Employing a semi-structure interview instrument ensures comparability, while also providing enough flexibility and space for each interviewee to draw out uniqueness important to revealing new meanings within the refugee and immigrant area of study.

Throughout the research and interview process, I constantly referred to my research questions in order to focus on answering them as completely as possible (Lareau, 1996). As a result, while the current political context made it impossible to interview all the groups I reached out to, I believe the experiences and information gathered are generally indicative of what is involved in working in the current immigration field in the US. One of the great powers of interpretivist qualitative research are the individual perspectives gained through interviews. During the course of my research, I was able to capture the varying perspectives and relationships between many different organizations rather than just the group I was speaking to at the time. This is largely due to the nature of my questioning, which directly inquired about

networks, relationships and communication. If during the interview an organization did not refer to anyone else, it was clear that they might not represent a perspective that ought to speak to the case in question. I am confident that my interviews capture the partnerships and coalition building taking place in the United States immigration and refugee field.

### *Positionality*

The comparisons and intersections this thesis make are grounded to an interpretivist framework that requires a researcher entering the field to be aware of both social identity and positionality in relation to those they interact with during the research process. In this context, “positionality” references the researcher role and social identity in relation research participants. This becomes a key component in qualitative research because “the researcher becomes the primary instrument” (Ravitch and Carl, 2016:10). In this way, awareness of positionality makes us aware of how the researcher draws on their own history, experience and background in shaping a research project or study, as well as how those things in turn are shaped by other factors such as culture, society and gender. Awareness of the influence of these factors is key in developing researcher reflexivity during the research process, which can be defined as the “systematic assessment of your identity, positionality and subjectivities” (Ravitch and Carl, 2016:10). This means developing a consistent process of reflection on positionality throughout research development, the interview process, coding and writing.

### *Negotiating Insider-Outsider Status*

It is important to note that my role in interviewing many of these organizations and individuals was primarily as an outsider with some insider familiarity to the groups I was speaking with. In Phoenix, I spent 8 weeks volunteering with a local refugee resettlement group, and this experience gave me specific familiarity some of the concerns facing similar

organizations. That being said, I had no personal or insider connection with any of the groups that I spoke with for the purposes of this study.

Access to many of the groups interviewed in Athens was further complicated by my status as not only an outsider but also as a foreign or American researcher, which further widened the insider/outsider divide. Additionally, several of the organization I spoke with in Greece expressed specific frustrations in working with short term foreign volunteers arriving in Athens to aid in work addressing the migrant crisis. As a non-Greek only living in Athens for the summer, by default I often felt that I was placed in this category. Both factors likely influenced the number of organizations I was able to speak with in a formal interview setting throughout my time there.

With these factors in mind, it remains my goal to accurately represent the voices and experiences of those I spoke with, while at the same time acknowledging my own positionality. I apply Dwyer and Buckle's approach, which considers: "The core ingredient is not insider or outsider status but an ability to be open, authentic, honest, deeply interested in the experience of one's research participants, and committed to accurately and adequately representing their experience" (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009:59). It is my intention to reflect the work of organizations authentically, especially when moving out of rich description of the case studies and into comparative case analysis. Comparisons will focus on the enabling and constraining policy environments that originate from national differences (Greece and the U.S.), federalism contexts linking national and sub-federal policies, rather than the organizations themselves. I approach comparing with the recognition that tensions exist between my interpretivist approach to interviewing and observing the organizations and my analytical approach to making sense of broader comparisons.



## *Ethics and Logistics*

I received Arizona State University Institutional Review Board approval in March of 2018 to conduct my research. Although there were slight changes in question structure, proposed timing and precise methodology since initially proposed, research generally proceeded as indicated. As mentioned previously, one of the goals of qualitative research is to prioritize confidentiality when requested by research participants. This is an area I kept under consideration throughout the research process and I aim to respect the wishes of the individuals I spoke with. All but one organization consented verbally and in writing to have the names of their organizations used in my final report. As verified with this specific group, they will be referred to only by the category (government officials) and by state. At times during other interviews, individuals requested the audio recorder to be turned off for certain comments, or that I verify with them first before quoting them on any topic that might impact their funding or portray them in any contentious light. During the interviews, I assured research participants that their confidentiality would be protected and that as requested I would use my discretion to check in with them first on politically sensitive topics of conversation.

Many of the groups I spoke with expressed great interest in my research, and upon their request I would like to share my research findings with them, either in their entirety after publishing or prepared sheet of research findings. As many groups are continuing to make efforts in the ways they communicate and join forces with each other, I believe my findings would be useful in the work such groups continue to do. I also believe this is a chance to indicate that such academic research and inquiry is not necessarily exploitive or invasive but can work to benefit these organizations as they continue to improve the ways in which they communicate.

## *Data Management*

Managing the data for this project was a systematic and rigorous process throughout the entirety of my research. All formal interviews were recorded utilizing two means of recording devices — on both a designated audio recorder and my personal iPhone’s recorder application. These recordings were then directly uploaded to my Apple MacBook personal computer. All interviews were transcribed verbatim both by hand as well as through the secure transcription service Temi. During the interview and transcription process, I also kept a detailed set of field notes which included not only my observations while working in the field, but also observations about participants willingness to comment on certain topics during interviews, and thoughts I had while interviewing and listening back to audio (e.g. potential groups to reach out to for further comments, other questions raised by our conversations or things to look for during the coding process). This iterative process was aimed at developing and maintaining “a brief written record of events and impressions captured in key words and phrases” at all stages of the research process (Emerson et al., 2011).

Institutional Review Board approval from Arizona State University was obtained in May, 2018, before conducting any interviews. As stipulated in my protocol, all physical copies of paperwork such as consent forms were stored in a secure location during the interview process and will remain stowed for three years. Digital copies of all files were stored on my personal computer as well as backed up to an external USB drive and private Dropbox account. When requested by participants, the interviewee’s identity will be protected in all final reports by assigning pseudonyms to participants. Several organizations declined audio recordings of our interviews, and one requested that their names and organizations not be mentioned in my final

research findings. Otherwise, all participants read and signed a consent form authorized by the Institutional Review Board allowing me to include name and organizations.

## CHAPTER IV: CASE STUDY —SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Examining the way advocacy coalitions form and are able to use their power effectively is a vital component of examining refugee and integration at the local level. As Colbern, Amoroso-Pohl, and Gutiérrez explain, early progressive jurisdictions on the rights of undocumented immigrants, especially California, were the key sites to resist President Trump’s anti-immigrant policies after 2017 by enacting many more sanctuary policies (2019). Similarly, states and localities in the United States, who have taken varying stances on undocumented immigrants, are now beginning to take part and become more vocal in matters related to asylum seekers—who are seeking to enter the Southern border, but denied access by the Trump administration. Coalitions in both Arizona and California have increasingly been forced to deal with similar the repercussion of similar restrictive immigration policy at the state or federal level. The following case studies that guide the thesis, found in Chapters four through seven, illustrate similar responses to ongoing immigration crisis as being largely dictated by the opportunities and constraints of federalism. In all of the following case studies, immigration-refugee coalition formation emerges as a result of concurrent crises and opportunities within federalism; yet, the strengths of coalitions is conditional on state and local government policy contexts, which varies across all of the cases. The following chapter reveals how California is unique, as an ideal case for high levels of formation and high levels of strength, due to its progressive policy landscape in immigration federalism.

As of February 18, 2018, sixteen states—including the state of California—are set to sue the Trump administration in order to prevent the federal government from declaring a state of emergency at the Southern Border. Numerous watchdog organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union, Protect Democracy, and the Niskanen Center (a center-right policy

institute, on behalf of El Paso County and the Border Network for Human Rights) have also joined in this movement and threatened similar lawsuits (Savage and Pear, 2019). This sentiment from the state of California is by no means isolated to immigration—California has sued the Trump administration 38 times in the past year and a half alone on topics ranging from immigration, the environment, the U.S. census, education, the internet, the rights of transgender people and healthcare(Mcgreevy, 2018)—but it is indicative of the type of local level stance on immigration that individual California cities such as San Diego have chosen to take as well.

For the purposes of this research San Diego, California was selected due to its significant proximity to the southern US border, as well as its status as a major California city. While the number of refugee arrivals in San Diego significantly decreased during the 2018 fiscal year in response to the federal cap on arriving refugees—down from 45,000 for the 2018 year—organizations in San Diego are still struggling to meet the needs of refugee populations and address the immigration crisis at the southern border. The decrease in migrant arrivals has reduced funding available to resettlement groups and nonprofits, and negatively impacted staff and available resources (Srikrishnan, 2018), making local partnerships and collaboration particularly significant.

## PART I: FORMATION

In the wake of failure from the federal government to address immigration concerns, many migrants rely on the response of local government and local advocacy groups. In October 2018, the federal government stopped offering aid to families seeking asylum after releasing them from custody. Coupled with overcrowding of detention centers, ICE has begun bussing some of these migrants into city centers and leaving them for local groups to manage. In recent months, this has resulted in people effectively being dropped off in downtown San Diego. To fill

the gap left by federal aid, groups like the newly created San Diego Rapid Response Network have stepped coordinate serves and open a shelter for immigrants with nowhere else to go (Clark, 2019). While unavailable for comment during the timeframe of this research, SDRRN stands as a significant example of joint work and collaboration on immigrant and refugee concerns in San Diego.

According to their website, they are a formal coalition consisting of human rights and service organizations, attorneys and community leaders focused on meeting the needs of immigrants and their families in San Diego. Their coalition formed in order to be able to respond to “increased immigration enforcement activities within San Diego County and humanitarian issues arising at the border, including widespread family separation and unjust deportation of asylum seekers presenting at the Port-of-Entry” (San Diego Rapid Response Network, 2019). Significantly, SDRRN provides a comprehensive list of groups forming their coalition, citing four key partners, five legal partners, and twenty-three participating groups from across the city and county of San Diego (San Diego Rapid Response Network, 2019).

Increasingly, coalitions, charities and non-profits like SDRRN are becoming more vital in efforts to address the needs of refugees and immigrants at the local level. In the months leading up to 2019, the number of migrants seeking asylum in the United States have completely overwhelmed government run facilities along the southern border, while at the same time the Trump administration has been dramatically reducing the amount of aid provided to migrants and refugees after they are released. This means numerous individuals and families who have nowhere to go, no money and no way to contact relatives who might be hundreds or thousands of miles away (Real and Fernandez, 2019). When local governments are slow to respond or get involved in meeting these needs due to political implications and cost, charities, nonprofits and

other non-governmental organizations have stepped in to fill the gaps offering everything from lodging and funding to legal service and transportation (Real and Fernandez, 2019).

This feeling is particularly exemplified by groups working in states along the southern border. “The government isn’t doing anything” said Kevin Malone, one of the founders of the San Diego Rapid Response Network. “People are working 24 hours a day trying to make this happen. Everyone is strapped” (Real and Fernandez, 2019). While recently released migrants have never had a great support network, actions taken by the Trump administration have only made things worse. In the past, the government would help coordinate release plans and aid people in reuniting with families. According to ICE officials, these safe release practices were phased out in October of 2018 due to services being overwhelmed, leaving many immigrants and the groups trying to help them struggling to come up with funding and coordinate services (Real and Fernandez, 2019).

#### *Collaboration, Resource Sharing and Partnerships*

The question of collaboration, resource sharing and partnership with other groups—as well as government entities—is an issue where most organizations I spoke with are struggling to find long term solutions. Alliance San Diego is a community empowerment organization that focuses their work on making certain that “everyone in San Diego has the opportunity to achieve their full potential in an environment of harmony, safety, equity and justice” (Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018).

Rather than just working to meet the immediate needs of at-risk populations, they’ve chosen to approach things from a policy angle, with the goal of helping people reach their full potential and be fully engaged in the civic process. For that reason, Alliance works on not just immigration concerns but also civic engagement and tax reform, education, criminal justice and

immigrant rights, often as a part of coalitions working on the same issues. This includes San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium, (organized by Alliance San Diego with over 50 members), but also the Interfaith Justice Coalition and the Southern Borders Community Coalition, which has connections from San Diego to Brownsville, Texas (Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018).

As discussed previously, research suggests that joining together to form coalitions to work toward mutually beneficial goals may provide the mechanisms by which marginalized groups and interests can access the policy arena in meaningful ways (Post, 2015). As with the strategy adopted by Alliance, this may take the form of direct advocacy on behalf of certain populations or policies, or by giving groups a louder voice with which to communicate with elected officials in order to provide them with significant information or express concerns (Burstein, & Linton, 2002).

#### *Why Groups Form and Goals of Communication*

As groups at the local level are increasingly stepping in to fill gaps in services left by the federal government (Clark, 2019), developing understandings of how these groups form and coordinate with each other or local governments is a pressing issue. Erin Grassi—who coordinates the San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium for Alliance—said that for them:

“it all goes back to how do we change the big picture of what's happening is by making, certainly are mobilizing voters, to be able to hold the politicians accountable to then pass policies that impact that positive impact our communities....Success is making certain that we're engaging all of our partners in a way that's meaningful in a way that's impactful in a way that's effective. So we're able to get policies passed that helped protect communities here. So in our current context, it's a little hard because federally, we're not seeing much movement, but we have been able to move a lot at the state level that we haven't been able to move before (Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018).



This focus on civic engagement and policy is a key component of refugee integration in the current political context. Research indicates that the “way governments react to immigration exerts a powerful influence on understandings of citizenship and the ability [of immigrants] to be politically active” (Bloemraad, 2006, p4). Coalitions operating in the context of immigration federalism in America face the additional challenge of a current administration with a strong anti-immigrant agenda (Real and Fernandez, 2019), and a client population who often have no political voice as a result (Gundogdu, 2015).

Many of the key questions I asked during interviews touched on these concepts. Not only are groups faced with the immediate needs of migrants in the wake of lack of federal assistance, but they must also coordinate service provision with each other despite potentially differing goals, and decide what kind of stance they want to take with governments on immigration policy concerns. Alliance—and it’s work coordinating and participating in several coalitions including the San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium—provided valuable insight into these processes and how they play out at the local level.

While the causes of coalition formation are complex, most tend to be created in response to external antagonistic political contexts or ongoing political threats. Furthermore, a mutual lack in political power in combination with connecting social ties, ideologies, group opportunities, or threats can all impact the type and strength of coalition formation (Van Dyke, McCammon, & McCammon, 2010; Post, 2015; Tattersall, 2010). This aligns with Colbern and Ramakrishnan’s use of the advocacy coalition framework, where they link progressive state policies on immigrant rights to federalism conflicts posed by restrictive federal laws and development of coalitions between state/local officials and immigrant rights organizations from the 1990s to the present (Colbern and Ramakrishnan, 2020; Colbern and Ramakrishnan, 2018).

Erin Grassi with Alliance stated, “I would say the last two years folks have been forced to work together because it's been a difficult two years— there's been constant attacks and so folks have had to come together and work together and respond constantly” (Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018). As an organization, this type of coordination is one that they have seen in other types of humanitarian crisis as well, specifically during the bigger fires that came through the area in 2007 and 2013, when groups they had to:

“band together to make certain folks were been evacuated, like population that were difficult to get to and then make certain that the agencies that were coordinating shelters weren't doing dumb things, for lack of a better way to put it” (Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018).

More groups working on the same issues can be a powerful force for change, but this also comes with the need to get everyone on the same page and coordinate tactics or response to ongoing crisis. As groups like Alliance expressed, different organizations may have the same goals overall but extremely divergent strategies on how to achieve them. Being able to bridge these divides is a key factor to overall success.

### *Communication Strategies*

In order to organize multiple groups working on similar issues and develop effective strategies of approach—with over 50 in the case of the San Diego Immigrant Rights Consortium—coalitions develop communication strategies designed to get everyone on the same page quickly. Alliance organizes monthly forums for member and partner groups, and also hosts emergency meetings in order to make sure every group has a handle on what’s going on. Groups working on similar issues will break out into subcommittees and work to handle those issues together; sometimes groups will also participate in the same events together (Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018). Significantly, while generally speaking the groups

attending these types of events have largely remained consistent, Alliance has seen increases in new groups wanting to get involved. According to Erin Grassi, “I would say from my personal standpoint, I would say we've had an increase in the number of organizations. Like new organizations really in the last two years.” (Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018). This supports theories suggesting that often coalitions form in response to external and antagonistic political contexts (Van Dyke, McCammon, & McCammon, 2010; Post, 2015; Tattersall, 2010).

With this in mind, one of the questions this research sought answers to was how—and to what extent—organizations working in the refugee and immigrant fields interacted and partnered with not just other organizations but also local governments. More specifically, do coalitions frequently work with local government officials in their efforts, and how would they describe that relationship? In a political climate that has proved itself to be extremely hostile toward refugees and immigrants (Associated Press, 2018; Savage and Pear, 2019; Srikrishnan, 2018) how groups connect with city and state governments becomes a significant component of understanding the United States immigration federalist system.

## PART II: STRENGTH

### *Advocacy and Government Relationships*

In terms of the work Alliance does with San Diego government, Erin Grassi spoke primarily about the advocacy and policy work their coalitions were a part of.

“[Alliance] is looking to find ways that we can limit the way our local and state agencies collaborate with federal immigration. And on our end, we're also pushing for accountability and transparency of the federal agencies we do have here” (Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018).

In the context of San Diego, because refugee resettlement groups receive federal funding, they tend to partner more closely with state offices than many other groups do, who may interact with the state or city government to coordinate services but not necessarily to work closely. Alliance specifically stated that they have recently been partnering with the city of San Diego as part of a steering committee that's working to help develop the cities refugee integration plan. Beyond that, while Alliance often meets with various government entities to advocate on certain policy issues, it's not necessarily in a partnership capacity (Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018).

Significantly, San Diego's government has been largely supportive of immigrants and announced in February the launch of the city-wide bipartisan integration plan they have been working to develop with support and insight from the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce and several nonprofits, including Alliance (Morrissey, 2019). As a part of this plan development, city leaders were active in getting insight and opinions from community members, holding forums and inviting multiple stakeholders to draft the resolution. Speaking about the resolution and research that went into the city-wide plan, a representative from the San Diego mayor's office stated that:

“At the end of the day, we don't get to set federal policy on immigration — who comes in and who goes out — but what we do have control over is making people feel welcome in our city. Whether you're a Democrat or a Republican, it doesn't matter. We want everybody to feel welcome here” (Morrissey, 2019).

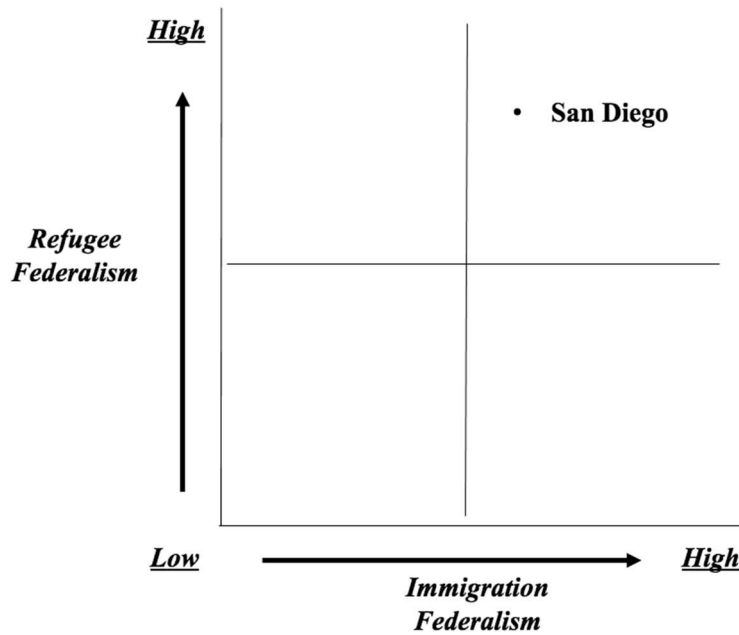
This statement of support has been echoed by recently elected California Governor Gavin Newsom, who's recently revealed state budget includes \$25 million for “a community-based rapid response program for nonprofits helping migrant families seeking protection from violence

and persecution in their home countries”, \$5 million of which is to be made immediately available to aid asylum seekers who have recently entered the US.

(Jennewein, 2019).

*Reception and Rights Determined at the Local Level*

Figure 4. 1 Model 1: Immigration Precedes Refugee Federalism



This serves to reiterate a key focal point that my research has consistently pointed back to—while immigration law and policy is set at the federal level, the reception refugees and immigrants receive is frequently dependent upon the state and city they are resettled into. The dictates of the current immigration federalist system give states a powerful and not always consistent role in determining refugee resettlement in their communities (Johnson,2017). In the case of San Diego, groups have come together to develop methods of coordination and collaboration that helped to smooth the challenges of working in the present immigration field.

Further, the San Diego government has been publicly and actively seeking ways to address mistakes and involve the community in making the city a better place for refugee and immigrant populations (Morrissey, 2019).

Because of the support from both local and state governments, San Diego has formed robust immigrant rights coalitions developed from advocacy for undocumented immigrants. This has provided strong foundations for coordinating around asylee rights and refugee resettlement and led to high levels of well-established networks and partnerships across immigration and refugee federalism. These factors have had significant impact in shaping immigration policy and integration initiatives.

As the following chapters will illustrate, refugees in less progressive locations might not receive the same integration assistance, or groups and communities working to address immigrant needs may find themselves without a cohesive support network, struggling to deal with repressive immigration policies from their local or state governments. In order to understand the significance of coalitional strength in San Diego, the following chapter will demonstrate some of the major differences between cases. By examining these dynamics within two distinct southern border cities—San Diego, California, a welcoming city for immigrants, and Phoenix, Arizona, which is still struggling with restrictionist state immigration policy—it is possible to understand both the significance of coalition building at the community level as well as how specific groups are utilizing it to advocate for immigration policy change.

## CHAPTER V: CASE STUDY—PHOENIX, ARIZONA

Phoenix, Arizona is an important city to compare to San Diego, California due to two primary factors. First, it is similarly positioned close to the southern border of the United States, and it faces many of the same immigration concerns that groups in San Diego find themselves struggling with. Second, unlike the current support for immigrants exhibited in California, Arizona has a history of discriminatory immigration laws and policies, perhaps most notably the controversial Senate Bill 1070 that was signed into law in 2010 (Harris, Rau and Creno, 2010). The debate and continuing discussion around the law serves as an excellent exemplification of the challenges facing ongoing immigration work in Phoenix. This restrictive legislation, and the divide in support for it that followed has created a complex system for immigrants, non-profits and community organizations operating in Arizona to navigate. The following section exemplifies some of these dynamics in the context of coalition building in the immigration field.

### *Senate Bill 1070 in Context*

Arizona's Proposition 200, the "Arizona Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act," was one of the first anti-immigrant laws passed in 2004, kick-starting the restrictive wave of policies.<sup>2</sup> FAIR had funded the signature-gathering campaign and then pushed the courts in the state to enforce the law broadly (Gulasekaram and Ramakrishnan, 2015, p111). The law changed voter registration in the state by requiring residents to prove U.S. citizenship prior to registering to vote and banned undocumented immigrants from access to public benefits by requiring state and local agencies to use strict identification standards that checked for legal immigration status.<sup>3</sup> It also mandated officials to report violations of federal immigration law, and made it a misdemeanor

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<sup>2</sup> Ariz. Proposition 200, Arizona Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act, A.R.S. §46-140.01 ("Verifying applicants for public benefits") (2004) available at <http://apps.azsos.gov/electionf2004/Info/PubPamphlet/english/prop200.htm>

<sup>3</sup> This provision was ruled unconstitutional in *Arizona v. Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc.*, 570 U.S. 1 (2013).

crime for not following state law in reporting immigration violations (Gulasekaram and Ramakrishnan, 2015, p60).

Year later, Arizona passed what is considered at the time to be one of the most restrictive immigration laws in the U.S. .SB1070 not only made it a state crime—rather than just a federal one—to be in the country illegally but also required police to enforce federal immigration law. Additionally, it required immigrants to carry proof of legal residence or citizenship at all times (Harris, Rau and Creno, 2010). Supporters of the bill included Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who felt it gave law enforcement more tools to apprehend illegal immigrants, and then-Arizona governor Jan Brewer, who stated that the law gave Arizona the ability to secure the border in ways the federal government was failing to do (Harris, Rau and Creno, 2010).

Local opponents of the bill immediately promised legal actions to push back against immigration restrictionist rhetoric, including then-Phoenix mayor Phil Gordon who requested the Phoenix city council sue the state in protest as well as national branches of the ACLU and the Mexican America Legal Defense Fund promised legal suits as well (Harris, Rau and Creno, 2010). SB1070 was immediately challenged by the Obama administration and the Supreme Court on the grounds that it challenged the federal government’s primacy in enforcing immigration law. In 2012, the Supreme Court struck down key aspects of SB1070 and confirmed the federal role in immigration policy while leaving the still controversial “show me your papers” provision, which allows law enforcement officials to verify the immigration status of individuals detained for any reason (Barnes, 2012; Gulasekaram and Ramakrishnan, 2015).

Because this provision was seen by many advocates as a continuing threat to immigrant rights by maintaining law enforcement’s ability to racially profile, the ACLU, National Immigration Law Center and Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund continued



litigation against the state of Arizona. This litigation ended in 2016 with a settlement providing an informal opinion for law enforcement officers on guidelines against racial profiling from the Arizona Attorney General's Office. Significantly, "it's the first time that a chief Arizona law enforcement officer has recognized that there are limits to Sections 2(b) and 2(d)," said Cecillia Wang, one of the lead attorneys for the ACLU (Kiefer, 2016).

During the summer of 2017, the majority of the Phoenix city council revised immigration enforcement policies in order to improve its relationship with the immigrant community that they felt might be affected by executive orders from President Donald Trump. Specifically, the revised policies relate to when law enforcement officers can contact Immigration and Customs Enforcement, clarifying that they can only do so after an individual is arrested (Gardiner, 2017). This shift in policy was raised as an issue with Arizona Attorney General Mark Brnovich when Arizona Republican Senator John Kavanaugh complained that it was a violation of state law. Significantly, while determining this policy to be in accordance with state law, Brnovich criticized the city council for "misleadingly framing the policies as making Phoenix more welcoming to undocumented immigrants" (Gardiner, 2017).

## PART I: FORMATION

### *City pushes back – but with limits*

Arizona's two immigration restrictionist policies sparked local opposition, but also constrained the legal options for local advocacy to emerge. This starkly contrasts the policy contexts within its neighboring state of California. The city of Phoenix emerged as a progressive center for resisting not only federal law but also state laws, with varying successes in regard to advancing the rights of refugee and those of undocumented immigrants. Indeed, no city in

Arizona is legally able to pass a sanctuary policy, under provisions from SB 1070 that remain in place today (Gardiner, 2017).

City council members (Gardiner, 2017), as well government officials (Harris, Rau and Creno, 2010) have expressed disagreement with state policy, yet they find themselves constrained with actions that they can take at the local level (Gardiner, 2017; Kiefer, 2016). With the increasingly over-capacity federal detention centers causing ICE to release families and individuals ‘en masse’ (Ainsley, 2018) and a lack of resources to appropriately respond to this from the federal government, much of the response to this ongoing crisis—especially along the southern border—comes down to city and organizational response (Ainsley, 2018; Real and Fernandez, 2019). Examining these dynamics in Phoenix provides a useful contrast that further explicates the role and formation of immigration and refugee coalitions in the context of immigration in the United States.

During my research in Phoenix, I spoke with three entities: the International Rescue Committee’s local office, We Are All America (a national coalition with a local division) and government officials in the state of Arizona. Of note, these officials refused to be named in this project due to, as they indicated, the politicized nature of the topic. One of my primary goals in examining refugee resettlement and immigration in Phoenix was to develop a better understanding of how groups cope with the needs of immigrant populations and coordinate services in a state that has been clear in its immigration restrictionist stance (Harris, Rau and Creno, 2010).

As explained earlier, the state’s ability to engage on immigration policy has sometimes resulted in their opposition or inhibition of refugee resettlement in their communities (Johnson, 2017), as seen in state-level immigration policies in Arizona. We know that the “way

governments react to immigration exerts a powerful influence on understandings of citizenship and the ability [of immigrants] to be politically active” (Bloemraad, 2006, p4). That being said, the infrastructure of community organizations, local government, and social networking play a significant role in how immigration is shaped on the ground while at the same time being influenced by government policies (Bloemraad, 2006). Throughout my Phoenix interviews, this was a sentiment I heard multiple times. While the State might be more restrictive, “Arizonans [as a community] are more welcoming than many people might believe” (Arizona Government Official, Personal Interview, December 13,2018).

#### *Community Level Involvement increasing*

Since Trump took office, many of the groups working in the Phoenix area have seen an increase in interest and support from the local community. Phoenix government officials stated that, while in recent years the politics of immigration have taken a turn into partisan politics, what they really see now on the local level are “people taking a stance for refugees as people” and see them as a key part of the community (Arizona Government Official, Personal Interview, December 13,2018). The Phoenix Office of Refugee Resettlement has also been making efforts over the past several years to further develop their own local partnerships and increase the level of communication and connection between groups working in the refugee and immigrant field in Phoenix. Specifically, they partner with other refugee groups, sister agencies, federal groups, and faith-based organizations. They also work with educators, health care, law enforcement, and legal entities as needed with a focus on information sharing between groups rather than specific service provisions and have been working to develop specific city-wide training and the use of focus groups to coordinate between different service providers. Specifically, this is all done with the goal of bolstering information and resource sharing between groups, but also to partner with

the community to identify gaps in services and fill them with local groups already doing the same things. Specifically, government officials I spoke to for the purposes of this project stated that they wanted to reshape perceptions local groups might have about the challenges of working with government entities (Arizona Government Official, Personal Interview, December 13, 2018). This corroborates instances where Phoenix officials have worked to indicate more progressive policy toward migrants despite the regressive policy at the state and federal levels (Gardiner, 2017; Harris, Rau and Creno, 2010; Kiefer, 2016).

Asked about this concept of community support in response to the ongoing immigration crisis<sup>4</sup>, Stanford Prescott from the Phoenix IRC stated that:

“...at least with advocacy, there's a lot of people who are much more interested in refugee issues and want to work together. I think that there's actually been an outpouring of private support. We've had about a 100 percent increase in volunteers. I don't know the exact percentage, but a similar increase in donations, private donations, and so there's been a huge influx of private support from local foundations that want to make people welcome. And I think because of this, there is that interest in refugee issues that opens the door to building more of those partnerships that may not have been tested.” (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018).

### *Partnerships and Connections*

For many organizations, building effective partnerships that capitalize on local interest and different areas of expertise are essential to being able to meet all the needs of the immigrant community. As a federally funded resettlement group, the IRC often deals with federal stipulations about what services they are allowed to provide.

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<sup>4</sup> The term ‘immigration crisis’ used here refers to the ongoing demographic crisis of the movement of people across borders. In the context it is often utilized by groups at the local level it serves to illustrate the current conflict within immigration federalism, or the tension that exists between the federal, state and local levels in terms of immigration policy. While some groups do use this term to refer to political events which were ongoing at the time of the writing of this thesis, it is further important to note that many of the dynamics of local level resistance and coalition building expressed in this work also reflect back to deeper threads of protest which predate the Trump administration (Gulasekaram and Ramakrishan, 2015).

“One of the things with refugee resettlement is that there are limited resources available for doing the work that we do. And often there's, because so much of our support comes from the federal government, we receive a lot of private support as well, but a lot of it's governments or there's often very strict guidelines on what can be provided through those programs. And so being able to provide with those partner organizations and be able to supplement that goes along ways to actually making sure the family can reach self-sufficiency” (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018).

The Phoenix IRC office is one of four federally funded refugee resettlement groups, including the Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services and AIRS (Arizona Immigrant and Refugee Services). In addition to these groups,

“... there's a number of other organizations that are helping us support refugees, and some of these are more formal and some are more informal. ... There's at least five to ten other significant organizations that provide [us] either formal or informal help.” (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018).

In addition to these groups, the IRC works with a long list of organizations based on the program and the specific needs of their clients. This includes everything from foster care services, Victims of Trafficking, domestic violence focused groups, to housing needs. As Stanford Prescott stated, “everybody has their niche and so we do what we can do and they can do what they can do and we work together to best serve the client” (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018). To coordinate with these groups, the IRC and other organizations working on these issues hold quarterly meetings or break into individual planning committees to organize specific events. Together with the We Are All America Project—a national coalition that formed in July 2018—they are regularly “working with other refugee groups, other immigrant groups, other ethnic groups to go ahead and plan out advocacy efforts for refugees and asylum seekers” (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018).

Because the stipulations of the federal refugee resettlement plan involve providing assistance specifically for the first six months of resettlement, the IRC will often work with other

outside organizations who can provide more long term or ongoing services. In addition, the IRC also works with federal agencies like the Phoenix Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). The federal refugee resettlement program requires that the IRC works with community stakeholders, so they frequently file reports to update the ORR on the number of people they have met with locally. The Phoenix mayor's office has been very supportive of their work and helping them meet specific goals, but as an organization the IRC also spends a lot of time working with government officials and lawmakers in an advocacy capacity to share information and better educate about the needs of refugees in the Phoenix area (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018).

## PART II: STRENGTH

Beyond issues of coalition building, one of the dynamics this research sought to illuminate was not just how groups communicate and coordinate service but why they choose to do so. Specifically, whether this is in response to client needs they can't provide for, or to work to advocate for immigrant policy at the state and federal levels. The way these dynamics play out in a State that has taken a very regressive stance on immigration policy is of particular interest. As an organization that receives federal funding, the IRC has certain policy or political issues that they are unable to take an active or public stance on. The IRC has built an extensive network that involves local service providers in resettlement, immigrant rights, education, legal services and healthcare depending on their client needs. Like other resettlement groups, they've been able to leverage their partnership with groups like We Are All America to influence areas of policy they might be unable to take a stance on themselves (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, 11/26/18). As Stanford Prescott from the Phoenix IRC discussed:

“I think that We Are All America coalition is one example of that. I think that it’s again an area where we’re growing as the IRC increases its advocacy footprint. We’ve been working increasingly with other immigrant rights organizations. And I think there’s a lot of room to go there to build those partnerships, but that has been something we’ve been working on...I think for the IRC specifically—the IRC has a very specific message and a very specific brand and so that means that we might approach some instances differently than some immigrant rights organizations. The other reality is that a lot of our programs are federally funded that come with federal regulations and so, you know, we have served many types of immigrants. We do not necessarily serve undocumented individuals and so, when it comes to our service provision, there is definitely very clear regulations from a donor perspective and from a federal government perspective of who we can and cannot serve” (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018).

Examining the work and goals of the We Are All America coalition in Arizona provides an example of how and why groups in the resettlement and immigrant rights fields—especially in more restrictive localities—come together, coordinate and develop strategies to shift regressive immigration policy. Because many refugee resettlement groups (like the IRC) receive funding from the federal government, there is often a limit to the types of work they are able to engage in. The IRC, for example, doesn’t work with undocumented migrants. While they have supported the Dream Act and opposed the Trump administration’s travel ban involving several Muslim-majority countries, they haven’t issued a statement on sanctuary policies or actively taken a position in opposition to Trump (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018). This follows informal statements from many of the groups I spoke with—when the work that they do is primarily dependent on federal funding, there is only so far the organization can step outside its formal mission statement or goals. Significantly, this might mean that working in partnership with other organizations who don’t have those same parameters provides a way to stay true to your organization’s goals while still meeting the needs of your clients.

In response to the travel ban issued by the Trump administration, national refugee resettlement agencies came together in July of 2018 to create the We Are All America campaign

with the goal of being able to respond to regressive immigration policy and take a more directive role in advocacy. Executives from those resettlement groups still serve on the steering committee for the organization, but it operates as more of a separate entity. Currently, they work in sixteen different states, with one local organizer and coordinator for each state locality. In Arizona, We Are All America has been actively working to build partnerships at the local and state level. In addition to participating in local trainings and communications with community organizations—contacting around 15 to 20 on a daily basis through mechanisms like Google voice, social media, Facebook and listservs—they also work to mobilize the refugee community, and advocate for legislative and policy change at the State level. This includes having a seat at the table at State DES meetings, as well as working with the Office of Refugee Resettlement in Phoenix (Nejra Sumac, We Are All America, December 18, 2018). Along with the Office of Refugee Resettlement in Phoenix and the IRC, they’ve been working to overcome some the inherent communication and coordination challenges by developing a series of city-wide trainings for all organizations working in the resettlement and immigration fields (Arizona Government Officials, Personal Interview, December 13, 2018; Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018).

Nejra Sumac, the state organizer for Arizona, said that Arizona was selected as a location as it was identified as one of the states that lacked and had a gap in community mobilizing and organizing around resettlement (Nejra Sumac, We Are All America, December 18, 2018).

Her goal, which echoes the organization’s mission as well, is to

“really to bring the community together, to empower refugees to share their stories, [show them] that they have a voice to be civically engaged, but also to really drive for policy change in the state of Arizona and work towards a welcoming state or all of our residents” (Nejra Sumac, We Are All America, December 18, 2018).



This focus on civic engagement is a key component in aiding refugees and immigrants in the integration process, and one that has often been overlooked in the immediate resettlement process. As discussed, while universal human rights are legally protected, in the context of immigration they are often linked with citizenship rights in ways that deny key human rights to non-citizens (Gundogdu, 2015). Working with refugees to empower them to speak up for themselves and advocate for their rights within the American political system is a priority in the work that We Are All America does in each state (Nejra Sumac, We Are All America, December 18, 2018). This is an area other groups joining with We Are All America are seeking to focus more on as well, especially in the wake of immigration policy from the Trump administration. “Advocacy is fairly new concept for the refugee resettlement agencies. They mostly focused on direct service, but with the recent political climate change, they have really strived to push for advocacy efforts” (Nejra Sumac, We Are All America, December 18, 2018).

### *Unique Forms of Collaboration*

This exemplifies an interesting dynamic pushed into focus by the ongoing immigration crisis—coordination between refugee and immigration focused groups. I asked each interviewed organization about this dynamic to understand to what extent and how frequently refugee resettlement groups and immigrant rights organizations worked together or coordinated efforts. Each group discussed how this was becoming more frequent in recent years—typically each group focuses on its own area of specialization without collaboration. Resettlement groups focus on service provision, while immigrant organizations tend to focus more on advocacy efforts.

Nejra Sumac with We Are All America said that the partnerships she is seeing now between these two sectors is distinctive, stating:

“It's very new. Usually the two would not [work together]—they work in silo. Migrant group organizations have been kind of an exemplary...they've been leading the work here in Arizona. They've done a really great job and mobilizing and organizing their communities and so we, we've certainly taken that approach. For example, with the crisis with asylum seekers right now, we've done a lot of work with them in order to build a partnership and unify our powers. The more we work together, the better we'll all be instead of working separately” (Nejra Sumac, We Are All America, December 18, 2018).

The ability of such groups to collaborate in the current political context is significant. As mentioned previously, the categorization of refugees and migrants has historically been separated in both policy-making and immigration studies. Frequently, there is little overlap between the fields of refugee studies and international migration studies. The often-arbitrary ways an individual is labeled as a refugee based on geographical boundaries or the entity by whom they are being persecuted have lasting impact on not only the person but also global immigration policy (FitzGerald, & Arar 2018) as well as at the national and state level. In the context of states within the US, it might also mean a distinction in not only what services an individual has access to, but also how—and which—groups step in to provide assistance.

Despite federal preemption of local immigration restrictionist laws, the ability of states to engage on immigration policy has nevertheless resulted in some states—such as Arizona—opposing or inhibiting the resettlement of refugees in their communities (Johnson, 2017; FitzGerald, & Arar 2018). This ‘multijurisdictional patchwork’ of laws and immigration enforcement policies at the local level also influences the work of resettlement groups, immigrant rights organizations and the populations they work within—immigrants, the communities where they reside, and their relationship with different levels of the federal government (Varsanyi, Lewis, Provine, & Decker 2012).

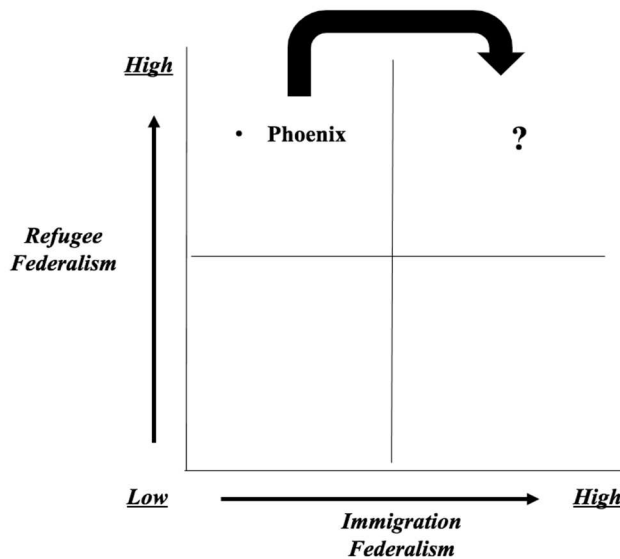
We Are All America selected Arizona as a location specifically because it was identified as having significant gaps in community mobilizing and organizing around resettlement in the

wake of the ongoing crisis at the border and the stance the State has taken on welcoming immigrants into the community. Specifically, they see the increasing amount of coordination and communication as a direct result of the current immigration restrictionist policy coming from the State and Federal governments.

“I think that out of this horrible situation, where one after the other we’ve been attacked—one of the things we’ve seen come out of it is organizations saying, okay, we can’t just work by ourselves, we have to collaborate, to build relationships with other organizations. And it all goes back to the stronger we are together, the more we are unifying our powers, the bigger a voice that we have” (Nejra Sumac, We Are All America, December 18, 2018).

This echoes statements made by all the organizations during my interviews. They each acknowledged that this type of coordination has increased in light of the immigration crisis, and that by doing so, groups have significantly been able to both increase reach and impact.

Figure 5. 1 Model 2: Refugee Precedes Immigration Federalism



Forming partnerships in order to both to confront an ongoing crisis and increase power in fighting for change are key components of coalition formation in both progressive and restrictionist locations. As the next chapter examines while groups in Arizona and California

have begun working together for similar reasons, the impact and strength of local coalitions is drastically impacted by the support they are provided at the state and local level. Importantly, even in restrictive states like Arizona, refugee focused groups are not targeted the same way immigrant advocacy organizations often are. Anti-immigrant state policies currently preempt much of local advocacy for undocumented residents, but not for asylum seekers or refugees. The result is that Arizona has a robust system of local refugee organizations with national and international affiliations and funding. On the other hand, immigrant rights organizations are currently more constrained in their local advocacy to service provisions within the bounds of federal and state laws.

That being said, my research indicates great potential for this to change, moving Arizona from a location with low immigrant advocacy coalitional power to one with high levels of power in both refugee *and* immigrant focused coalitions. When organizations in both the refugee and immigration federalism fields increasingly work together, new pathways from refugee services to full integration are emerging as groups begin to prioritize a focus on long term rights for both refugees and legal and illegal immigrants. This continues to illustrate how local governments in the immigration federalist system have great potential to preempt federal immigration policy in terms of refugees and immigrant reception and integration efforts.

## CHAPTER VI: COMPARISON—SAN DIEGO AND PHOENIX

The election of Donald Trump in 2016 pushed immigration to the center stage of local and state level politics by targeting undocumented immigrants for removal, narrowing the definition of refugee for Central Americans, and centering current immigration debates on the border wall rather than comprehensive federal reforms that would include a pathway to citizenship. In President Trump's first week, the administration introduced the travel ban on migrants coming from the countries of Libya, Iran, Somalia, Syria, Yemen, North Korea and Venezuela (Associated Press, 2018). Despite increases in conflict, disaster and war globally, the administration also capped the number of migrants to be admitted into the United States for the fiscal year (which ended in September 2018) at 45,000—the lowest number since the passage of the Refugee Act in 1980. Additionally, the Trump administration addressed the needs of the tens of thousands of migrants fleeing violence in South America by working to change the criteria for who is eligible to seek asylum, and adopted a policy of deterrence family separation at the southern border that has created a system of chaos, resulted in thousands of children being separated from their families and shocked advocates around the world (Associated Press, 2018).

Most recently, on February 15, 2019, President Trump announced his plan to declare a state of emergency at the southern border in order to redirect federal funding for a border wall, despite the fact that numbers of arrivals have dropped significantly in recent months and experts state that no such emergency exists (Savage and Pear, 2019). While the US reduced the cap on refugees for the 2018 year to an all-time low of 45,000, in actuality only 22,491 refugees (fewer than half the cap) were actually resettled in the US (Srikrishnan, 2018). The events of the past two years illustrate a key factor in the ongoing immigration discussion: The current political

context in which immigration is being framed and discussed by the Trump administration has created an additional space for states to take a role in shaping immigration policy.

While immigration law and refugee resettlement policy is a matter of federal law, states are expected to play a role in resettling refugees in their communities. As discussed, despite federal preemption of local anti-immigrant laws, the ability of states to engage on immigration policy has nevertheless resulted in some states opposing or inhibiting the resettlement of refugees in their communities (Johnson, 2017). Since 2013, there has been a resurgence in efforts to increase the role states play in local immigration determinations, which has only intensified since the election of Donald Trump in 2016 (Pritchett, 2017). The Trump effect has led many states to reaffirm their desire to support the rights of immigrants and refugees, and fueled a new wave of states and localities reinforcing national restrictions with their own immigrant policies (Pritchett, 2017; Gulasekaram and Ramakrishnan, 2015).

The implication of the current immigration federalist system in the context of this research is clear: while immigration law may be a federal issue, the reception and services immigrants and refugees have access to at the local level may vary widely between states. Indeed, integration policy of residents of states and localities (regardless of their legal status), falls outside of federal plenary powers over immigration law – which is limited to questions of admission, exclusion, deportation, and naturalization. This has constrained states and localities from passing harsh restrictions that mirror federal law, but the courts have upheld restrictions on driver's licenses, post-secondary education, health care, among others. This allows for complex federalism conflicts to emerge over policy (Colbern and Ramakrishnan, 2020; Colbern, Amoroso-Pohl, and Gutiérrez, 2019; Motomura, 2014).

This indicates that it is vitally important to understand the role of states, localities and the different organizations working within them when discussing the immigration in the United States. Refugee resettlement is often discussed in a very one-dimensional way—the need to put more money toward refugee resettlement, or toward better programs for immigrants and refugees. What often gets missed in that discussion is how this translates on the ground in each location: not only in examining who is playing what role, but also examining the way organizations, and groups addressing immigration concerns all work together and coordinate services.

#### *Distinctions and Similarities between Locations*

Given their very different state policy contexts, with California leading the country on progressive state level policies aimed to shield undocumented immigrants from federal interior enforcement, contrasted with Arizona which is seeking to reinforce federal enforcement, we would assume clear distinctions to emerge across state lines for both immigrant rights and refugees resettlement organizations. Here, I draw out the similarities and differences. One the key distinction I highlight is that crises along the border connect these two seemingly contrary cases by sparking new coalitions to emerge between refugee and immigrant rights organizations.

Deeper analysis reveals that such coalitions are able to similarly advance a refugee orientated movement, but Phoenix remains legally constrained under states laws from developing its capacity to change the lives of its undocumented residents. Proposition 200 is a critical barrier here on government provision of public benefits, making local organizations the primary safety net for the undocumented. Meanwhile, refugees are able to gain access to federal, state, local and private benefits. These dynamics play out in each of my case studies as I examine the context around coalition formation and partnership in both San Diego and Phoenix.

As discussed, both cities are located along the southern border and have been struggling with repercussions immigration crisis at the southern border in terms of capacity building in order to meet the needs of increasing numbers of refugees and asylum seekers in their communities (Ainsley, 2018; Real and Fernandez, 2019). Both cities have a wide range of organizations working to meet the needs of immigrants living in their communities by increasing their partnerships and level of collaboration with each other and with local government.

At the same time, the political context within each city is radically different. Phoenix finds itself still struggling with the repercussions of the remainder of the exceedingly regressive immigration restrictionist law SB1070 (Barnes, 2012), and while key members of city government have opposed the position Arizona has taken yet have been constrained by actions they can take at the city level (Gardiner, 2017; Kiefer, 2016). On the other hand, San Diego's city government has been actively involved in developing a Welcoming City initiative in partnership with key members of the community (Morrissey, 2019). Further, the State government has been publicly opposed to the Trump Administration's anti-immigrant agenda (Mcgreevy, 2018) and has allocated significant funding toward efforts focused on the immigrant crisis (Jennewein, 2019).

### *Organizations in San Diego*

These factors have created very different environments for local-level coalition building and coordination efforts. Groups working in San Diego have been able to form substantial coalitions across the resettlement and immigrant rights field, including the Immigrant Rights Consortium and Southern Borders Coalitions with Alliance San Diego, as well as the city-wide Rapid Response Network. Being able to draw from the resources of these established networks has drastically increased the reach of these groups, both in terms of service provision and



advocacy efforts. Erin Grassi with Alliance discussed this the way this collaboration has impacted reach, stating:

“I would say really increased our ability to advocate and to reach communities that we weren't able to reach before specifically on working on a policy campaigns or refugee integration .... So, I would say it's increased the ability for all of our organizations to get information out to different partners. We have partners that work on refugee rights, we have partners that work specifically with the immigrant population. And then we have partners that don't specifically do either, but they have clients that are impacted. So, it's increased our ability to get information out across the county to different community members depending on whichever information, because we have a list serve. And so, when folks have information they want to get out, they put it out through the LISTSERV. It's also advocacy wise. I mean, the more folks you have when you're doing organizing work, the more votes you have—like people are power, right? So, for us it's increased our ability to instead of saying, Hey, we have 10 organizations—hey, we have 50 organizations. It's a little bit more weight” (Erin Grassi, Alliance, December 17, 2018).

Building larger networks not only allows groups to coordinate and improve service provision, but also gives groups a louder voice with which to communicate with elected officials in order to provide them with significant information or express concerns (Burstein, & Linton, 2002). In the context of the intersection between refugee and immigration federalism, such networks are also significant because they provide groups the ability to engage with local government and assist in developing plans to protect and aid immigrants in their communities. In fact, the continued actions of coalitions and networks at a sub state level not only have the power to connect groups, communities and actors in different cities, but have also shown that states and localities can be key places for immigration legislation to take place (Gulasekaram, Ramakrishnan, & Ramakrishnan, S. Karthick. 2015).

While coalitions beginning to bridge the gap between refugee and immigration federalism are now appearing in Arizona, similar groups in California have been growing their foundation for much longer. Immigrant rights organizations forged a robust statewide coalition with California officials starting in the late 1990s in response to Proposition 187 (Kopetman,

2014). They then led in San Diego with the creation of San Diego Alliance in 2007—the local response to refugee crises on the ground that partnered with national and local refugee organizations (Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018). Today, groups working in San Diego, California have been able to form substantial coalitions across the resettlement and immigrant rights field, including the Immigrant Rights Consortium and Southern Borders Coalitions with Alliance, as well as the city-wide Rapid Response Network. This has helped them to coordinate services in response to ongoing immigration crisis along the United States Southern Border, as well as to work closely with the city of San Diego in order to create a city-wide integration initiative and Welcoming City Policy that stands in resistance to national level anti-immigration rhetoric from the Trump administration (Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018). This demonstrates the strong intersection between refugee and immigrant federalism in San Diego.

Much of this is due to the support and resources such groups have received from state and local governments. As discussed, California’s recently elected governor has promised substantial funding to local organizations and coalitions working to address ongoing immigration concerns, both with the city of San Diego and along the southern border more broadly. Significantly, this funding is available to all groups working with both legal immigrants and those who are undocumented (Jennewein, 2019).

### *Organizations in Phoenix*

Organizations in Phoenix, by contrast, are potentially less robust on immigrant-specific rights due to the restrictive state policy history, which inhibits advocacy on a range of traditional immigration federalism concerns—issues such as health care, education, business licenses, sanctuary, and driver licenses. They may have a harder time gaining traction on these issues, as

pro-immigrant policies that would benefit undocumented immigrants as well are discouraged under current state law. This means partnerships they form with local groups that *do* address these concerns is significant in understanding how organizations operate under restrictive immigration policies.

Groups in Phoenix, Arizona face similar challenges in terms of being able to meet the needs of an increase in refugees and migrants arriving to the city (Real and Fernandez, 2019). This is compounded by the immigration restrictionist stance the State government has taken in the wake of SB1070, the current debates over local law enforcement involvement in enforcing federal immigration policy (Gardiner, 2017; Keifer, 2016; Harris, Rau and Creno, 2010) and overall gaps in organized communication and coalition building both statewide and locally. This restrictionist stance has had the effect of preventing policy or funding initiatives that would benefit undocumented immigrants, instead focusing resources on resettlement programs. Groups on the ground are each continuously trying to bridge these gaps and create vital partnerships with organizations working in the field with the goal of both immediate needs provision and policy advocacy.

Federally funded refugee resettlement groups like the IRC have specific parameters of how their funding can be used and for what type of programs and services (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018). For this reason, the refugee crisis has led local refugee organizations with national affiliates, including the IRC, to begin forging new coalitions—such as We Are All America—that crossover from refugee rights to the rights of all immigrants, including those who are undocumented. As mentioned previously, this is a new coalition that formed in 2018. As such, it faces legal barriers under state and local laws that discourage the same advocacy that has formed in California towards undocumented rights. The work that We

Are All America is currently engaged in provides a unique and ongoing example of a progressive foothold in a restrictive policy state (Nejra Sumac, We Are All America Interview, December 18, 2018).

Recognizing both the gap in terms of communication as well as the potential for states and localities to impact policy through the immigration federalist system, coalitions like We Are All America have been actively working to build a regional infrastructure of partnerships in immigrant and refugee advocacy at both the local and state level. This has included forming networks of nonprofits and community groups, but also with municipalities and government offices like DES. This level of partnership and organization between the refugee community and the migrant community hasn't been done before in Arizona, and they are hopeful that the increased power from interorganizational partnerships help them pass a pro immigrant bill in the Arizona house in 2019 (Nejra Sumac, We Are All America, December 18, 2018).

In this way, the We Are All America Coalition has brought together immigrant rights groups and resettlement organizations with the goal of helping refugees speak up for themselves and advocate for their rights within the American political system (Nejra Sumac, We Are All America, December 18, 2018). The type of advocacy they focus on was in many ways a direct response to the restrictive immigration context in the current US immigration field, and as the Arizona coordinator stated during our interview, "Advocacy is fairly new concept for the refugee resettlement agencies. They mostly focused on direct service, but with the recent political climate change, they have really strived to push for advocacy efforts" (Nejra Sumac, We Are All America, December 18, 2018). This serves to highlight ways ongoing immigration crisis push local level advocacy for immigrant rights into focus for many groups that may have previously only focused on immediate service provision.

Significantly, organizations both noted that the severity of the current immigration crisis has pushed for more collaboration and partnership between groups that have historically worked in silo, like resettlement organizations and immigrant rights groups. This type of partnership is one that all of the groups I spoke with agreed is both ongoing and new to the current political context coalitions are now operating within. Based on my findings, restrictionist immigration policies and increasing need from their client populations has largely prompted an all-hands on deck mentality from groups that have recognized the reach and power they can achieve through sharing resources and joining forces to fight for policy change.

In many ways, this has helped to blur distinctions between the refugee and immigrant fields in ways that have helped to break down the silos many of the organizations working in these areas have long operated within. This speaks to research that has indicated that the ability of groups to overcome potential issues such as these may revolve around external and antagonistic political threats creating a strong enough reason to ignore previously insurmountable ideological differences and join forces with new groups (Van Dyke, McCammon, & McCammon, 2010).

### *Significance Moving Forward*

The ability of groups to continue to do this work and leverage successful partnerships continues to be vitally important in the wake of ongoing events. In February of 2019, more than 76,000 migrants crossed the southern border without authorization—an eleven year high. This is a strong indication that the policies of deterrence and harsher asylum and detention controls have been ineffective in preventing asylum seekers and migrants from traveling to the U.S. The immigration system as it currently exists is far beyond capacity—processing centers are full, border agents are unable to keep up with medical needs, and thousands of individuals and

families are crammed into a detention system that was never designed to keep them there (Dickerson, 2019).

Over 2,000 people arrive every day, often in remote parts of the Southwest. The issue is not solely one of numbers—arrests for illegal border crossings were higher under President Clinton at up to 1.64 million arrests in 2000—but one of changing demographics. Where large numbers of migrants in the past were single men, the majority of border crossers today are families with young children who often are in greater need of medical care upon arrival and harder to immediately deport if they claim asylum with for their children (Dickerson, 2019). While the Customs and Border Patrol are in the process of working to meet some of these immediate needs (Dickerson, 2019), many community groups and non-profits are often the ones who are left picking up the slack (Real and Fernandes, 2019). This has effectively created a system that relies heavily on the ability of such groups to effectively communicate and work together rather than separately.

Understanding how and why they choose to do so continues to be a vital component of addressing the migrant crisis, both in the United States as well as on a global scale. Significantly, this research indicates that collaboration between refugee resettlement groups and immigrant rights groups is not limited to either San Diego or Phoenix but is instead indicative of broader patterns in how such groups interact with one another. While immigrant rights groups tend to be more advocacy focused, increasingly the severity of the current immigration crisis has pushed for more collaboration and partnership between groups that have historically worked separately, especially in response to ongoing immigration concerns along the southern border. Whereas coalitions do emerge over long spans of time, as Colbern and Ramakrishnan's (2016) research shows, crises can lead to intersections and new coalitions.

This echoes observation gathered from Alliance San Diego as well. Coalitions Alliance participates in has partners that focus specifically on refugee rights, as well as groups focusing on immigrant rights. My research suggests that this type of collaboration is not a trend isolated to San Diego or even to California. While immigrant rights groups seem to continue to do more work with advocacy, especially with work at the southern border these types of groups are increasingly working together on the same issues. (Unidos, Personal Interview, December 15, 2018; Arizona Government Officials, December 13, 2018).

In the context of the migration crisis in Europe, Mediterranean and other border countries are facing many of the same challenges—increasing numbers of refugees, and the constraints of restrictive immigration policy from the European Union. In Athens, Greece, organizations also find themselves forming coalitions and working in partnership in order to meet the needs of asylum seekers and immigrants in their community in the wake of perceived government failures.

## CHAPTER VII: CASE STUDY—ATHENS, GREECE

The ongoing migrant crisis in Europe and the Mediterranean provides a valuable point of comparison to the ongoing conflicts over reforming immigration policy, and addressing immigrant rights broadly speaking, in the United States. While the context of each crisis is distinctive—especially the larger scale of migration into Europe—the types of approaches and challenges groups operating at the local level can be fruitfully compared as generalizable feature of coordinating and forming partnerships in the face of restrictionist government policy.

In the wake of the March 16, 2017 agreement between the European Union and Turkey and the closing of the Balkan Route—which used to lead from Greece through Macedonia and Serbia to Croatia or Hungary—more than 60,000 refugees have found themselves effectively trapped in Greece (Strickland,2018; Higgins, 2018). The goal of both actions was to prevent migrants from moving on to final destinations throughout Europe by creating a hard European Union border paired with internal, national policies of deterrence. The European Union’s “Dublin Rules” requires all asylum seekers to file their asylum claims in the first member country they arrive in. For migrants arriving into Greece—one of the first European countries many migrants reach—the long-migration routes that span the Mediterranean and Turkey has meant indefinite waiting periods within Greece for E.U asylum claim determinations (a process which may take years). The closing of Greece’s borders (along with the entire EU) in 2016 effectively blocked the movement of many migrant towards final destination countries (Pai,2018).

The repercussion of sealed borders, coupled with the ongoing Greek economic crisis, have left many migrants in Greece with no way out, no options for a life outside the refugee camps, and no way to fully integrate into society (Pai, 2018). In the past decade, far right groups



and parties in Europe have grown, aided by EU austerity policies that misdirect public anger and discontent toward perceived outsiders of EU society. Even before Donald Trump's restrictionist and regressive anti-immigrant policies seemingly shocked the world, similar anti-immigrant rhetoric and anti-refugee policies have spread across EU member countries (Pai, 2018). This legal-political landscape has not only similarly escalated the marginalization of immigrants, as in the U.S., but similarly situated advocacy groups in cities like Athens, Greece, seeking to provide some relief and aid.

Today, the dominant actors pushing for immigrant rights are often non-profit relief agencies and local governments. Together, they face of ongoing restrictionist immigration policy from the European Union, individual EU member countries, and western actors such as the United States. According to recent UNHCR statistics, less than 1% of the 22.5 million estimated refugees world-wide have resettled permanently. The majority live permanently in refugee camps or in illegal squats in the Mediterranean region and throughout Europe (UNHCR,2016). Conditions reported in many of these camps are deplorable, with crowded living situations, few permanent structures, no heat or air-conditioning, and a lack and fresh food and water (Strickland,2018; Pai, 2018).

Refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants' access to resources, social programs and integration services is further complicated by the Greek economic crisis, now in its tenth year. Citizens and non-citizens alike have lost critical access to social services due to the Greek economic crash and bailout conditions which led to dramatical cuts in social programs, health care and employment. As of 2018, estimates place youth unemployment at over 40%, and healthcare expenditures were cut to just 6% of GDP (Coppola, 2018). With the government already struggling to fund social programs for Greek citizens and address the staggering

unemployment rate, integrating refugees now effectively stranded in Greece has been an additional financial struggle where refugees and asylum seekers are paying the price.

## PART I: FORMATION

In countries in the European Union like Greece, much of the focus centers around refugee federalism and immediate service provision that faces further spatial complications from people moving between multiple EU member countries. The goal for many migrants in Greece is to ultimately move onward to final destination countries and seek refugee status or a pathway to citizenship there rather than in the first country of arrival. For this reason, many of the groups operating in Athens place much of their focus on time sensitive concerns such immediate crisis response and lifesaving services rather than long term integration policy or services. For these reasons, much of the work in Athens centers around refugee rather than immigrant federalism in a system of multi-level refugee governance. At the same time, the context of immigration in Greece provides a lens with which to think about the tensions between local groups and local coalitions pushing for services and rights for immigrants in the context of a restrictive national and international landscape.

### *Refugee Response in Athens, Greece*

Organizations working in Athens, Greece often find themselves dealing with a crisis of multiple components. When the European Union began enforcing stricter border controls and a showed an increasing reluctance to admit refugees into the rest of Europe, the fate of many of the refugees and migrants fell on countries like Greece to manage. Due to the financial crisis, this is a burden the Greek government has been woefully unprepared to manage. Close to 38,000 refugees and asylum seekers live on the Greek mainland—primarily in urban settings like Athens. Another 16,000 are currently estimated to remain in camps and detention centers on

Greek islands of Lesbos, Chios, Kos, Samos and Leros, often in dangerous, overcrowded and unsanitary conditions (International Refugee Committee, 2019; Pai, 2018).

### *Local Coalitions as Advocates*

In response to rising EU and National restrictions, local coalitions have become the primary safeguard and advocate for immigrants. While local resistance to both international and national governments adds a different type of complexity than what is happening in local advocacy in the U.S., the parallels drawn from multi-level governance. To meet the needs of the refugee population in Greece, my research indicates that non-profits, NGO's and community-based groups are increasingly stepping in to fill the gaps create by EU and Greek cuts to services and expansion of restrictive migration policies.

While the migration crisis in Greece is distinctive from what is seen in the United States, organizations in Athens are working to create similar social networks at the local level for refugees and asylum seekers who have felt the effects of restrictionist policy from the European Union. During research in Athens, Greece I spoke with five organizations in the spheres of government, non-profit and community levels who are paralleling work of these coalitions in the United States by working to address perceived gaps in immigration policy and advocate for the rights of refugees. Like groups in California and Arizona, they have developed extensive networks and partnerships at the local level for groups all working to address the migrant crisis and create a form of local resistance to restrictive immigration policy. These groups included the Athens Partnership, Athens Coordination Center for Migrants and Refugees, Solidarity Now, Humanitarian Initiative Bridges, and officials with United States Embassy, all of which I draw from for the purposes of this research. In doing so, my primary goal was developing a clear

understanding of who the primary actors on the ground are, how they perceive the immigration crisis and government response to it, as well as how they communicate and coordinate services.

Solidarity Now was established in 2013 with the goal of creating a network of people and organizations across Greece to support people most effected by the economic and humanitarian crisis ongoing in Greece. To do this, they partner with over 70 different organizations both internationally and within Greece. Based on my experience doing research in Athens, they are one of the most recognized non-profits working in the city—all organizations I spoke with were familiar with their work and often, had even partnered with them on various programs and initiatives. Much like groups I spoke with in the United States, they have realized the need to prioritize collaboration and information sharing, particularly in the context of addressing ongoing crisis. As Solidarity Now stated,

“We are starting to realize we cannot do anything on our own—NGO’s need municipalities and vice versa. This is something that was taken for granted in the past but not so much today. Today, NGO’s [must] form strong collaborations to address the migrant crisis” (Solidarity Now, Informal Interview, May 29, 2018).

This echoes previously discussed statements from organizations, as well as the concept that coalitions and partnerships tend to form in response to external antagonistic political contexts or ongoing political threats, as well as the degree to which similar struggles combined with connecting social ties, ideologies, group opportunities, or threats can all impact the type and strength of coalition formation (Van Dyke, McCammon, & McCammon, 2010; Post, 2015; Tattersall, 2010). Additionally, as this research has already established, support from governments and local municipalities play a huge role in the ability of such groups to connect and effectively advocate on behalf of their client populations.

### *Relationship with Municipality*

The relationship groups like Solidarity Now have with the Athens Municipality is certainly improving—interviewees stated that the current government has shown far more support toward social programming and community organizing than in the past. At the same time general distrust for the government from citizens—as well as migrants—often provide challenges for ongoing integration work.

“In general, we are quite open (despite some general tensions), but many people [Greek citizens] are struggling to find work as it is. Then imagine you see people arriving and provided with housing, and an allowance for free, while you are struggling without any assistance—obviously there will be some kind of resentment here....We do have tensions—we [Athenians] are not against refugees, but feel that it should be controlled somehow—for example, not open borders” (Solidarity Now, Informal Interview, May 29, 2018).

Sentiments such as these make joint collaboration and city-wide partnerships between organizations and local government increasingly important. One of the challenges to successfully integrating refugees and asylum seekers into the community has been successfully managing perceptions from the local population about who has access to what services and where people can go to access them. Groups like Solidarity Now are not only connecting clients to services—everything from education and language support to legal counseling and health care—but also make it a goal to connect people who come into their centers with organizations all across Athens who are working to meet the needs of vulnerable populations—both refugees and citizens (Solidarity Now, Informal Interview, May 29, 2018). Building relationships with local government has been a big part of this.

The Athens Partnership is an “independent nonprofit entity” created to promote public/private partnership between the municipalities and local groups (Athens Partnership, Interview, June 14, 2018). They partner with the Athens Government but are also independent

of it, with the goal of creating platforms for NGO's to interact with the city and take advantage of its resources, and at the same time allowing municipalities to leverage community resources. The impetus behind their work was to essentially create an emergency communication command center, where all relevant groups and entities are brought together under one roof in order to effectively coordinate both services and responses to ongoing crisis. They were created in response to the need for more cohesive social services in Athens, as well as in direct response to the migrant crisis. The city of Athens really saw the need to coordinate and target services being offered to refugee population as there was often no communication between groups and little accountability to how those groups chose to address the perceived needs of the migrant population (Athens Partnership, Interview, June 14, 2018).

#### *Need for City-wide Coordination*

When the immigration crisis began to escalate in Greece, one of the results was a myriad of groups and nonprofits who developed or arrived to respond to the needs of the refugee population. At the same time, there was no one to overview the situation and organize services based on real needs and opposed to perceived ones, so often you had multiple groups offering the same services without communicating with each other, or without ever assessing the needs of the refugee population. Providing a way for groups to talk to each other and coordinate and partner on service provision is one of the key functions of the city-wide partnership (Athens Partnership, Interview, June 14, 2018). At the time of this research, they have over 14 different initiatives where they focus their coordination efforts across multiple areas of service provision. This includes the Athens Coordination Center for Migrants and Refugees (ACCMR) which was established specifically to address the needs of migrants and refugees in the city of Athens

(Athens Partnership, Interview, June 14, 2018); Athens Coordination Center for Migrants and Refugees, Interview, June 21, 2018).

The ACCMR was created for the specific purpose of coordinating service provision and creating a strategic integration plan for future flows of refugees into Greece. They also manage and coordinate an innovative online platform that creates a space for member groups to connect with each other and share resources. While the ACCMR is relatively new—they were formally organized just two years prior—they currently have 85 member organizations across all sectors including local, international, public and private. These member organizations not only share resources, but regularly meet together to discuss ongoing needs and best strategies. Currently, they have five technical committees organized around service provision to refugees in the categories of Health, Legal, Livelihood, Urbanization, and Education. For them, this process involves connecting groups to municipal resources and funding opportunities when available (Athens Coordination Center for Migrants and Refugees, Interview, June 21, 2018).

## PART II: STRENGTH

From the perspective of the ACCMR, the population of Athens as a whole is supportive of migrants and refugees, and they haven't seen the level of anti-immigrant rhetoric that many other EU member countries are experiencing (Pai, 2018). At the same time, the population is still generally distrustful of government initiatives aimed at fixing the problem, and as the ACCMR stated during our interview “there's no positive perspective on the ability of the Greek government to assist the population. So it's quite the complex situation” (Athens Coordination Center for Migrants and Refugees, Interview, June 21, 2018). Significantly, while groups I spoke with in the United States often see the work that they do as offering additional protections to immigrants that go above and beyond what is offered by the federal government, organizations

in Athens don't see their efforts from the same perspective. When asked about this exact issue, the director I spoke with at the ACCMR explained,

“It's less of that happening as it is Athens trying to adjust services in order to boost chances of integrating. At the same time, they don't see themselves as going outside the national law or structure. Rather, they are supporting national procedures while at the same time helping to make that process easier for the migrants here in the city” (Athens Coordination Center for Migrants and Refugees, Interview, June 21, 2018).

The context of the asylum system also complicates the work that groups engage in, as well as the relationship they have with the government. Many asylum seekers and refugees currently residing in Athens are there temporarily—either because they are waiting for their claims to be heard, or because their goal has been to join family in other parts of Europe. In the meantime, they might find themselves residing in Athens for an indeterminate amount of time while at the same time trying to navigate an integration system that was not necessarily intended to resettle people permanently. Groups like Humanitarian Initiative Bridges are a part of the ACCMR network, but also worry that the focus on immediate service provisions often overlooks both the long-term impact and rights of migrants in the city (Humanitarian Initiative Bridges, Interview, July 9, 2018).

#### *Advocacy Component of Integration*

As discussed previously, many refugees fleeing their home country enter secondary or third countries as “asylum seekers,” or a person falling into temporary category of non-citizen who then needs to prove refugee status in order to receive safety and protections (Bhabha, 2002). Receiving asylum status does indeed provide some measure of aid and assistance to those who receive it. However, in relation to the scale of the broader migrant crisis, those who are given asylum status are few and far between due to the fact the majority of applications end in failure. In this way:

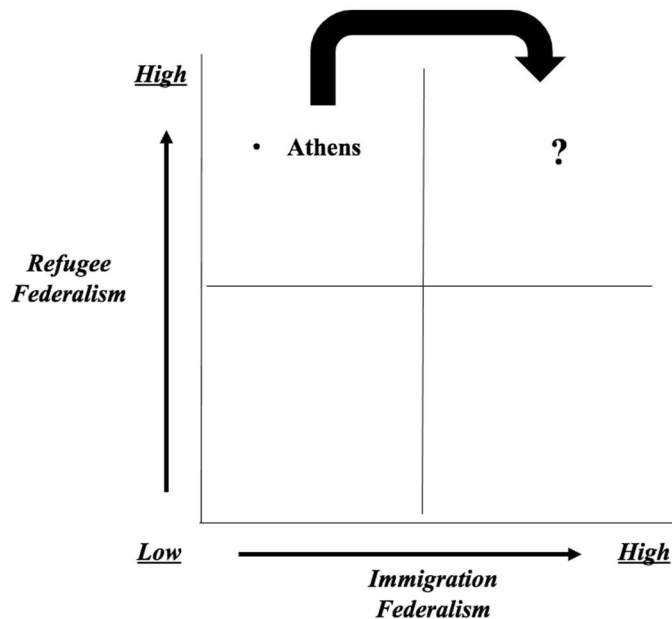


...(W)hile thousands of applicants gain refugee status or some form of subsidiary humanitarian protection, tens of thousands live in a limbo of illegality without access to basic civil rights, or are incarcerated for years as they await a decision on their cases, and hundreds of thousands are rejected, unable to gain access to a forum where the adjudication of refugee protection can be made in the first place” (Bhabha, 2002, p.161).

Groups like Humanitarian Initiative Bridges believe in working with the local government and other groups working in the refugee field in Athens, but at the same time worry that the current focus often ignores the advocacy component of integration—making refugees feel like people with a role and voice in their new community. From their perspective, a focus that fails to go beyond immediate needs and engage with the right of refugees to be seen as individuals does not take the conversation far enough (Humanitarian Initiative Bridges, Interview, July 9, 2018).

Additionally, it is their belief that many of the issues Greece currently faces in terms of integration are the result of bureaucratic procedures that create a barrier for integration. Migrants who are waiting for asylum claims to be heard may wait indefinitely, either in city accommodations or camps outside the city or on the islands. For these migrants, integration into Greek society is complex—if the end goal is to move on to final destinations, long term integration into Greek society isn’t the focus of either the government or the larger NGO’s operating within the city. Migrants are instead left with no way forward, and at the same time no path back, instead existing in a state of limbo that chooses to portray them as numbers rather than as people (Grewal, 2018; Humanitarian Initiative Bridges, Interview, July 9, 2018).

Figure 7. 1 Model 2: Refugee Precedes Immigration Federalism



At the same time, there is strong indication that this is changing. Currently, there are strong and active social movements lead by local groups in Athens advocating for the long-term rights of refugees and immigrants, and the current city administration is been largely of supportive these initiatives. Currently, Athens has a robust system of local refugee organizations with national and international affiliations and funding. At the same time, the ongoing refugee crisis has created a need to develop a long-term integration strategy for refugees and asylum seekers who will likely remain in Greece for the foreseeable future. This has pushed the Athens municipality to move forward with a National Integration strategy that has prioritized immigrant rights rather than a focus on only immediate service provision. This indicates that Athens—much like Phoenix Arizona—has the potential to move from system focused primarily on refugee services to one where both refugee and immigration advocacy coalitions have greater power and impact.

## CHAPTER VIII: COMPARISON—GREECE AND THE UNITED STATES

Both the United State and Greece are experiencing ongoing refugee crises, with key points of difference and comparison. In Europe, the immigration crisis is much larger and has stressed the European Union system far more than what the United States is currently experiencing at its southern border. Many of the debates over immigration in Europe are additionally complicated by disagreements between multiple E.U. member countries, and a lack of resources and funding from border countries like Greece who are shouldering much of burden of immediate service provision (Pai, 2018). In the United States, integration of undocumented immigrants or refugees involves policy tensions across multiple and overlapping jurisdictions at the federal, state and local levels. As discussed, the disputes over jurisdictional immigration policy often revolves around tensions around long term integration and the rights of immigrants, both those who are documented as well as those who are undocumented (Colbern and Ramakrisnan, 2018).

In both the U.S. and Greece however, ongoing discussions deal with key concepts over how to integrate refugees, immigrants and the undocumented into their host countries at the local level. Despite national level differences, this makes comparisons between local level advocacy organizations increasingly relevant. Significantly, this comparison lies not with similarities and differences between the U.S. and Greece as countries, but with examination of the way organizations operate under systems of federalism in the U.S. and multi-level governance in Greece as a European Union member country.

### *Integration in the United States*

Groups in the US tend to focus their efforts in two sectors—either through more immediate service provision from refugee resettlement organizations like the IRC, or long-term

advocacy and integration initiatives from groups like Alliance San Diego. In both cases, the long-term efficacy of immigrants in their community is a priority, and groups work with both each other and local municipalities in order to best meet these needs (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018; Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018).

National level resettlement groups like Catholic Charities see these dynamics play out even across more restrictive localities such as Arizona and Texas. With over 160 individual agencies, they have a valuable perspective on local level resistance and partnerships in communities across the United States. While local groups recognized restrictive trends in national or state level policy, many of them are doing their best to offer aid and meet the needs of immigrants where they see national immigration policy falling short.

“...the truth is that we also have really good partnerships in Arizona and Texas, where we see a lot of other difficult situations. So our local agency in McAllen, Texas, for example, has a large humanitarian welcome center, and a major partnership with the city, with the police departments, with the surrounding county—all of them—and just public citizens that volunteer. All of them are trying to make the situation [better] for these migrants who are passing through their town, if for no other reason than for the sake of the safety of the town, you know. So even though the state itself may be [more restrictive] there are other reasons why people get together and do what they need to do in order to help people. (Jean Beil, Catholic Charities Interview, December 28, 2018).

While these groups might have their disagreements, as the civil rights of immigrants become more threatened Catholic Charities has seen an increase in the strength of local and national coalitions. From their perspective, “once we start stepping on people's human rights, more people step up to say, hey, this isn't right” (Jean Beil, Catholic Charities Interview, December 28, 2018). Standing up for these rights and creating a platform for long term integration means forming extensive networks and partnerships at both the national and local level.

“the more people you can get at the table on any immigrant or refugee issue, the better it's going to be in providing a public voice [which] is really what we need. We need to move the political will and political will is public voice, so getting more people on board

with those kinds of coalitions that do sort of public actions around immigrant and refugee issues is going to be... beneficial in moving the needle as we go into the next election cycle” (Jean Beil, Catholic Charities Interview, December 28, 2018).

For national level groups like Catholic Charities, this means partnerships across all sectors—government as well as private—in order to advocate with one collective voice. In addition to their local networks, they partner with border patrol in order to receive immigrants who have been processed through detention centers. They also habitually work with Congress to promote a bipartisan perspective on pro-immigration legislation and take a public stance against immigration fearmongering. Significantly for a federally funded resettlement agency Catholic Charities has also taken a role in working with undocumented immigrants, often adopting their own form of don’t ask don’t tell policy. In addition to other service provisions, this includes working with FEMA to provide aid to undocumented immigrants effected by national disasters who are not eligible for other benefits (Jean Beil, Catholic Charities Interview, December 28, 2018).

This is a shift other national level coalitions and advocacy groups in the US have pointed to as well. Groups like Unidos US—who focus the majority of their work on advocacy for Latino rights in the US—are an active members of multiple US based coalitions working to advocate for immigrant rights at both the national and local levels. Like other groups I spoke with, these are partnerships they have seen grow in response to ongoing political crisis, especially with increased partnership between resettlement organizations and more immigrant rights focused groups. While much of their focus is at the national level, they also discussed the importance of including the perspectives of multiple groups with different expertise in discussions about best integration practices—ensuring that everyone has a voice at the table (Unidos, Interview, December 5, 2018).

## *Integration in Greece*

In Greece, these concept of long-term refugee integration and rights and a formal national integration plan are an ongoing discussion. Since the 2016 EU Turkey Deal, Greece has had to grapple with the needs of refugees effectively trapped within its borders (Pai, 2018), and is now realizing the need to integrate refugees and migrants into society in ways that prioritize long terms rights. While not available at the time of this research, the Athens municipality is in the process of developing a National Integration Strategy aimed at addressing how it will integrate the population of refugees that will remain in Athens—into society, the economy and the educational system (Holly Metcalf, US Embassy Interview, July 5, 2018).

While the plan had not been released to Greek Parliament at the time of this research, the government of Athens has been developing this plan since 2015, with mixed initial responses from local groups (Holly Metcalf, US Embassy Interview, July 5, 2018). “Most groups are not optimistic about it...they are cynical about the government. They all talk to each other in their own little groups, but no one really talks to each other about these issues. Ultimately, it needs to be an issue NGO’s and Government need to solve together” (Holly Metcalf, US Embassy Interview, July 5, 2018). Currently, groups in Athens see the daily effect of government inaction and a failure to provide long terms solutions for refugees living in Greece, which often creates a sense of general skepticism toward new government integration initiatives. This makes the work of city-wide coalitions like the ACCMR in Athens even more important as organizations seeks to find ways to advocate collectively for refugees within the city and seek to find more effective means of integration.

### *Challenges of Multilevel Governance*

Organizations in both the United States and Greece face the complexities of systems of multi layered governance. In Greece, groups I spoke with cited local government's impact on immigration, but more specifically the national anti-immigrant rhetoric and policy from the European Union. Groups in the US are often faced with conflicting local, state and national level immigration policy that further complicate the rights of immigrants at the local level. I interviewed groups in each location to illustrate some of the reasons why coalitions form and groups chose to collaborate in response to restrictive immigration policy or anti-immigrant rhetoric. While the size of the immigration crisis may be demonstratively different between the US and Greece, each location illustrates significant local or national response to ongoing immigration crisis.

Significantly, groups and organizations interviewed in both the United States and Greece are increasingly forming networks, coalitions and partnerships that correlate to concurrent political contexts impacting immigration. In both cases, the events over the past three years have in many ways crystalized the crisis for groups on the ground. In both Arizona and California, organizations discussed the ways that the 2016 election of Donald Trump and the rise in anti-immigrant sentiment has caused groups to come together and form more connected networks and partnerships (Stanford Prescott, IRC Interview, November 26, 2018; Nejra Sumac, We Are All America, December 18, 2018; Erin Grassi, Alliance Interview, December 17, 2018). In Athens, groups cited the escalation caused by the EU/Turkey Deal in 2016 and the closing of the Balkan route as major events causing many of the challenges they face today (Athens Coordination Center for Migrants and Refugees, Interview, June 21, 2018; Solidarity Now, Informal Interview, May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018).

In many ways, the political challenges facing organizations in both locations are but the most recent embodiment of a growing rise in blatant anti-immigrant, anti-refugee sentiment around the world. In the US, Donald Trump embodies the most recent latest example of anti-immigration policy from the federal government. Under Bill Clinton in 1994, the US adopted a prevention through deterrence strategy and began constructing heavily militarized sections of the border wall with Mexico (Pai, 2018). The 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) made more people eligible for deportation, made it easier for the government to hold and then deport immigrants, and also increased difficulty of immigrants becoming fully legalized (Colbern, Amoroso-Pohl, and Gutiérrez, 2019). Barak Obama discussed arming the border and added 20,000 more police to the southern border between 2010 and 2016. This was a significant increase from the 9,000 police that manned the border in 2000 (Horton, 2018). Finally, the Secure Communities Act of 2008 under the Obama administration connected Immigration and Customs Enforcement to FBI databases and local law enforcement and allowed ICE to identify immigrants being held in jails for potential deportation. It also required local law enforcement to cooperate with immigration officials, raising huge concerns about the relationship between federal and local law enforcement (Colbern, Amoroso-Pohl, and Gutiérrez, 2019).

In the European Union, far right parties and their anti-immigrant viewpoints have gained increasing traction and popular support from key EU member countries (Pai,2018; Kentmen-Cin and Erisen, 2017). Far right groups that spent years growing on the political fringes are becoming mainstream across multiple EU countries including, Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands long before the creation of harder European borders in 2016. This sentiment was made particularly apparent during the 2017 presidential race in France, where far right Front



National leader Marine Le Pen ran a close race on a blatantly anti-immigrant platform with promises to close the border (Pai, 2018). In one of the most recent examples, in June of 2018, European Union leaders met at the EU Summit in Brussels and came to an agreement that would make accepting refugee quotas voluntary rather than mandatory and specified that migrants rescued in the Mediterranean would be sent to “control centers” across the EU (Jakli, Carlson and Linos, 2018).

In both cases, groups in Greece as well as the United States are increasingly driven by responding to increasing nationalism and populism at the same time in uniquely parallel ways. This points to the true importance of local governments and organizations in responding to the needs of refugees and migrants moving forward. As national governments responded to ongoing immigration crisis, the ability of communities to engage their local governments and promote diversity on the local level stands to create a new and unique form of protection for migrants that can prioritize the safety and wellbeing of immigrants even in the face of restrictionist national policy.

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APPENDIX  
I—IRB APPROVED INTERVIEW GUIDE

I. Background:

- 1) First, can you tell me a little more about yourself and how long you've been with [organization name]?
- 2) What does your job here entail?
- 3) What were your primary motivations for beginning your work here?
- 4) What field of work were you in before beginning your work here?
- 5) Can you tell me a little bit about [organization] and the type of work you all do?
- 6) Can you tell me about the size and scope of your organization, including:
  - a. the types of population(s) you serve (e.g., race/ethnicity, nationality, immigration status),
  - b. how many full-time and part-time staff members you have, and
  - c. the location of any national or local offices?
- 7) How many organizations are working on the frontlines (of your field) and how would you describe your relationship to them?
- 8) What does success look like (for you, for your client)?
  - a. Tell me about a time when you feel like this is illustrated.
- 9) What does failure look like (for you, for your client)?
  - a. Can you give me an example of this?

II. Organization Networks: I am now going to transition to a set of questions about your organization's broader network and partnerships with other groups.

- 1) Can you tell me about any networks or coalitions your organization is a part of and

how this helps you in your work?

- a. Follow-up questions on specific networks/coalitions.
  1. When and why did [Network/Coalition X] originate?
  2. Has it evolved in any ways?
  3. How has the Network/Coalition expanded your reach and the type of work your organization focuses on?
    - a. International, national, state or local?
    - b. Specific policy campaigns?
    - c. Refugee integration?
    - d. Immigrant rights?

2) Does your organization ever partner with government officials?

- a. Follow-up questions.
  1. When and why did this partnership originate?
  2. How has it evolved over the past decade or so?
  3. How has it expanded your reach or work?
    - a. International, national, state or local?
    - b. Specific policy campaigns?

3) How does your organization typically communicate with other organizations or government agencies?

- a. Forums,
- b. social media,
- c. phone calls,
- d. email,
- e. online platforms/websites?

Transition: I am now going to ask a few questions about coordination or coalitions connecting refugee-serving and immigrant rights organizations.

4) Do refugee-serving organizations and immigrant rights organizations ever coordinate or develop coalitions?

- a. Given that your organization focuses on [refugee integration or immigrant rights], how do these types of partnerships connecting refugee and immigrant rights groups differ from the Network/Coalition that you mentioned as being important to your organization and work?
  - i. Are refugee-immigrant partnerships more temporary in nature?
  - ii. Are refugee-immigrant partnerships limited in any ways?
  - iii. Are they able to take on new challenges in any unique way?
    1. How about in restrictive states like Arizona where refugee resettlement is taking place? Are there unique opportunities for refugee and immigrant rights organizations to partner in Arizona or other similarly restrictive states?
    2. What about progressive states like California?
  - iv. Is there an ideal example of this type of partnership that you can think of?

- a. Are there specific conditions like moment of crises that spark increased coordination between refugee and immigrant rights organizations?
  - b. Are there specific national, state or local policies where refugee and immigrant rights organizations are more likely to coordinate?
  - c. Are there specific refugee and immigrant services where coordination takes place?
- 5) Do refugee and immigrant rights orgs attend the same workshops, forums, or convenings?
- a. Who has led these initiatives in past, and how have they been funded?
  - b. How frequently do these take place?
  - c. Are there usually the same faces, or has there been a change in which organizations lead or attend these events?
  - d. When did a change occur in who attended, and what do you think sparked this change?
- III. Policy Specific Questions: I am now going to move on to a few questions about key policies and coalitions.
- 1) What types of coalitions have emerged around expanding immigrant or refugee access to health care or services?
- a. Do refugee and immigrant rights organizations partner on this issue or on these policies?
- 2) What types of coalitions have emerged around expanding immigrant or refugee access to legal services around immigration status?
- a. Do refugee and immigrant rights organizations partner on this issue or on these policies?
- 3) What types of coalitions have emerged around sanctuary policies?
- a. Do refugee and immigrant rights organizations partner on this issue or on these policies?
- 4) Are there policies or areas where they partner that I might have missed?
- IV. Success, Barriers and Avoiding Collaboration: Finally, I will move on to a few questions about success and instances of specific policy collaborations.
- 5) What practices/strategies/approaches would you say have been most successful in the work that you do?
- a. How might these translate between organizations?
  - b. How about in other cities?
  - c. What are the greatest barriers these organizations see themselves facing in their ongoing work?
- 6) Have there been policy instances where it makes sense to avoid collaboration with government or other groups?
- 7) Have you observed a change in how and when coalitions or coordination efforts occur since Trump took office?

- 8) Thinking a bit more broadly, have there been major moments during the past 10-15 years around events or changes in National Immigration policy that have shaped or changed the way coalitions occur?
- 9) What are the greatest challenges you see your organization facing in ongoing work?
- 10) Success? Failure? (If not asked before).
- 11) Are you familiar with the work of the National Temporary Protected Status Alliance?
  - a. What do you think of their efforts to save TPS and provide migrants a path to legal citizenship?
- 12) Are there policies or areas where they partner that I might have missed?

Conclusion:

- 13) [IF TIME IS NOT EXCEEDED, ASK] Is there anything else you think is important to discuss that I might have missed about the work of your organization, the network/coalitions you are part of, and how refugee and immigrant rights organization may or may not coordinate?
- 14) I'd like to end the interview by thanking you for your time, and asking if you have any questions for me?

APPENDIX  
II—INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

### Overview of Project:

My project seeks to explore how organizations work towards refugee and immigrant integration through formatting different types of coalitions and strategic networks. Interviews will be conducted to examine the ways refugee organizations and immigrant rights groups share their resources and information to achieve shared goals of providing immigrants with services and/or engaging in policy advocacy and implementation. Do organizations that focus on refugees and on immigrants form partnerships, coordinated efforts, or build long-lasting coalitions? Through examining these coalitions, my thesis engages at the intersections of immigration federalism, refugee studies and human rights scholarship to reveal deeper complexities in the politics of immigrant integration. I seek to reveal how federalism shapes the types of coalitions that emerge between refugee resettlement and immigrant rights organizations.

### Provide a sense of the Length of the Interview:

This interview should take about 60 minutes, depending on the role that your organization has in refugee or immigrant integration. □

### Provide Sense of Confidentiality:

Publications from this research will discuss organizations and their work in general terms, name specific organizations, and name specific individuals (only with written consent). My goal here is to lift up the work of an organization and individuals, not negatively portray them. Please know that you are free to decide whether you wish to participate in this study and you can end the interview at any time. This will not be held against you. Also, if you wish to remain anonymous, you can choose not to have your organization or yourself named, mentioned during the interview, or used in any publications from the research.

I will be asking your permission to audio record the interview, using an audio recorder and iPhone. Let me know if, at any time, you do not want to be recorded and I will stop. Only the research team will have access to the recordings and transcriptions. All sources of information collected from the interview will be securely stored in a password protected ASU dropbox and ASU encrypted external hard drive.

A list of resources for the participant

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, you can reach me at [mamoroso@asu.edu](mailto:mamoroso@asu.edu). You may also contact my thesis advisor, Dr. Allan Colbern, at [Allan.Colbern@asu.edu](mailto:Allan.Colbern@asu.edu).

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Social Behavioral IRB. You may talk to them at (480) 965-6788 or by email at [research.integrity@asu.edu](mailto:research.integrity@asu.edu) if:



- You want to talk to someone besides myself or the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Verbal and Signed Consent:

With this information, I'd like to ask a few questions before I can proceed with the interview.

1. Are you ok with having your organization's name used in publications, in order to highlight its role in the sanctuary and immigrant rights movements?

Circle whether the participant said: yes or no

2. Are you ok with having your first and last name used in publications, in order to highlight your individual role in the sanctuary or immigrant rights movement?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Is it okay that I audio record the interview to make sure that I accurately represent your thoughts?

Circle whether the participant said: yes or no

APPENDIX  
III—EMAIL INTERVIEW REQUEST

Hello,

I hope this email finds you well! I am a graduate student at Arizona State University working on my thesis, looking at coordination efforts among immigration rights and refugee resettlement groups. I am reaching out to you and your organization to inquire about interviewing you for my project. If you are not the right person to speak with, I am hopeful you can point me the correct direction!

I am generally interested in how organizations work together towards refugee and immigrant integration, including the types of coalitions and strategic networks organizations are forming, how they share their resources and information, how they engage together in providing services, and how they engage together in policy advocacy and implementation. The interview should take about 60 minutes, depending on the role that your organization has in refugee or immigrant integration.

Please know that publications from this research will discuss organizations and their work in general terms, name specific organizations, and name specific individuals (only with written consent). My goal here is to lift up the work of an organization and individuals, not negatively portray them. Also, if you wish to remain anonymous, you can choose not to have your organization or yourself named, mentioned during the interview, or used in any publications from the research.

Your perspective would add a lot to my project and understanding. Please let me know if you are able to schedule a time for an interview. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

All the best,

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