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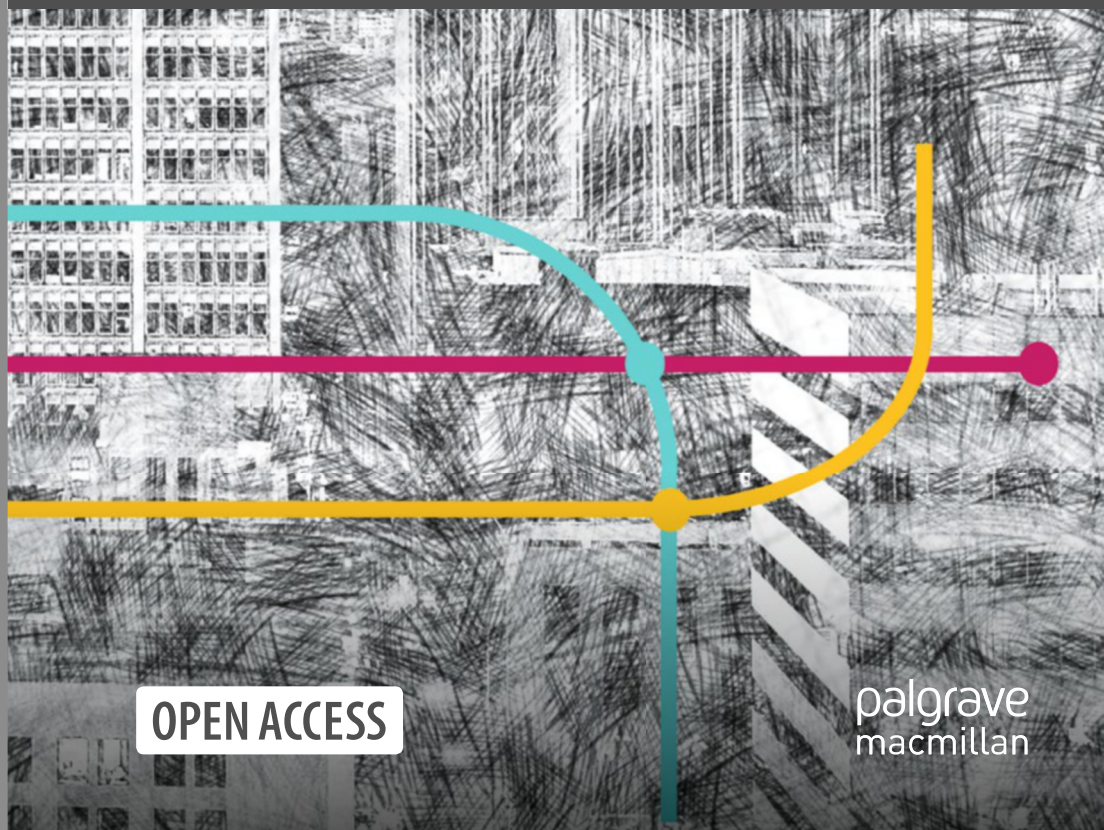
Framing Solidarities in Times of Multiple Crises

Social Movements across European Cities

Edited by

Mojca Pajnik · Helge Schwiertz

Donatella della Porta · Franz Bernhardt · Marko Ribač



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This book is a result of the research project *Enacting Citizenship and Solidarity in Europe "From Below": Local Initiatives, Intersectional Strategies, and Transnational Networks* (ECSEuro), funded by Volkswagen Foundation (2022–2025). We acknowledge the financial support of the Open Access Fund of the University of Hamburg.



ISSN 2946-6016 ISSN 2946-6024 (electronic)
Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology
ISBN 978-3-031-82562-0 ISBN 978-3-031-82563-7 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-82563-7>

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Framing Solidarities in Times of Multiple Crises: Introduction

*Helge Schwiertz, Mojca Pajnik, Donatella della Porta,
Franz Bernhardt, and Marko Ribač*

In the last two decades, a multiplication of crises has increased the challenges for European society. While the nation-states dominating the European project have been barely able to find adequate responses to

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M. Pajnik et al. (eds.), *Framing Solidarities in Times of Multiple Crises*, Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-82563-7_1

financial, migration governance, health, and climate crises, intersectional inequalities increased. In response to these new challenges, but also rooted in previous experiences of struggles for social justice, new practices of solidarity and citizenship have been emerging at local scales. Arguing that research addressing the local scale and its multiscale entanglements can be useful in addressing the pressing challenges of our time (della Porta, 2020a), this book analyses how social movement organizations and civil society initiatives across ten European cities in five countries (Denmark, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, and Switzerland) have been reimagining and transforming forms of solidarity in three contentious social fields: migrant rights, housing, and care. In these fields, a mixture of protracted structural contradictions and local crises, interwoven with multiple far reaching global shocks such as the Covid-19 pandemic, ecological devastation, escalating wars, and inflation, created a critical juncture. The responses and reflections of activists to this “polycrisis” (Tooze, 2021, pp. 6–7) can assist us in reimagining intersecting alliances, translocal similarities, and multiscale dimensions of the challenges we face.

Collective frames about the causes and solutions of these social challenges have been constructed in situations characterized by fast and dramatic transformation. Not only are there increasing and urgent needs to be addressed in the short term, but also a perceived necessity to imagine political and social alternatives. This book uses frame analysis as a core epistemological and methodological lens to examine the discourses and political imaginaries of contemporary local, city-based social movement organizations and civil society initiatives active in the aforementioned social fields facing these cascading, overlapping crises. Diagnostic and prognostic frames in particular have been analysed by the authors of this book in order to understand social and political relations by foregrounding social injustices and calling for social change. In particular, the book aims to analyse changes in perceptions of solidarity in times where the

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interactions of risks and shocks tend to escalate, and seem to amplify the interrelated problems, bringing them into a new critical conjuncture.

While we focus on the contribution of civil society, social movements, and social movement organizations, as well as their hybrid combinations (della Porta, 2020b),¹ we do not consider them and state institutions simply in opposition to each other, but rather in multiple relationships of conflict and cooperation. Therefore, we examine how social movement actors coproduce discourses and policies, and take on ambivalent roles and hybrid forms, and we thus look at the interrelations of autonomous or civic practices with (state) institutionalization (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019; della Porta, 2018; Ambrosini et al., 2020). Challenging the concept of public-private dichotomies, our study singles out emerging concepts, such as those related to performative citizenship approaches, highlighting the emergence of new collective political subjectivities and identities (Isin & Nielsen, 2008; Schwiertz, 2021), as well as “commoning” (Federici & Linebaugh, 2019; Jørgensen & Makrygianni, 2020) and practices of care in everyday life, creating “infrastructures of solidarity” (Schilliger, 2016, 2020). Moreover, intersectionality, focusing of framing and social locations, is a useful lens to investigate the anti-discrimination position (Smrdelj & Pajnik, 2022). Thus, using “commoning” to address societal issues—together with undertaking caring practices—are paramount for enacting intersectional solidarities and new forms of citizenship. These enactments create resistance against state institutions unfit to address what is presented as an emergency and against the way that capitalist markets promote the individualization of social problems. In this way, we also show how civil society initiatives, beyond but also related to established welfare institutions, (re)create public goods through direct social actions and mobilizations. These efforts call for the establishment and institutionalization of infrastructures of solidarity.

¹We have constructed this typology using della Porta and Diani’s (2006, p. 20) definition of social movements as social processes, consisting of mechanisms actors use to engage in collective action; they “are involved in conflictual relations with clearly defined opponents, are linked to dense informal networks, share a distinct collective identity”, because of its conceptual relation to solidarity, while we also stress the importance of often less visible practices of commoning and care. Subsequently, we then understand social movement organizations by referring to Kriesi’s (1996) description of their internal structure as emerging from formalization, professionalization, organization, and integration (see also della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 140), but also in a broader sense that includes the organization of more informal groups (Nunes, 2021).

While these multiple crises deepen, social movements not only act as agents of change, but also play a crucial role in generating knowledge and discourses to assess societal developments beyond the dominant narratives. By challenging mainstream viewpoints, they bring to light underlying issues and propose innovative approaches to address social, economic, and political problems. Their contributions broaden the understanding of crises, encouraging inclusive responses that take into account diverse experiences and needs. In this sense, we do not only present a collection of case studies *about* social movement organizations in this book. Rather, we also ask what we can learn *from* these organizations and their enactment of citizenship and solidarity “from below”. On an epistemological level, we see movements as privileged producers of knowledge about social problems and change, not only for activism and political strategies but also for social science analyses. Studying their framing helps, in Robert Musil’s words, to sharpen not only our sense of reality but also our sense of possibility, and to identify both current grievances and ways out. The reason these insights are so valuable is because they are based on the perspectives of those directly affected by the crises and involved in the related struggles. On a political level, the framings also show how we can remain hopeful in these rather dark times. We need to ask ourselves what it means to talk about solidarity in a society that is becoming more exclusionary, divisive, and authoritarian. In this vein, we see the framings examined here as a counter-approach to the increasingly dominant framings of right-wing populist and far-right actors, in that they do not identify individual scapegoats and advocate exclusion, but rather name structural causes and outline more inclusive, solidarity-based solutions. In doing so, we believe it is important not only to criticize the dominant framings, but to point out alternatives. J. K. Gibson-Graham (1996, p. 3) have argued that “it is the way capitalism has been ‘thought’ that makes it difficult to imagine its supersession”, and that the focus on this way of thinking also limits “anticapitalist imagination”. If we limit ourselves to a critique of existing conditions, we can, albeit unintentionally, contribute to making these conditions appear insurmountable. As a result, we see particular relevance in examining not only the problems, but also the framings of social movements’ approaches to solutions and the “radical imaginations” they articulate (Haiven & Khasnabish, 2014).

The title of this book, “Framing solidarities”, reflects this importance of political imagination, and it can be understood in several ways and refer to different dimensions. First, we analyse how solidarity is enacted at the discursive level, exploring the narratives of movements. Second, we

examine how concepts of solidarity are framed differently across various contexts, recognizing that cultural, social, and political environments shape these framings. Third, we analyse how practices of solidarity are constructed based on specific framings that challenge individualizing and dominant societal narratives. Our analysis extends beyond mere symbolic declarations of solidarity, emphasizing the material relationship between framing and solidarity practices. By doing so, we highlight how these practices are grounded in real-world actions and mobilizations that seek to transform societal relations. This multifaceted approach demonstrates how solidarity can be both a powerful rhetorical tool and a tangible agent for social change, rooted in an understanding of structural inequalities and collective efforts to address them.²

1 INTERSECTING SOCIAL FIELDS: MIGRANT RIGHTS, HOUSING, AND CARE

The selected case studies that are addressed in individual chapters disaggregate the framing of solidarity by social movement organizations active across three social fields: migrant rights, housing, and care. These fields are witnessing innovative approaches to urban politics, and their structural differences allow the case studies to address a broad spectrum of initiatives and diverse theoretical aspects. However, we do not perceive social fields to be preordained, but resulting from a twofold construction process: they are produced by the actors involved as well as by our research. The distinction between the three fields has the heuristic function of orienting our analytical scope and clarifying specific social relations, though no clear-cut boundaries can be empirically drawn among these fields. We are particularly interested in their entanglement, and how they interact with and influence each other.³

²These solidarity framings are linked to material collective assemblages in the political initiatives presented in this book. In the concrete enactment of solidarity, close social ties, reciprocal relations of care, bodily co-presence, and affect all play a crucial role. These aspects, which were only partially examined in our frame analysis, are the focus of our complementary ethnographic research, which we have conducted in parallel. The findings from that research will be published in a second book (Schwartz et al., [forthcoming](#)).

³Our concept of “social fields” is based on the work of Çağlar and Glick Schiller (2018), who employ this concept in a broader sense than Bourdieu did. Social fields overlap and are parts of urban spaces, but also extend beyond specific cities, linking multiple locales and fieldwork sites, and interact on multiple scales (*ibid.*). We therefore utilize an intersectional, translocal, and multiscale concept of social fields.

First, the social field of migrant rights is characterized by conflicts over mobility, immobility, and belonging, which Mezzadra and Neilson (2013) have described as “border struggles”. These conflicts unfold in the context of nationalism, colonialism, and racism, as well as gender and class relations. We define migrant rights as encompassing not only the laws of border and citizenship regimes, but also as rights claimed through struggle. Our focus includes the “precarization” of legal status, conflicts over asylum, residency, and access to a state’s territory, as well as social inclusion. Second, the social field of housing is characterized by conflicts over access to accommodation and the development of urban spaces structured by social status and resources. Struggles over housing address what may be the key social question of the twenty-first century (Wacquant, 1996): rapidly rising rent and real-estate prices, the expulsion of low-income households from attractive residential areas, and the expansion of platforms for short-term renting—all this is an expression of current transformations in housing provision, which pose pressing challenges for local politics. This also relates to broader struggles for the right to the city (Harvey, 2008; Lefebvre, 1968), which incorporate contentious politics surrounding urban planning and attempts to create alternative infrastructures and new urban commons. Third, the social field of care is characterized by conflicts over the capitalist division between productive and reproductive spheres, with work in the latter sphere often unpaid and seen as a “labour of love” (Finch & Groves, 2022). Although care is central to the social fabric, it is undervalued or devalued in terms of rewards and status (Fraser, 2016). Care work includes material activities as well as affective relations in familial, voluntary, and professional relationships. It is disproportionately done by women, migrants, and people of colour, and is marked by intersectional power relations. Feminist scholars have analysed a growing “crisis of care” resulting from economic and social transformations (Tronto, 2013) and causing a care deficit that is partly filled by migrant workers in precarious jobs (Schilliger, 2016).

The three fields cover urban spaces and scales in specific ways: (1) the field of migrant rights, with tensions between exclusionary (supra)national policies towards non-citizens and campaigns for the inclusion of all local residents (whereby migration control mechanisms also operate at local level); (2) the field of housing, with contestations over affordable housing increasingly shaping the social imaginaries at the urban scale as well as struggles over the development of urban spaces, and (3) the field of care, with the distribution, recognition, and democratization of care becoming

an urgent issue for urban communities. Although all three fields produce field-specific framings, we particularly see differences between the relatively similar framings of the field of housing and the field of care on the one hand (due to their focus on particular social goods and services), and the often more entangled framings of the migrant rights field on the other (in which conflicts about differential exclusion, the role of the state, and access to potentially all social fields interact). In all three fields, however, intersectionality emerges as a way to address perceived increasing inequalities, while care is proposed as an approach to reconstitute social ties. Therefore, we aim to understand how social movement organizations amidst multiple, interwoven crises frame political imaginaries of solidarity across these social fields.

2 SOLIDARITY: CONTENTIOUS AND RELATIONAL PRACTICES REVISED

By examining solidarity as one of our central concepts, we highlight the social relationships between actors, including how actors are transformed by different modes of relating to one another. In doing so, we analytically distinguish exclusive notions of solidarity, often bounded to national communities and welfare states, from more inclusive and transversal forms of solidarity, which are enacted (trans-)locally in many cases (Bauder, 2016; Oosterlynck et al., 2017). While we take into account broader structures of social cohesion, we primarily conceptualize solidarity as a practice of mutual aid in political struggles, during which these structures themselves are negotiated. We understand solidarity as a relational and contentious practice that articulates an external political antagonism (Schwiertz & Schwenken, 2022; della Porta & Steinhilper, 2021a; Agustín Jørgensen, 2019; Featherstone, 2012). New conceptions of solidarity emerge in the context of intersecting crises; they nurture emerging collective identities, facilitate alliances between different civil-society actors, and propose political alternatives. We therefore do not conceive solidarity as a component of state institutions and systems of rule, implemented and enforced in a hierarchical relationship “from above”, but rather as coproduced and transformed in broader societal processes. In this perspective, political practices that develop, renegotiate, and enact alternative approaches to understand social relations in solidaristic terms play a significant role. We also assert that solidarity is not necessarily based on a pre-established,

homogeneous community, but rather arises through the mediation of differences (Mohanty, 2003, p. 7). In this sense, rather than viewing solidarity in an overly optimistic and praising manner, we reflect on the ambivalent processes of inclusion and exclusion that are unavoidably linked to solidarity.

The frame analyses reported in this volume connect solidarity to citizenship in order to understand how political subjectivities come into being (Schwartz & Schwenken, 2022) and how actors position themselves through “acts of citizenship”, enacting urban and European citizenships beyond national boundaries (Isin & Nielsen, 2008; Isin & Saward, 2013). Such practices of “urban citizenship” (Darling & Bauder, 2019) go beyond state-centred definitions of citizenship as legal status and rights sanctioned in law by articulating a “right to the city” that implies, according to Harvey, “far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is the right to change ourselves by changing the city” (2008, p. 23; Lefebvre, 1968). Contexts of economic crisis and austerity politics have been especially fruitful for urban movements to promote social innovations (Mayer, 2009), generating alternative discourses, performing new practices, and rethinking relationships with the local state (Walliser, 2013).

Solidarity and citizenship have been central concepts in analyses of how demands for democracy and social justice have been embedded within democratic welfare states (Balibar, 2014). For a long time, the expansion of citizenship rights, encompassing civil, political, and social rights, has been considered part of a general trend of greater inclusion. While the assumption suggested by Marshall (1950) of a progressive extension from civil to political and social rights has been challenged by observations of persistent forms of unequal access to those rights, the increasing separation of the conditions of residents, taxpayers, and citizens has laid bare the negative side of citizenship, as an exclusive device, rather than an inclusive one. Moreover, in view of global inequalities and migrant rights, citizenship status appears to be a modern form of feudal privilege (Shachar, 2009). Finally, within national contexts, the retrenchment of the welfare state and the ongoing detachment of political parties from their societal roots have weakened the link between democracy and social justice (della Porta, 2013). This points to the “democratic difference” between established regimes of democracy and the fundamental principles of the democratic—principles of equality and freedom for all—which cannot be taken for granted but must be repeatedly enacted, often in opposition to established regimes and hierarchies (Schwartz, 2022, p. 291).

In the social sciences, the emancipatory value of citizenship has therefore been connected less to the formal endowments linked to nationhood and formal legal status, and more to the performative dimension of citizenship. This perspective emphasizes the disruptive yet innovative moments in which activist citizens enact their rights beyond applicable laws and the status quo (Isin & Turner, 2002; Isin, 2008). Critical citizenship studies have in fact pointed out contestations of the established status of citizenship as well as the enactment of alternative citizenships through diverse routines, cultural rituals, habits, and norms. Besides these social habits, there is a particular focus on the contentious “acts of citizenship”—practices through which subjects transform themselves into citizens at particular moments (Isin, 2008, p. 18). Beyond the focus on publicly visible ruptures and claim-making, such processes could also be conceptualized as “collective political subjectivation”, stressing the importance of close social ties, mutual care, and solidarity for the emergence of political subjectivities (Schwartz, 2021, forthcoming).⁴

Solidarity has emerged as a core concern for progressive movements, which have claimed broader inclusion of citizens and less domination within and across national borders (Ypi, 2011). In the traditional definition of urban movements, solidarity is linked to the development of a sense of community, as well as to social integration (della Porta & Piazza, 2008) and could be inventive, reshaping the political scene (Featherstone, 2012, p. 6) as well as disruptive to the organized solidarity of the nation-state (Schwartz & Schwenken, 2022, p. 412). Here, the typology of Agustín and Jørgensen (2019), which is taken up in several chapters helps to unpack complex relations of solidarity by differentiating among “autonomous”, “civic”, and “institutional” variants: “autonomous solidarity” depicts relational practices produced in self-organized spaces with an explicit antagonistic position towards the state; “civic solidarity” is used to denote a wide range of hybrid practices by nonstate actors with varying degrees of both conflict and consensus vis-à-vis the state; “institutional solidarity” refers to transformative practices in which public-sector officials are actively involved. However, especially in the context of the polycrisis, practices of solidarity “increasingly blurred the lines between contentious and non-contentious forms of civil society engagement” (della Porta &

⁴Thus, it is possible to distinguish different forms of collective subjectivities, such as “we, the residents” or “we, the illegalized”, and analyse how such forms of subjectivities are linked to different scales, e.g., cities, communities, or neighbourhoods.

Steinhilper, 2021b, p. 176) and have led to a combination of “voluntary non-profit activities on one hand and social movements and political activism on the other” (ibid., p. 176).

Periods of intense emergency also affect the framing of solidarity, producing paradigm shifts. Before the consolidation of the polycrisis, practices of solidarity seem to have been integrated within institutional assets, with some degree of coordination between the state and the third sector in the provision of goods and services. However, times of crisis tend to repoliticize solidarity. The emergence of new needs prompts reflection on the causes of the problems and potential solutions. The established specialization in the provision of specific goods and services (such as housing or health) to standard groups in the population (such as migrants or homeless) is therefore often challenged. The search for effective solutions to complex problems facilitates greater coalition-building, which also requires the “bridging” of frames. In this process, the very language of social movements can be affected, following the perception that crises themselves testify to the inadequacies of previous social practices.

As our research reveals, in times of multiple and connected crises, the very specialization and institutionalization of solidarity are in fact challenged and new collective political subjectivities and coalitions arise around emerging concepts, such as a vision of intersectional inequalities and the development of caring within broad commons. Going beyond the field of migration, the performance of critical solidarity emerges as an act of citizenship as it enacts a universal vision of empowerment. At the same time, new terms emerge to justify renewing the use of the very concept of solidarity, which might have been perceived as institutionalized, apolitical, top-down, and even disempowering. As Tarrow (2013) emphasized in his work on the repertoire of contentious language, the “construction and re-construction of contentious language results from the interactions among actors in contingent situations”. New concepts are purposefully employed as communication tools to convey a particular meaning, yet their meaning tends to remain ambiguous, shifting across time and space. While the use of a shared terminology across countries and continents at the same time testifies of and fuels transnational links, the attraction for some of these terms seems to lie in their vagueness. As sort of empty or floating signifiers, they acquire different meanings in different contexts, often through symbolic struggles within and outside of social movements themselves. Critical junctures are particularly hospitable for terminological innovation, because “when people are thrown together in new

configurations of opportunity and threat, they produce both new forms of action and the words to describe them” (Tarrow, 2013, p. 14). When words acquire symbolic resonance, become linked to other terms that are historically entrenched in a movement culture, and are strategically adapted, social movement groups and activists can take on the role of translators by appropriating and adapting certain terminology and giving it context by relating it to other terms. In “Framing solidarities”, we address the ways in which new terms emerge in diagnosing the causes of ongoing crises, assessing prognoses, and imagining solutions. Times of crisis especially lead to social movements not only developing alternative approaches to dealing with them, but also offer innovative perspectives on current conditions and help us find ways beyond them.

3 FRAME ANALYSIS: WITH AND BEYOND THE DIAGNOSIS-PROGNOSIS FORMAT

In “Framing solidarities”, we focus on the discursive dimension that is crucial for all practices and institutions of solidarity, as these are deeply shaped by the collective framing of emerging problems and envisaged solutions. In this sense, we adopt a widely shared definition of frame analysis as a discursive approach to the study of (underlying) norms, beliefs, perceptions, and atmospheres, which are imbedded in texts (Verloo, 2005; Bacchi, 2009; Snow & Benford, 1988). In other words, a “frame” is the basic element of the framing approach and analysis that we apply in this book. Drawing on Verloo (2005, p. 20), we understand a frame as an “organising principle that transforms fragmentary or incidental information into a structured and meaningful... problem, in which a solution is implicitly or explicitly enclosed”. In social movement studies, frames are understood as the strategic shaping of political demands and are defined as “action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings” that inspire and legitimize the activities of social movement organizing (Benford & Snow, 2000, 614; Pajnik, 2019; Pajnik & Fabijan, 2023). Framing seeks “to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists” (Snow & Benford, 1988, p. 198).

Following Snow and Benford’s (1988) classical distinction, we focus on three main types of framing. The first type, diagnostic framing occurs when a movement convinces potential converts that a problem needs to be addressed. It involves problem identification and attributions, i.e., the

frame highlights what the issue is and who or what is responsible for it. Diagnostic framing is crucial for rallying support, as it makes clear why the status quo is unacceptable and requires change. In the second type, prognostic framing, the movement convinces its public of appropriate strategies, tactics, and targets. It involves the articulation of a proposed solution to the problem, and the strategies for carrying out this plan. Prognostic framing provides a roadmap for action, outlining the specific steps that should be taken to address the identified issues. This includes defining the tactics that will be employed and identifying actions targeting policies, institutions, or societal norms. The third type, motivational framing exhorts individuals to get involved in the movement's activities. It includes creating a sense of urgency and a compelling reason for why action should be taken. Thus, framing involves the strategic use of language, symbols, and narratives to define problems, attribute causes, propose solutions, and inspire collective action. The process of frame articulation is key to this, as it links events and experiences into a narrative that explains why action is necessary.

Moreover, besides identifying the “diagnosis” and “prognosis” in texts, our frame analysis also addresses values and affects; this allows us to determine possible inconsistencies in texts, and to learn which affects underpin a frame as well as which frames create specific atmospheres and moods, but also to determine how a certain issue is conceptualized. To go beyond the analysis of discursive aspects, we also look at the context of framing in terms of affective cultures (Gould, 2009). As Snow and Benford (1988) noted, the choice of wording is not up to the individual actor, but is rather influenced by the characteristics of the environment in which the frames operate what can be called “discursive context” (Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2016). While we propose a methodological and pragmatic approach to frame analysis, the reference to literature that links such an approach to post-structuralist discourse theories, e.g., those that draw on Foucault (Sandberg, 2006; Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2016) or Laclau (Saharov, 2021), can help to critically deconstruct some of the categories frame analysis might otherwise take for granted. This literature allows us to question the assumption that a given actor is predefined and rational (which we address using the concept of collective political subjectivation) and to refer to more deep-rooted social processes and histories. While we examine the “strategic framing” involving a particular selection of language and concepts (Bacchi, 2009, p. 19), we also start from the premise that framing can be unintentional, articulating and reproducing (hegemonic)

discourses and narratives that exist in a certain social field or society as such (Bacchi, 2009; Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2016).

The sample for our frame analysis consists of 127 text documents, including public statements, letters, manifestos, and social media posts written and distributed by social movement organizations across Europe in the four-year period from 2019 until 2022. The documents were selected from a larger sample after a process of mapping social movement actors in ten European cities, considering territorial divisions rooted in national historical developments: the North-South cleavage in Italy, the West-East cleavage in Germany, centre-periphery contrasts in Denmark and Slovenia, and different cantons in Switzerland. We selected social movement actors in Aarhus, Aalborg, and Copenhagen in Denmark; Hamburg and Berlin in Germany; Florence and Palermo in Italy; Ljubljana and Maribor in Slovenia; and Bern and Zurich in Switzerland. Coders in each country were provided with a manual, a coding book, and a coding sheet for the coding process, in which we identified distinctive frames. We used “markers” (see Dombos et al., 2012) and “sensitizing questions” (Verloo & Lombardo, 2007, p. 35) for each document to identify which pairs of problems (diagnosis) and solutions (prognosis) appear; who or what causes the problem and the solution (actors); who is affected by the problem; what the related affects and underlying values are; and finally, to what extent reference is made to scales, translocal, and transnational networks, or the intersection of fields. At the end of each diagnosis-prognosis analysis, we summarized short definitions for each frame and condensed those into a smaller number of main frames.

While the diagnosis-prognosis distinction is central to the method we use, the analytical perspective adopted in our research is not limited to it. In particular, in an effort to address the spatial and social relations that local political initiatives articulate in their text production, we also coded the categories of urban scale, translocal/transnational networks, and intersectional relations. We noted in fact whether reference was made to the local/urban scale and, if so, in what way it was described, imagined, or evaluated; whether relationships and networks across city limits and/or national borders were mentioned in the text; and whether the text referred to links between social fields and intersectional forms of exclusion and discrimination. Coders were instructed to further extrapolate elaborations of citizenship and solidarity when they were present in the documents in order to grasp new understandings, reimaginings, and visions of both concepts.

4 STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

Although the activist groups in the fields we studied articulate different claims, our analysis shows how they concurrently develop political approaches that do not start from the imagined community of the nation-state. They all develop a political approach that stems from collective engagement in local communities, neighbourhoods, and cities, which is oriented to reimagining and redefining notions of citizenship and migrant rights. According to this political approach, they propose viable, democratic housing policies, defend the commons, and devise more inclusive infrastructures of care. Our work addresses the ways in which new terms emerge when defining the diagnosis and prognosis of ongoing crises. Especially in times of crisis, social movements not only develop alternative approaches to action; these movements also can present innovative perspectives on current conditions and ways beyond them. They can help to change our view of the world, and at the same time open up a vision of a different world.

At the diagnostic level, the social movements we analysed point out the increasing injustices and conflicts over the racialization of mobility and belonging, the strengthening of policies of containment and rejection in the name of security, struggles over affordable housing, and increased gentrification and touristification, as well as pressing conflicts over the capitalist division between productive and reproductive spheres and between productive and distributive processes. The analysis of prognostic frames across the three social fields and across the analysed cases and cities singles out these movements' critical demands for strong and responsible public interventions against the neoliberal dismantling of public goods and public institutions, and also claim the necessity to reinstate political, social, and civil rights for the excluded. The suggested prognosis often lies in autonomous and civic mobilization by social movement organizations against exclusionary migration and housing regimes, thus establishing spaces of solidarity as well as demanding and co-creating institutional solidarity infrastructures.

All the chapters presented below discuss the framing of solidarity in the context of an encompassing privatization of resources, the intensifying commodification of human rights, and the depoliticized individualization of problems. The analysis also outlines common trends of how social movement organizations across European cities and states are discursively aligned to practising solidarity and to politicizing solidarity in an urban

fabric that has been transformed and shaped by transversal crises. The individual chapters analyse the framing by social movement organizations by country to better understand how they mobilize when facing exclusionary policies and regimes. Each chapter also devotes space to the concept of solidarity, distinguishing between autonomous, civic, and institutional forms, as well as newly formed (re)articulations and (re)imaginings of solidarities.

The first chapter, by Carlotta Caciagli and Donatella della Porta, explores the narratives of Italian urban movements in the three fields under analysis: migration, housing, and care. In particular, it uses frame analysis to shed light on how solidarity and contention are addressed by locally based collective actors dealing with contemporary urban transformation. Given the dramatic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in Italy, the first country in Europe to be hit by the virus in its more lethal form, Caciagli and della Porta show how solidarity became a primary concern for progressive movement organizations during the pandemic, when new groups emerged at a very local level while previously existing ones (re)focused their activities on the provision of direct assistance for the population in need. As for the conceptualization of solidarity, the pandemic not only made conditions for marginalized groups all the more dramatic, but also broadened the movements' potential constituencies to new social groups that had become impoverished in terms of material resources as well as rights as citizens. Given the relevance of the Covid-19 crisis in the Italian case, the years since 2020 were in fact considered a turning point by the organizations engaged in solidarity initiatives, thus affecting their framing. At the diagnostic level, there has since been a focus on the increasing injustice produced by the development of repeated crises, which commodify rights by neoliberal capitalism. The pandemic experience has also emerged in the prognostic framing of the right to cure, with a particular emphasis on the deadly consequences of the commodification of health and calls for the "right to health" as part of citizens' rights and, therefore, state responsibility. In the prognostic frame, solidarity is defined not as a simple return to the welfare state, but mainly as an expression of the civil, political, and social rights for the excluded.

In general, the various collective actors all identify the unequal access to services as the main cause of social problems and injustices. In this sense, the actors viewed as responsible for the dramatic consequences of inequality are public institutions, rather than market dynamics. As for solutions, first, there is a call for these institutions to grant social as well as civil and

political rights, and second, an appeal to recognize direct social action and solidarity as the only way to not only overcome difficulties but also guarantee rights. In this sense, solidarity is seen as the means through which social conflict is performed. The local is singled out as the most important scale at which collective identities are constructed. Indeed, the category of “inhabitants” often replaces the one of “the vulnerable”, “migrants”, “refugees”, and “citizenships” in these organizations’ public claims. An intersectional vision of injustice connects to a broad conceptualization of care, which often emerges as care for people and territory at the same time, bridging environmental and healthcare issues.

This first chapter is based on an analysis of 25 self-produced documents that were published in blogs, social media webpages, and journals by 25 social movement organizations or networks that were based in two Italian cities: Florence and Palermo. The two cities are experiencing similar processes of gentrification and urban transformation, and they are witness to a rich presence of social movement organizations in the three fields of study, providing a nuanced picture of these movements’ strategies and difficulties. Nevertheless, they also face different challenges due to different economic and political contexts. This variation allowed the authors to depict a broad spectrum of contemporary urban movements and conflicts in Italy. However, against the backdrop of a multilayered crisis of social reproduction, which has only been exacerbated by the experience of the pandemic, civil society initiatives and urban social movements have begun not only problematizing the increasing intersectional inequalities but are also proposing concrete alternative forms of social provision, and experimenting with innovative ways to share resources and build support networks.

Based on a process-oriented theorization of solidarity, the chapter by Sarah Schilliger examines how urban political actors in the fields of care, housing, and migrants’ rights claim, build, and institutionalize “infrastructures of solidarity” in local settings in Switzerland. Methodologically, the chapter also relies on the frame analysis approach, taking 20 documents (public statements, self-representation statements, petitions) produced by movement actors in the cities of Zürich and Bern and six public statements by the governments of the two cities as its empirical basis. Taking an infrastructural perspective on solidarity, the chapter first explores how grassroots initiatives criticize the inadequacies of existing social infrastructures and how they articulate political claims to both expand the reach and openness of public institutions and defend them against

privatization and marketization. Second, the author illuminates how grassroots initiatives engage in place-based solidarity by creating and strengthening collective structures and spaces of care in times of uncertainty. Third, the chapter examines how grassroots initiatives as well as municipal actors have tried to institutionalize solidarity practices beyond concrete temporal and spatial contexts and thus pave the way for a transformative future.

In analysing the frames, Schilliger identifies numerous interesting similarities and transversalities in the way grassroots initiatives in the three social fields engage in claiming, building, and institutionalizing infrastructures of solidarity. First, she notes how these organizations increasingly formulate their political frames in terms of (the neglect of) everyday needs. They criticize state as well as market actors for insufficiently taking care of people's basic social needs, which they blame for the growing intersectional inequalities in access to urban social infrastructures. Against this backdrop, the demand for the socialization of care and housing has gained political momentum in the two Swiss cities (showing transurban links to corresponding socialization campaigns in Germany). Instead of organizing care and housing as a commodity, urban solidarity initiatives claim that essential social needs should be accessible for all and provided through public or non-profit institutions.

The focus on everyday needs corresponds, secondly, with a specific spatial dimension in the way solidarity is built across the three social fields. A multitude of grassroots initiatives consider the neighbourhoods and spaces of everyday life as the primary terrain for social transformation: in the field of care, mothers' collectives and feminist movements promote the creation of community spaces to practise reciprocal care. A similar form of local organizing is practised in the field of housing: neighbourhood initiatives attempt to foster solidarity between tenants threatened with eviction and their neighbours, while cooperatives work to build commons-oriented housing. In the field of migrants' rights, solidarity initiatives are committed to creating spaces of encounter where people can develop a sense of belonging regardless of their citizenship status.

Third, the author observes how grassroots initiatives frame their attempts to institutionalize solidarity, either by formalizing solidarity relations through collaborations with municipalities, and/or through the development of alternative notions of citizenship. This includes political campaigns in both cities that revolve around the notion of urban citizenship, in which a person's presence in the city and belonging to

neighbourhoods is considered the criterion for the right to stay and to be included in urban social infrastructures.

Moving on, Denmark has also been witness to various social movements responding and organizing from the grassroots level in order to build a Europe “from below” as a result of an array of social, economic, and political “crises” in recent years—from the so-called 2015 European “migration crisis”, to the Covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing war in Ukraine. For many of these social movements, the concept of solidarity played a central role for their reimaginings and transformations. In the third chapter, Franz Bernhardt, Mashudu Salifu, Paola Buconjic, and Martin Bak Jørgensen build on Agustin and Jørgensen’s (2019) typology of (a) autonomous, (b) civic, and (c) institutional forms of solidarity. This theoretical framework helps to capture transformations in the articulation of newly formed (re)articulations and (re)imaginings of solidarity, but also examines the degrees to which solidarity is institutionalized as infrastructures. On the one hand, this wide-ranging theoretical framework is ideally placed to examine a variety of different forms of solidarity among different social fields. On the other hand, it also opens up the possibility of analysing various forms of solidarity not as distinct categories, but as inter-related. With this theoretical distinction in mind, this chapter builds a typology of social movement organizations in Denmark, distinguishing between more a) activist and autonomous and b) civic and institutional examples; the authors then examined these organizations for their inter-relations across the social fields of housing and migrant rights.

Their research covered five social, political, and activist movements and organizations located in three major cities in Denmark: Copenhagen, Aarhus, and Aalborg. Almen Modstand and Boligaktionen København (Copenhagen) are examples of housing initiatives, while Trampolinhuset (Copenhagen), Aarhus for solidarity and Asylforum Aalborg are examples of initiatives focusing on migrant rights. This chapter focuses on the interplays and connections between social fields, practices, social movement organizations, and forms of solidarity, rather than the differences among these aspects. It therefore investigates both housing and migrants’ rights through their close intersection with practices of care. The practice of care is understood here more broadly, as care for others and for the community (Gabauer et al., 2022). The chapter also employs frame analysis to examine the mobilizing discursive strategies of these movements and organizations, analysing the norms, beliefs, perceptions, and (re)construction of affective atmospheres. Altogether, the authors analysed 25 documents

produced by these five Danish initiatives. The documents span the range of public statements and demands, self-representations of the movements, antagonistic online and social media statements, press releases, and media articles.

Based on these theoretical reflections and empirical materials on these five social movements and organizations, the chapter then proceeds to shed light on the prognosis and diagnosis framings of the local initiatives ascribed to the social fields of housing and migrant rights, and by extension the practice of care. In this regard, it demonstrates the strong contextual interrelationships of these movements. Interestingly, the Danish government (and its restrictive, exclusionary policies) is seen as the actor causing greatest problems in both social fields (migrant rights and housing). The 2018 Parallel societies law (or Ghetto law) targeting nonprofit housing estates, and the “paradigm shift” regarding asylum policy by the Danish state constitute the distinct empirical background for antagonistic perception. Shared frames therefore centre on problematizing the role of the Danish state in those fields, though the privatization and the profit orientation of housing also come in for criticism. Moreover, the state’s assault on (or sometimes absence of) strong democratic, civic, and institutional solidarities, as well as its lack of participation in those infrastructures, are equally noted as major contributing factors to the diagnosis. On the other hand, the suggested prognosis lies often in active and committed mobilization by local social movements against these exclusionary and restrictive migration and housing policies, as well as in the socialization of institutional infrastructures. Against this backdrop, this chapter then explores how the articulations and framings of solidarities through these local social movements amidst this array of simultaneous crises, may also create new forms of citizenship from below, for example through the creation of new collective political subjectivation.

In a similar manner, the chapter by Jo Gerdes, Mouna Maaroufi, and Helge Schwiertz examines the discursive frames of social movement organizations and civil society initiatives in Berlin and Hamburg in Germany, focusing on the challenges these groups faced amidst a proliferation of crises in recent years. Their research also explores the fields of housing, care work, and migrant rights, revealing various manifestations of these crises. While the financialization of the housing market and a slowly escalating housing crisis have long affected European cities, recent factors such as rising prices due to global supply chain disruptions and increasing income inequalities have exacerbated substandard living conditions and

posed a growing threat of homelessness. In particular, the Covid-19 pandemic has shown that these housing issues impair households' and societies' capacities to protect health and provide care. The healthcare crisis, as highlighted by coalitions of organized hospital workers, has deeper roots, including the privatization and commercialization of healthcare provision as part of neoliberal restructuring starting in the early 2000s. Furthermore, self-organized groups of migrants, along with solidarity initiatives, face a criminalizing migration regime that increases precarity in the labour market. This in turn further intensifies the housing and healthcare crises for individuals affected by intersecting forms of discrimination. In these deepening multiple crises, social movements are agents of change, but they also produce knowledge and incisive discourses that analyse these developments, challenging dominant narratives and formulating alternatives. In this chapter, the authors therefore investigate these social movement diagnoses and prognoses based on a frame analysis of public calls and self-representations of 25 civil society initiatives, campaigns, and groups active in the fields of care work, housing, and migrant rights in Berlin and Hamburg. The scope and focus of these groups vary, ranging from city-wide campaigns and coalitions to neighbourhood initiatives and self-organized groups of migrants, renters, and care workers.

Articulating theoretical approaches of commoning and collective political subjectivation, the authors highlight multifaceted claims for the deprivatization and socialization of problems and for solutions that challenge ideologies of capitalist markets and states as well as the narrative of the self-responsible citizen. What connects the framings across those fields is, in particular, a resistance to the dominant neoliberal individualization of social problems. Within the diagnostic framings, they follow discursive strategies of deprivatization that frame supposedly individual problems as in fact societal problems. This results in an identification of common concerns and the commoning of problems in processes of collective political subjectivation. In the prognostic framings, the chapter explores how concepts of commoning and political subjectivation resonate with approaches to socialization. Based on their definition of the problems, these organizations then develop alternative solutions with them. This entails collective approaches to countering prevalent isolation and fragmentation through new ways of producing the commons; the commoning of social infrastructures through the socialization of care or housing, as well as the commoning of community infrastructures through the self-organization of migrant, care, or housing collectives. Gerdes, Maaroufi, and Schwiertz interpret

these framings as discursive practices of relational and contentious solidarity, making interdependencies visible and enabling those affected to break out of isolation and build collective (infra)structures. Based their empirical analysis, they call for a more precise understanding of the practices, relations, and infrastructures of solidarity through the concepts of commoning and political subjectivation, while also arguing for connecting these debates.

Moving to a different context, the chapter by Marko Ribač presents a study of discursive differences in the existing and evolving distinctive forms of solidarity elaborated by 25 social movement initiatives in the two largest Slovenian cities, Ljubljana and Maribor. The chapter focuses on discourses of local political and activist initiatives in three “communities of struggle” in Slovenia: in the social fields of migrant rights, housing, and care work. Like the other case studies, these three fields all have different historical developments, institutional architectures, patterns of alliances, and social exclusions, as well as different repertoires of contention. Moreover, all three fields are differently affected by the multiple crises. Different forms of solidarity manifest themselves in each field, with broader relevance in Slovenian politics and activism: autonomous solidarity in the field of housing, civic solidarity in the field of migration, and institutional solidarity in the field of care.

The first section of the chapter singles out the diverging forms of solidarity, which emerge as a result of the ways local social movement organizations promote specific understandings of social problems (diagnostic frames) and in ways in which they formulate or propose solutions (prognostic frames) to address those problems. While activists in the migrant field problematize securitized and racialized border regimes, police violence, and the exclusionary nature of citizenship, institutional solidarity discourses in the field of care articulate the injustices in struggles of labour and between generations, thus leaving borders, citizenship, and transnational as well as municipal struggles unquestioned. Neoliberal financialization facilitated by authoritarian municipal authorities are the focus of framing injustices in the housing field, where autonomous forms of solidarity frame commoning, the infrastructure of care in urban spaces, the building of alternatives “from below” and the democratization of the city. This section also marks differences in affective framing (frame resonance or frame divergence) among fields, identifies crucial antagonistic groups, and examines the atmospheric/normative dimension in the movement’s

letters. This reflection helps determine how solidarities are reproduced and maintained when social movement organizations address the publics.

The second section of the chapter examines “transversal connections” among similar and comparable groups in these diverse, and internationalized, contentious social fields. The section compares translocal links and framing(s) of solidarity by social movement initiatives in the other four European countries covered by the research to examine various motivating and mobilizing discursive strategies that similar and interlinked activist initiatives integrate in their rhetoric or apply in their immediate affective environment in different contexts and places (while experiencing similar crises). The conclusion discusses to what extent the imagining of solidarity, the enacting of political activism, and the inventing of movement strategies are affected by international and translocal connections, or if they instead evolve in a more closed, localized (nationally determined) setting that can be traced to the internal histories and national development of three social fields under examination.

In the concluding chapter, we develop a translocal perspective of analysis that goes beyond the city-based case studies. To this end, we first take a comparative perspective to discuss similarities and differences in the framing of solidarity in the various cities and the three fields against the background of local and field-specific formations of the polycrisis. We then develop some general theoretical reflections which go beyond the results of the empirical research in addressing some main concepts and the related debates introduced in the first chapter. First, we examine how the different framings of the initiatives point to a new scaling of political engagement. The focus here is not so much on policy change at the national scale, but on the struggle for social change starting from and in relation to the local level. Second, we suggest that new political subjectivities originate in local communities, where the collective identification as inhabitants and residents of a city or neighbourhood partly transcends existing identities. We discuss this nexus of political practices and subjectivities in relation to new “acts of citizenship” and other performative citizenship concepts, while at the same time exploring the limits and extensions of these with respect to concepts of care and the commons. Thirdly and finally, we discuss a revision and extension of the concept of solidarity based on our research findings. We show how the political conjunctures of the polycrisis relate to the refocusing on local solidarities that do not start from a homogenous community and abstract demands, but rather fuel diverse coalitions in the local and through specific antagonisms that generate heterogeneous

subjectivities of dispute and mutual care. We conclude the chapter by discussing the potentials and pitfalls of translocal and intersectional relations of the different initiatives and outline directions for further research.

Acknowledgements This book is an outcome of our Europe-wide collaboration on the research project Enacting Citizenship and Solidarity in Europe “From Below”: Local Initiatives, Intersectional Strategies and Transnational Networks [ECSEuro] (2022–2025, funded by Volkswagen Foundation; website: <https://europefrombelow.net>).

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Solidarity as Care: Multidimensional Inequalities and Narratives in Italian Cities

Carlotta Caciagli and Donatella della Porta

1 INTRODUCTION

Solidarity is a core concern for progressive movements that address “claims for broader inclusion of citizens and reducing domination within and across national borders” (Ypi, 2011). Indeed, solidarity is a fundamental factor in achieving “the liberation (or ‘emancipation’) of collectivities (for example: citizens, classes, nations, minorities, income categories, even mankind), be it the liberation from want, ignorance, exploitative relations, or the freedom of such collectives to govern themselves autonomously, that is, without being dependent upon or controlled by others” (Offe,

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M. Pajnik et al. (eds.), *Framing Solidarities in Times of Multiple Crises*, Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-82563-7_2

2011, pp. 79–80). For social movements all around the world, solidarity is a practice that plays a crucial role in forging collective actors by creating new imaginaries and enforcing proximal relationship in space (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). It is not by chance that this notion has come to be at the core of urban studies and urban social movements (Caciagli, 2020).

The centrality of solidarity increases during periods of crisis, such as the economic and financial crisis of 2008 and the pandemic crisis of 2020. During periods of emergency, the forms of commitment of social movements are channelled in the direction of an intensification of actions oriented towards the principles of mutual help and care, which can reshape the boundaries of traditional forms of participation from below. As noted in relation to the so-called long Summer of migration of 2015, “times of crises have increasingly blurred the lines between contentious and non-contentious forms of civil society engagement” (della Porta & Steinhilper, 2020, p. 176) through a combination of “voluntary non-profit activities on one hand and social movements and political activism on the other” (ibid.). This hybrid approach to solidarity has enlarged the repertoires of action of social movements, often producing cognitive innovation and increasing the contentious potential of different types of social actions. Migrant mobilizations represent paradigmatic examples of this.

Sociological analyses on the contention of migrants’ rights in periods of crisis have demonstrated that although humanitarianism, with its “moderate frames”, is characterized by “emergency assistance”, critical solidarity aims at achieving “social justice” (della Porta & Steinhilper, 2020, p. 178). Acts of solidarity disrupt routines and often challenge the existing order, becoming expressions of “activist citizenship” (Yarwood, 2014; Schwiertz & Schwenken, 2020; della Porta & Steinhilper, 2020; Ataç et al., 2016; Isin, 2009) within “new sites of struggle”, which enact new types of “rights, sites, scales and acts” (Isin, 2009, p. 368). Consequently, activist citizenship is promoted as acting “beyond the established status of citizenship” (Schwiertz & Schwenken, 2020, p. 496) representing an “act of citizenship” that converges with that performed by migrants when they cross national borders and claim the right to do so in the name of justice (della Porta, 2018). During periods of crisis and the fragmentation of collective identities, forms of solidarity are considered to have a crucial role in subject formation, as they have the potential to bring together people (Standing, 2011) that are exploited in different ways but find themselves in the same place and at the same time, which is a necessary condition for practising solidarity (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). Due to the fact that

solidarity is rooted in the local, urban spaces provide an ideal context in which to study the various meanings and forms of solidarity. Nevertheless, the relationship between different socio-spatial contexts and the multiple avenues of solidarity is a complex subject, and one that is far from being completely explained. This chapter aims to fill this gap.

The research presented here explores the link between solidarity and local areas by analysing how urban movements in Italy narrate their solidarity initiatives in the three fields in which they are most heavily active: migration, housing and care. More specifically, by looking at the diagnostic, prognostic and motivational framing (Benford & Snow, 2000) of these movements, it sheds light on how solidarity and contentious actions are tied up in the strategies of collective actors dealing with contemporary urban transformation and global challenges. The research is based on an in-depth analysis of self-produced documents that have been published on blogs, social media webpages and in journals by social movements and civil society organizations that are based in two Italian cities: Florence and Palermo. The two cities are comparable because they are both experiencing similar processes of urban transformation (such as gentrification and touristification) that increase the vulnerability of the local population. Moreover, they are notable for the presence of activism in the three fields of study discussed here, providing a rich picture of the strategies employed by these movements and the difficulties they face. However, it must be noted that they also face different challenges due to their different historical and geographical contexts. This variation has made it possible to provide a broad overview of how contemporary urban movements frame solidarity and the main challenges they face in doing so.

The chapter is organized as follows. In the following section we will develop our theoretical framework, drawing on three stands of literature: critical solidarity studies, studies on commons and studies around care. In the third section we will present the research design and the frame-analysis that were employed. In the fourth and fifth sections we will provide an overall perspective of diagnostic and prognostic frames respectively. Following this, in the sixth section we will discuss the renewed notion of care that emerges from the narratives of social movements. This will be followed, in the seventh section, by a comparative discussion of Palermo and Florence, before providing some conclusions that will pave the way for further studies.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: ENACTING CITIZENSHIP THROUGH SOLIDARITY AND CARE

Periods of crisis not only enlarge the field of solidarity, but they also challenge consolidated conceptualizations, such as those of citizenship and citizens' rights. According to Isin and Nyers (2014, p. 3), citizenship involves both the combination of rights and duties in each polity (as it derives from the outcome of social struggle) and the performance of citizenship. Critical studies on citizenship have looked at the practices through which status has been contested by collective organizations and subjectivities formed, not only through an analysis of routines and rituals, but also customs, norms and habits (Isin, 2008). Therefore, claims to citizenship, beyond the awarding of legal status, also fundamentally address issues of social and political recognition as well as economic redistribution (Isin & Turner, 2007). Critical citizenship studies have stressed the fact that for migrants protest is an act of citizenship *per se*, as it involves putting forward claims to insider status through which political subjects are formed and speak up, overcoming silence and illegitimacy. As Engin Isin (2008, p. 18) has argued, citizenship can be reclaimed as a source of political potential if it is understood in terms of acts of citizenship—that is, “performance, enactments and events” (Walters, 2008, p. 192) through which subjects transform themselves into citizens. Solidarity is what allows these actions to be carried out on a collective basis through acts of citizenship that help to create new scripts.

Moving beyond the field of migration, critical solidarity can be conceived as an act of citizenship as it enacts a universal vision of empowerment through not only claims, but also direct social actions that provide a grassroots response to needs that have been neglected by institutions. More specifically, solidarity has been at the core of many social movement organizations acting on an urban scale, which is the scale on which people organize their daily lives and experience difficulties and exploitation. In this context, the notion of critical solidarity resonates with the concept of “urban commons, which refers to a way “of collective self-organization outside capitalistic logic” (Huron, 2015, p. 963). References to the “urban commons” combine the urban dimension with the concept of the commons as a resource that is collectively owned and/or managed by members and that is valued not for its monetary or exchange value but for its everyday, horizontal use (Nonini, 2007). Therefore, the urban commons is conceived of both as a social process (Linebaugh, 2008) and as a

physical space (Federici, 2010), nurturing an alternative to the profit-oriented understanding of the city. The urban commons are theorized, with various nuances, as the daily engagement against the neoliberal urban fabric, implying the construction of a space that deals with the reproduction of an alternative paradigm (Caciagli & Milan, 2021).

The concept of the urban commons, which is used in the self-representation of many collective organizations, implies an activation from below that relies on a sense of belonging to a place, within a horizontal and grassroots model for managing resources. In addition, experiences that can be inserted into this framework refer to a community. Indeed, the term commons does not refer to a sum of citizens, but rather to a group of individuals that have solidarity ties and similar values. In this sense, it goes hand in hand with a redefinition of the legal notion of citizenship as relating to nationality. A similar development of contentious solidarity as acts of a reworked and place-based meaning of citizenship has characterized the pandemic. During the pandemic, new groups and networks emerged at a very local level aimed at providing immediate assistance to those within the population who were in need. As we will see in what follows, the pandemic had the effect of worsening the conditions of marginalized groups, but also of broadening the potential constituency to new social groups that had become impoverished in terms of material resources as well as their rights as citizens (della Porta, 2022).

During the pandemic, and in its aftermath, the conceptualization of the urban commons has also been closely connected to the notion of care, which took on a very central role in public discourse. In particular, grassroots actors proposed a renewed meaning of care within the urban commons. While the lack of care has been considered one of the causes of the health crisis, the development of a society of care has been presented as a solution by many grassroots actors. The concept of care, which is rooted in feminist social reproduction theory, refers to a form of reproductive labour that is essential for surviving the effects of capitalism (della Costa & James, 1975; dalla Costa, 2019; Federici, 2004). As Mary Daly (2021, p. 109) explains, “[t]he domestic division of labor and social reproduction were concepts developed to place care in the context of economic and other forms of power. Unpaid care labor was analyzed as part of ‘the family under capitalism’”. Moreover, feminist analyses have addressed the growing care labour market at the global level, in which care work is globally mobile, impacting upon patterns of migration and increasing inequality along gender, class and race lines through the outsourcing

of care work from the Global North to the Global South (Daly, 2020; Hochschild, 2000).

Something that is closely related to this is the extension of the concept of care to the environment, which was originally developed by ecofeminists and later embraced by the climate justice movement, and stresses the fundamental task of taking care of the earth, non-human animals and nature (Mies & Shiva, 1993). Care is conceptualized, therefore, as a means of relating to others and to “our world” through the ethical outlook and moral values attached to the process of caring—including the importance of interdependency and vulnerability (Gilligan, 1982). It has already been noted that:

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic the concept of care spread, becoming a bridging concern, being adopted by many collective actors, but also by national governments and companies. This broad reference to care is certainly linked to the tragically visible importance of care services in our health systems, with the acknowledgment of the essentiality of care workers, being applauded for many months as the new heroes of our times. Moreover, it refers to other forms of caring that became part of our pandemic everyday life, such as social distancing and self-isolation, building upon forms of collective action centered on care, such as mutual aid and solidarity networks. On a more general level, the idea of a democracy (or society) of care gained traction internationally, also as a desirable alternative to the logics and practices of a neoliberal world. (della Porta & Lavizzari, 2022)

Thus, in the public discourse, care was framed not only as care work aimed at helping vulnerable people, but also as the relationships that allow human beings to live meaningful lives (Dowling, 2021). Not by chance, Tronto and Fisher (1990, p. 10) have described care as “everything that we do to maintain, continue and repair our world so that we can live in it as well as possible”. In this process, care has been placed at the core of claims for citizenship rights. For example, as Casas-Cortés (2019) has shown in their analysis of Spanish social movements over recent decades, the concept of *care-tizenship*, developed by feminist movements, has become a core concern for many different struggles, such as migrant rights movements and precarious workers struggles. At the same time, fruitful connections have been developed between feminist studies focusing on care and urban studies (Gabauer et al., 2021). Space has a dual importance in relation to care. Firstly, the inefficiencies of care regimes became most visible on a local level, namely where people live and look for services and opportunities.

Secondly, the alternative relationship of care, which movements are both seeking and providing, needs to be developed in close proximity to the local population.

The acknowledgement of the spatial dimension of care has encouraged many social movements to further explore the link between cities and care. The notion of care challenges not only the limits of an exclusive understanding of citizenship, but also the centrality of urban space as the most important element when considering the local dimension. Linking care and the environment, many movement organizations are increasingly paying attention to small towns and rural areas as core spaces for capital accumulation and dispossession. Indeed, the effects of our model of production are not only impacting on cities, through dynamics of touristification and gentrification, but also other areas, where environmental issues are becoming increasingly serious. Indeed, these locations are often targeted as places where large infrastructural projects, with negative climate and environmental impacts, can be constructed to serve the needs of urban residents. In this sense, care is intersectional not only in terms of fields, but also in terms of types of spaces.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Referring to these notions of critical solidarity as connected to concepts of acts of citizenship, urban commons and care, this chapter explores the narratives of Italian urban movements in three fields of intervention: migration, housing and care activities. In particular, through frame-analysis it aims to shed light on how solidarity and contention are entangled in the activities of locally based collective actors dealing with contemporary urban transformation and global challenges. The research covers solidarity initiatives enacted by various types of grassroots organizations in two Italian cities: Florence and Palermo. These two cities are both currently experiencing similar processes of gentrification, which is worsening the living conditions of their inhabitants and increasing the number of vulnerable people. They also both have a wealth of collective organizations working in the three fields of study considered here. Nevertheless, they also face different challenges due to their different socio-political contexts, which makes it possible to carry out a comparison between Southern Italy and North-Central Italy. The former is characterized by the fact that development took place at a later stage than in other regions and was dominated by clientelist politics, while the latter was traditionally

characterized by a dynamic district economy and a communist “red” territorial subculture, both of which are now in decline.

The frame-analysis has been conducted on 25 documents produced by 25 collective organizations or networks active in Florence and Palermo (the complete list can be found in appendix 1). We have selected content that deals with issues related to at least one of the three fields the research has focused on (care, housing, migration). Of the 25 selected documents, 14 have been produced by organizations based in Florence, 10 by organizations based in Palermo and 1 by a national organization (Fridays for Future) that is present in both cities. With regard to the topics addressed, 8 of the documents are related to migrants’ rights, 5 deal with housing and 12 discuss care, as conceived in its broader meaning and touching on various issues, such as health care, care of local areas and neighbourhoods, care of the planet, etc.

The documents include public statements, self-presentations, public calls, and texts published on blogs and social media web pages. In order to provide a proper representation of the heterogeneity that exists in such cities, we have selected documents produced by different types of collective groups: associations, social movement associations, squats, grassroots trade unions and other such bodies. This selection does not perfectly mirror the relevance of these groups in the urban fabric, as the selected collectives were chosen also considering the volume of their online output. The documents selected were published between 2020 and 2023, in order to address the impact of the pandemic but also to depict the approach of these collectives to the global financial crisis. For each text we identified diagnostic and prognostic frames.

By carrying out multiple readings of these documents, we have singled out a number of main characteristics in how the causes of the problems faced by the constituencies are defined (diagnostic frames), the solutions for these problems are presented (prognostic frames) and calls for action are issued (motivational framing) (Benford & Snow, 2000). Following an initial reading oriented at conducting a quantitative analysis, all of the documents were then read again with the purpose of deepening our understanding of the three abovementioned dimensions and the role each one played.

4 THE DIAGNOSTIC FRAME: THE ROLE OF INSTITUTIONS IN FOSTERING THE EFFECTS OF THE PANDEMIC

If we focus first on the diagnostic aspect, it can be observed that in all three of these fields the various collective actors stress the responsibility of institutions, especially local (regional or municipal) institutions, to a greater extent than market dynamics. In all three fields, a clear focus is placed on the increasing injustice produced and reproduced by the multiple crises. In most of the documents the various forms of inequality are connected with each other from an intersectional perspective, which views the multiple manifestations of crisis as individual parts of a bigger picture. The main problem identified by most organizations in all three fields is unequal access to rights and services. The second most commonly mentioned problem is inadequate resource distribution, followed by the neglect of public spaces and neoliberalism more generally. Criminalization and the repression of solidarity actions is also listed as one of the most significant problems, as is the profit-orientated nature of politics.

These main diagnostic frames go hand in hand with who is identified as the main actor responsible for the perceived problems. In many of the documents analysed, the social movement organizations identify political institutions as the principal actors of the crisis, more so than market actors, such as financial bodies or large property owners. Although the deregulated market is often mentioned in the documents, it plays a secondary role in the narratives. Instead, institutions, and particularly local and regional ones, are targeted as the main actors that are responsible for the effects of the crisis on people's lives. This occurs even when the documents address global phenomena, such as the financialization of cities, the pandemic and environmental issues. There is a clear focus on institutions by activists, who, conversely, assign a marginal role to political parties. The inadequacy of institutions is considered to have an impact on all of the inhabitants of the two cities considered here, although certain categories are more harshly affected than others. Indeed, solidarity is described as being oriented towards the needs of the "invisible". The categories listed as being most severely affected by Covid-19, for example, include undocumented migrants, asylum seekers, migrants working in precarious jobs and women suffering from domestic abuse. In this direction, the pandemic is more often framed as a social emergency than a health emergency.

The in-depth, qualitative analysis of the diagnostic framing reveals the ways in which the critical notion of citizens is articulated. First of all, in

referring to citizens, the documents do not address legal status, but rather focus on the daily participation of people in the life of the neighbourhood and the city. This approach can be clearly seen in the Florentine group Covid Clandestino, a network of various organizations that have been operating in Florence for many years (social centres, Senegalese representation groups and many others) and which was founded during the pandemic to collect and distribute food and medication to people in need. As a consequence, Covid Clandestino explains its solidarity actions through similarly broad descriptions, linking individuals from very different backgrounds who are united by the precarious nature of their situations.

Living through the emergency has not been the same for everyone. It is one thing to go through this experience living in a villa, and quite another thing to do so in a two-room apartment that you are forced to share with four other people, or along with eighty other people in a refugee centre. It is equally different for those dealing with legal insecurity while waiting for their situation to be regularized. The fear of a police check while you are doing the grocery shopping, the possibility of gaining access to a GP or attending the hospital without the fear of being asked for ID. None of these aspects is the same for everyone. However, it is especially the case for those who are working off the books and have no access to the welfare and other emergency measures put in place for workers. This is the case, for example, for street vendors, uncontracted bricklayers, and the thousands of undocumented workers who, in addition to being exploited on a daily basis and kept on the margins, now find themselves unable to access even the basic necessities. (12F)

In the field of migration, in particular, the lack of social rights is often considered to coalesce with a lack of political rights, both of which can only be reappropriated through political action. Thus, the Forum Antirazzista in Palermo (4P) points to the fact that the pandemic, followed by the war in Ukraine have worsened social inequalities, with Covid-19 having a particularly drastic effect on those who are trying to flee war and famine. As the group states:

We are living in truly unprecedented times, in which the emergency triggered by Covid-19 has caused and continues to cause a number of significant consequences for a large part of the population, but once again, especially for those who don't have much of a voice, who continue to be rendered invisible, and whose rights continue to be treated like waste paper. (4P)

They particularly stigmatize the fact that those who are trying to reach Europe by crossing the Mediterranean sea have been affected by the cynical use of the pandemic emergency to implement a European policy of “containment and rejection in the name of security, which has now taken on the banner of health security but merely continues a trend in policies aimed at pushing people back and militarizing borders”. They then conclude that “We are not coming out of this pandemic as better people”.

The intersectional challenges to citizens—as inhabitants of the cities—are also expressed with reference to the precarious situation of migrant workers. This can be seen in the case of Si Cobas, a grassroots trade union that is particularly active in the textile and logistic sector in the industrial areas surrounding Florence. Due to the high percentage of migrant workers in this sector, the Si Cobas campaign bridged workers’ and migrant struggles, often pointing to the fact that the intertwining of various levels of exploitation led them to merge with one another. As part of their action in support of Pakistani workers who were fired because they refused to work 12 hours per day, 7 days a week, the Prato and Florence branch of the Si Cobas union issued a call to action, in order to:

Break the wall of invisibility around exploitation in the textile district, for the reinstatement of the 22 workers laid off by #IronLogistics, for those who have already won an 8 hour day, for those who are still working 12 hours, and for those who are being blackmailed into working 4 hours a day on fake, part-time contracts because they joined a union. (13F)

Indeed, the claims for labour rights recall the demands made by the labour movement in the nineteenth century, including a 40-hour week, the right to sick leave, not to mention the right to organize. Thus, migrant working conditions are linked to broader injustices in terms of the denial of not only social, but also civil and political rights. The labour protest campaign carried out by the migrant workers is, in fact, presented by the Prato and Florence Si Cobas union as addressing not only labour rights but also the wider conditions faced by migrants as part of a “struggle that contains so many other [problems]”. Working conditions are framed as being linked to citizenship rights and, therefore, the work-place struggles conducted by Si Cobas are conceived of as struggles for citizenship, as can be seen in this call for action:

For all our brothers and sisters who work 12 hours a day, every day. For the delays and abuses you have suffered from the Questura in your residence applications. For our children, who do not have citizenship in the country they are growing up in. For the houses that they won't rent to you if you are a foreigner or, when they do, they force you to pay more. For everyone and everything. For a better life [...] The movement needs this area as much as this area needs this movement. To an end to the "special economic zone", a zone free from labour rights and dignity. The 8 × 5 movement is teaching us about a new bond of solidarity, so that we are no longer afraid, so that we no longer feel alone: you touch one of us, you touch us all. [...] this is a system they have built on fear. On the fear of working people. And without that fear, this system has no future. (13F)

Calling for solidarity, Si Cobas refers to the local territory in two ways: as the workers living in Florence and the surrounding area and as the physical space that companies are damaging from a social and environmental point of view.

Actors that have traditionally been engaged in housing rights have also sought to broaden their fields of intervention. This has seen them systematically bridge the pandemic crisis with the war in Ukraine and rising inflation rates, which they see as the most important factors in explaining current issues relating to housing. In Florence, the squatted centre in Via del Leone, which has long been involved in anti-eviction and anti-gentrification activities, organized the "We Won't Pay" protest campaign, aimed at "raising awareness and involving as many people as possible in the fight against rising utility bills and more generally against the cost of living brought about by privatization, new accumulation processes in local services [...] speculation, war and inflation for which all governments are responsible" (3F). The effects of neoliberal policies are stigmatized by the activists as follows:

Only wages and pensions are going down. Today these costs have become unsustainable: millions of families will be forced to choose between buying groceries and paying for heating, between paying their rent or mortgage and buying clothes for themselves and their children. It is time to say enough is enough! In order to say this, it is time to DO! We aim to support all of those who will not be able to pay their bills against the arrogance of the energy giants that threaten to disconnect our utilities and the robbery enacted by debt collection companies. (3F)

Pointing to the broadening constituency of people in need of decent housing conditions, the group presents itself as “People like you”:

If we were career politicians we would propose solutions that sound easy but are false. Since we are people like you, however, we will tell you that a group of sympathetic lawyers are working to find the best forms of protection and ways in which you can reduce your bills. (3F)

Along the same lines, Fridays for Future frames the climate crisis as being linked to social inequalities:

The people who are most affected by the consequences of the climate crisis are still being silenced: think of migrants, who are exploited or treated as scum, but also those workers who initially were praised, only to be swiftly sacrificed on the altar of the never-ending crisis, as if it is their duty to accept lower wages and precarious conditions. Meanwhile, those in power still seem to devote all of their time to distracting, delaying and denying the necessary changes that lie ahead. CO2 emissions are not being reduced, and instead continue to rise. The world continues to expand fossil fuel infrastructure and pour astronomical amounts of money into the coffers of a few corporations, all in the name of their improved profits, with profits reaching as high as 700% of normal levels. (10F_P)

Addressing the ever increasing number of emergencies, the community of Le Piagge, which is a civic organization active in a working-class area of Florence, criticized the local administration and described its activities as “an attempt to rebuild dignity in a part of the city in which the local situation, urban planning choices and institutional forgetfulness have created social, environmental and relational complexities within which, very often, residents are unable to make their voices heard” (4F).

A similar call was issued by the squatted social centre Anomalia, located in the Borgo Vecchio working-class neighbourhood in the city centre of Palermo. In one of their social media statements, the activists described the organization of cleaning activities in their area as follows:

Given the lack of interest shown by the local authorities, our community engages and responds to its needs from below, through spontaneous solidarity actions aimed at defending our neighbourhood and the space we navigate and live in on a daily basis. We will never stop calling out the institutions, who in their mismanagement of the city, demonstrate the fact that they consider us to be second class citizens. (3P)

In sum, in diagnosing the problems faced by their communities, the many movement organizations examined here focus on the increasing injustice produced by the emergence of successive crises, which impinge upon the commodification of rights by neoliberal capitalism. In this framework, solidarity is not only presented as a return to the welfare state, but also as the attainment of civic and political rights for marginalized social groups. As we will see in the following sections, this transformation can be analysed by looking at how concepts of an intersectional definition of inequalities are combined with reflections on care as a solution to such issues.

5 THE PROGNOSTIC FRAMES: THE CLAIMS FOR THE COMMONS

If we turn now to consider the prognostic framing, it can be seen that all of the various types of organizations point to the importance of self-organization, in all of its myriad forms. Self-organization is not only considered in relation to the organizing of protest, but even more so, in terms of its capacity to address the highlighted challenges. In the documents examined, self-organization and empowerment are mentioned 14 times as the instruments that are available to people to solve the problems they are faced with (quoted 14 times), followed by social struggle (9), mutual-aid (7) and community work (5). A needs-based approach, notably in relation to health care, is mentioned 4 times. In most of the documents, self-organization is presented as the basis of social change, as it focuses on equal rights and mutualism as opposed to the individualistic and profit-oriented approach of institutional processes. The potential for societal change is also present in documents addressing specific issues: even when place-based solutions are sought, groups describe their actions as expressions of social conflict, something that is also evident in the statements by actors that have traditionally not been engaged in contentious politics. The actors that are considered to be responsible for change are grassroots actors such as networks and social movement organizations, alongside the local inhabitants, who are mostly described as “people who help” or “people who bring solidarity”. Even in the case of proposed solutions, political parties and politicians are rarely mentioned, in spite of the demands for public policies and the conception of politics more broadly to be transformed.

The local dimension plays a crucial role in the diagnostic framing, as the urban space represents the ideal scale on which to claim rights and perform acts of solidarity. The beneficiaries of solutions are referred to as “inhabitants”, in contrast to how they are often referred to in public claims: namely, “vulnerable people”, “migrants”, “refugees” and “citizens”. In this regard, even though the crisis may affect certain social groups more than others, the benefits of constructing alternative models will be reaped by all of the people inhabiting the local area. This can be seen in the documents dealing with the consequences of the pandemic. In these, social movement organizations framed a renewed right to care for inhabitants within a wider denunciation of the severe consequences of the commodification of health in terms of cuts to the public healthcare system, the privatization of services, outsourcing and precarity. Thus, the Camilo Cienfuegos social centre in Florence criticized the fact that:

In Italy, in the course of just a few years, 35 billion euro of health funding, 70,000 beds and 50,000 staff have been lost, a large number of hospitals, local clinics and health centres have been closed, access to medicine has been restricted, and authorities have freely resorted to precarious employment practices through temping agencies and employing staff on self-employed and irregular contracts, all in the name of austerity policies. Private health care has been financed through contractual and corporate welfare and, above all, with downward procurement at the expense of safety. The cleaning of hospitals and clinics, services such as ambulances, home care and mental health, long-term healthcare and assisted living centres have almost completely been outsourced, with private managers employing underpaid, under-trained workers who are easily blackmailed due to the constant fear of losing their job. (14F)

Health care is not addressed as a public service as such, but rather as a right that nowadays is denied to everybody. In most of the documents this is related to the shortcomings of the ever-shrinking welfare state, which becomes a clear claim in the statements made by the majority of movement organizations. Through this lens it is possible to understand the crucial importance social movement organizations place on state intervention.

In the narratives presented by social movement organizations they make a clear distinction between the long- and short-term perspectives in achieving the desired social change. Indeed, when referring to immediate solutions, the documents often call for the intervention of local

institutions, even to solve problems that originate on a national and a supranational level, such as the effects of the pandemic. In particular, the negative effects of global crises are associated with short-sighted policies at a local level. One example of this can be seen with regard to the local administration of Florence, which is criticized for having sold off public assets that would have been particularly useful during the pandemic, when homeless and vulnerable people living in precarious housing conditions were also subject to shelter-in-place orders. As one document signed by the Anti-eviction Network of Florence states:

Every municipal asset, building, parcel of land, factory, and hospital has been sold off to developers, speculators, in short to big sharks who are building student halls, hotels or tourist accommodation then left empty cathedrals in the desert. And that now remains for us to occupy. (2F)

Criticizing local policies, the Anti-eviction Network also pointed to the need to squat empty buildings in order to “Put an end to a situation characterized by people without houses and houses without people” (2F). Along the same lines, the Movement for Housing Rights in Florence, denounced the housing emergency and the “New poverty related to the pandemic”, promoting care as a means of addressing the problems of migration, housing and precarity as a whole:

...because they have lost their jobs or because of drastic reductions in their hours. Many are caregivers caring for the elderly in our families, many are bricklayers on construction sites where they build houses they will never be able to live in. Workers, not squatters or illegal immigrants but people who pay hefty taxes on their meagre paychecks. (5F)

Citizens, therefore, are framed not as vulnerable individuals in need of protection, but as local inhabitants and, specifically, users of urban services. In this and similar documents, inhabiting and caring are strongly connected. In the call to care, the connection between health services and residency is bridged with the housing crisis, given the fact that evictions also cause people to lose access to health care. At the same time, the diminishing rights of workers in the health sector are mentioned by the Camillo Cienfuegos social centre:

Healthcare workers, who were held up as heroes during the emergency, are now harassed and gagged by corporate loyalty obligations through sanctions and layoffs. What's more, emergency hiring measures, introduced to cope with the emergency, means that many workers in the sector are still faced with a future of precariousness, with both the regions and the Conte¹ government dusting off precarious contracts for community nurses and the spectre of possible layoffs in outsourced facilities such as Assisted Living Centres, Daycare Centres, Home Care, bringing us back to the low levels of more fossil energy use are indispensable pre-Covid employment. (14F)

The Borgo Vecchio neighbourhood clinic, which opened within the Anomalia social centre in the city centre of Palermo, is also concerned with health rights and the challenges brought about by the pandemic. They have called for a crowdsourcing approach in order to "Strengthen local medicine by claiming, universally, the right to healthcare". The calls for institutional intervention, for people to become active and for solidarity are also combined in documents such as that produced by the Forum Antirazzista in Palermo, in which it is stated that:

We support the legislative intervention for the regularization of those on Italian territory indiscriminately, not only in favour of 'useful hands and arms.' We believe that an organic reform of legislation on immigration that includes the cancellation of the security and immigration decrees is imperative. We call on the government and all institutional levels, including the mayor of our city, to take courageous steps, to keep their promises of discontinuity, to look around and understand that if the virus and the state of emergency have served any purpose, it is to make us understand that what we were experiencing was not 'normality' at all, but a condition of inhumanity and exploitation that we finally have the opportunity to heal! (1P)

In this sense, the pandemic intensified exploitation across various fields, but also enabled social movement organizations to develop encompassing narratives that bridged struggles that had often been carried out separately. This shift was also connected to a new, broader meaning of care, which often emerges as care for both people and local areas, linking environmental and healthcare issues.

This interconnection emerges especially in the narratives of feminist movement organizations. For example, the local chapter of the national

¹ Giuseppe Conte was the prime minister of Italy during the Pandemic crisis.

feminist movement *Non Una di Meno* in Palermo promoted a parade to defend the right to abortion on social media using the following words:

We will march to talk about welfare [...] and say one more time that our bodies will never be the subject of political propaganda carried out by those who take advantage of gender violence to nurture islamophobia and racism. We will march because in this context of social, economic and environmental crisis our bodies are still a field of struggle. The attack on our rights is stronger during a crisis and it is even worse during a war, when salaries are hit by inflation. (4P)

The need to bridge different struggles through the lens of the commons is particularly evident when activists narrate their opposition to attempts by public institutions and private enterprises to use greenwashing in dealing with the climate emergency. This can be seen, for instance in a joint call launched by the Fridays for Future movement and the Collective of the Workers of the Former GKN, a collective formed in 2021 by steelworkers at GKN who resisted the closure of their factory, and which has since become a reference point for many local mobilizations over the past three years. The document stated that:

In a real ecological transition, polluting labour will gradually cease to exist: no longer will work be done at the expense of rights, the environment, health and peace - instead it will go through a democratic redefinition of what it is really necessary to produce, defining models of production, processing and consumption that serve the community rather than capital, within the limits of the planet's biocapacity. (9F)

The call included demands to reduce working hours and distribute working quotas across the whole population. Indeed, care is not only considered to be a solution to the climate crisis but also to the loss of workers' rights:

Take public research and patenting away from any conflict of interest aimed at maximizing profit. That is why activists and workers join the movement in defence of public education. [...] It is not possible to carry out a real climate transition while millions of people — through wage poverty or precarity — are focused on their economic survival, are suffering labour blackmail or have no future except to fight for their expiring contracts. (9F)

It has to be noted that the call frames the general strike not only as a means to fight for better working conditions but also as an instrument of participatory democracy and citizenship issues, given that they argue “freeing ourselves from blackmail means regaining our right to affect politics” (9F).

In summary, in examining the prognostic frames it becomes clear that self-empowerment and the mobilization of people do not imply an attempt to supersede the intervention of local institutions. On the contrary, most of the organizations call for more welfare, which they consider to be the only way to answer the increasing needs of those in the fields of work, care or citizenship, at least in the short-term.

6 THE MOTIVATIONAL FRAMES: A COMMON STRUGGLE TO REBUILD SOLIDARITY RELATIONS THROUGH A RENEWED NOTION OF CARE

The common ground shared by the various claims and scales is often represented by the notion of care, which allows social movement organizations to develop a broad motivational framing. In this regard, even when solidarity is called for with reference to specific issues, it always refers to a broader need for mutual care, beyond solving the specific problem at hand. As pointed out by the Movement for Housing Rights in Florence:

We do not offer easy solutions but we make it clear that WE, collectively, are part of the solution: neither resignation nor illusions [...] struggle is the only way! If we are a mass movement we will have more space, more strength, more intelligence and a greater chance to win. If this [movement] remains composed of a few hundred activists, then no one will be saved. Because no one can be saved alone. Certainly no one will be saved by continuing to sacrifice the environment and health: we will not fall into the trap of a system that created this situation and now tries to exploit it to make us believe that re-gasifiers, nuclear plants and more fossil energy use are indispensable. Against the selfish response to ‘stay at home’, which was spread by the authorities during the pandemic, the call is to self-reduce utility bills as ‘We need to turn that selfishness into solidarity and become an ever-growing WE’. (5F)

As this document excerpt testifies, the urgency of care translates into a broader call to fight for the dignity of people and their local area. Indeed,

we can see how the concept of care bridges personal health, interpersonal relationships and the environment. The No Military Base in Coltano or Elsewhere Movement, a network of inhabitants and collective activists that was founded in 2021 to mobilize against the construction of a military base in Pisa, explicitly frames care as the care for people and the environment. Along with protests against war and in favour of resistance, the committee also organizes initiatives devoted to self-help, sharing and getting to know the local area that one must take care of. As can be seen in one of their documents: “Our work of monitoring and cleaning up the area is only beginning; we will continue to defend *Coltano* not only to prevent the construction of the base but also to imagine new ways to cross its roads and paths” (6F). A similar type of engagement can be found in the documents of the Anomalia social centre based in Palermo, which organizes the collective cleaning of the neighbourhood “in response to the silence of the institutions” (3P).

Feminist movements are actively present in both the No Military Base Movement and Anomalia, which might help to explain the development of the care frame as manifested in its multiple meanings of care for our bodies, relationships and the “place we live in”. The solidarity actions are enacted not in the name of a generically defined right to the city but in terms of a specific desire to care for the place where people carry out their daily lives. At the same time, through the call to directly engage in care for one’s neighbourhood, city and local area, environmental and urban struggles are conceived of as a direct extension of the attitude of care held by activists and inhabitants.

Care is often framed as the attempt to reappropriate public space, as expressed by the Viale Corsica Collective, a student squat located in Viale Corsica, on the outskirts of Florence. Alongside their struggle to resist eviction from their squat, this collective was engaged in defending the area in which the squat was located. In the documents analysed, for example, the activists defend the self-managed “dog park”, currently managed by local inhabitants, that the local administration planned to shut down in order to build a car park. They define the area as:

A space that is open to the community, a space where many people can meet each other, a social space where many initiatives have taken place: neighbourhood pizza parties, concerts, live painting and sports demonstrations. At a time in history when the priorities of a community should be quite different, the City of Florence decides to wipe out all traces of a self-managed

project, the value of which is well known to all those who have passed through it. (8F)

The group's emphasis is on citizen participation in the self-management of everyday spaces, calling not just for an increase in public spaces but also for a new way to take care of them collectively:

We believe that it is the residents who should decide how to transform the neighbourhoods in which they live, not those who buy them for their own profit, further impoverishing our lives, economically and socially [...] They talk about redevelopment but it is just a war on the poor. We cannot let them also sweep away our neighbourhoods, our identities, without anything happening. (8F)

Similar points are also raised by the Booq collective in Palermo, a community library that opened in the working class neighbourhood of Kalsa, which has been heavily impacted by gentrification. Over time it has become an important meeting point through a logic of commodification. The idea of "taking care" of the local area is raised by many movements and organizations in Florence and in Palermo, taking on various meanings and becoming embedded in different practices: from tidying up the neighbourhood to protesting about environmental issues. Thus, Booq refers to an "educating community":

Kalsa's educating community is constantly under construction; the process involves collaborations, meetings, reasoning, and public debates around the area of Kalsa and its public spaces, as well as its management and redevelopment. It touches on how to build relationships and moments that can foster care for public spaces and those who live in them with special attention to those who are the most marginalized and vulnerable inhabitants. Public space is crucial because it is the place where all types of inhabitants can meet and it must be welcoming, inclusive and free to access, it must also provide opportunities so that no one is left behind. (11P)

Similarly, groups such as SOS Ballarò, which is made up of citizens and associations working in the disadvantaged, working-class area of Ballarò in the city centre of Palermo, mobilized against the spread of Class A drugs (especially crack cocaine). They did not frame their claims as tackling drug consumption through a repressive approach, but rather as a "call to action"

for the inhabitants to take care of the place in which they live on a daily basis:

Dealing with the issue of drugs means addressing the causes, starting with education in the communities [...] building a legal economic system, investing in the neighbourhood and in people, training social workers that can work in the streets and be accessible to those in need, it means creating spaces for care and encouraging everyone from the neighbourhood to participate. At the same time, it also means placing the issue of drugs at the heart of public policies. (9P)

Importantly, taking care of one's area is not framed as a local issue; on the contrary, it emerges as a key point for constructing coalitions aimed at addressing immense challenges, from climate change to the lack of labour rights. Thus, in Florence, the Collective of the Workers of the Former GKN and Fridays for Future launched a common day of struggle to call for an "ecological and labour transition" as well as an end to war, stating that:

The climate crisis is a crisis of climate but above all of the relationships determined by human beings. It is the result of a social development that to this day alters and worsens people's lives, contaminating their relationship with work, precarity, health, mobility, the environment and care for others. It is the current model of production and consumption that is the real polluter, and it is from a radical transformation of this model that we need to start again... And given that there is no process that creates more pollution than war - in terms of its environmental impact and the way it redefines the economic and social priorities of countries - March 25 and 26 cannot but also be a deadline for the struggle against war. (9F)

The same urgency to converge in a common struggle is stated by the Scum student collective in Palermo:

We need to develop unconventional alternatives. It is essential to rethink the connections between various struggles and so we want to return to the reflections developed during the queer assemblies through the voices of those who experience these struggles every day. [...] Queer circles need to talk about the environment and ecology, the exploitation of bodies and local areas because our identities are being systematically erased through devastation, precarization, *homolesbobitransfobia* and privatization. Our queer bodies and identities are oppressed and criminalized in the same way as the

bodies of those who fight for their spaces, be they in their schools or their local areas. Connecting struggles is necessary to defeat all of these problems. (7P)

Through the notion of care, environmental and local struggles gained a new meaning. Practices of solidarity emerge as the best way to bridge different fields and build relationships of care in social struggles at a local, national and supranational scale. In sum, the notion of care makes it possible to move beyond contentious or collaborative dynamics, calling for public intervention while at the same time outlining the broad societal model in which solidarity can have a nurturing effect.

7 COMPARING CITIES

It must be noted that the common trends that have been described up until this point take on different characteristics in the two cities analysed. Differences can be observed, first and foremost, with regard to housing. This is a central concern in Florence, both in terms of inhabiting the city (and the planet) and the right to housing. Indeed, housing can be seen to be a transversal issue in at least in 7 of the 13 documents analysed. The narratives of collectives in Florence refer to the lack of housing as well as the unequal access to resources and services. The right to housing is mainly addressed by the Movement for Housing Rights and the Anti-eviction Network. These actors criticize the inadequate public policies and the repressive attitude of the local administrations, with public institutions singled out as bearing the majority of the responsibility for the housing crisis. The broad use of the term “inhabiting” the city does not, however, necessarily come from those actors that have traditionally been engaged in housing struggles. Rather, the idea of housing as the access to services and the benefits of urban life is present in the statements of those actors who are engaged in environmental or labour struggles. Thus, for instance, the Si Cobas grassroots trade union, of which many Pakistani and Indian workers are members, links the conditions of migrants with unequal access to services and resources.

In the case of Palermo, on the other hand, social movement organizations focusing on housing are less active, at least online. Nevertheless, many collective actors address the issue of housing; these include third sector associations, migrant rights organizations and squatted centres, who deal with the issue in two main ways. On the one hand, associations

call for an increase in public services, criticizing the lack of public information on public housing, which leads to self-organized grassroots organizations being forced to play a surrogate role. On the other hand, grassroots actors who are heavily engaged in neighbourhood activities frame housing as “inhabiting” the local area. In contrast to the situation in Florence, social movement organizations are less concerned with condemning the criminalizing practices pursued by the police and public institutions (as is the case with regard to migration) and focus instead on highlighting the absence of public institutions in the city’s neighbourhoods. A further difference with Florence is the fact that touristification and gentrification dynamics are almost never quoted explicitly as processes that must be challenged.

Solidarity frames would also appear to be different in relation to the field of migration. In Florence, we did not find any social movement organization that solely focuses on migration, in spite of the fact that migrants’ rights are a core issue for solidarity initiatives that have been launched in various fields of action, such as labour or feminist struggles. Third sector associations, on the other hand, more explicitly frame migrants’ rights as their main field of action. Although these groups were founded to deal with the specific needs and problems of migrants, they frame their initiatives and struggles as responding to the broader needs of the inhabitants of the city. Services, such as language schools, are therefore framed not as initiatives for migrants but rather for the entire locality. This framing testifies to the transformative imaginary by which migration is approached as an urban issue rather than through a “welfarist” approach. In Palermo, by contrast, the public discourses of the various types of organizations are more focused on refugees’ rights, rather than on migrants in general, given the geographical position of the city at the frontier of arrivals for both documented and undocumented migrants.

What the two cities do share in common is the framing of solidarity practices as an expression of a new care-focused approach to inhabitants and local areas. In Palermo, it is possible to distinguish two main ways in which care is framed, both of which clearly originate in the narratives of the Borgo Vecchio Community Health Clinic, which explicitly links the care of people with the care of the local area in two ways. First of all, the activists state they have created the community health clinic to ensure access to care in a working-class neighbourhood like *Borgo Vecchio*, where there is a high percentage of elderly people for whom it is not possible to reach other parts of the city as they live alone and are not independent.

Secondly, the analysed documents demonstrate that the Community Health Clinic also takes care of the neighbourhood itself, by promoting campaigns to clean up the area, while also criticizing the absence of institutional intervention in this regard. Care is also a crucial component for associations and local committees that call for urban spaces to be treated like a commons, even when such calls are not explicit. The opening of a community library or grassroots participatory actions are narrated as ways of taking care both of local areas and inhabitants in a manner that goes beyond the paradigm of public versus private.

In Florence, Covid-19 was the turning point that helped to place the issue of care at the core of an increasing number of organizations. From the beginning of the pandemic, many solidarity actions have been put in place to ensure that inhabitants in need were provided with food support, while there has also been a focus on the fight against the gentrification and touristification of the city centre. Thus, the Via del Leone squat frames the We Won't Pay campaign against the increasing cost of bills and rents as a way of taking care of ourselves as human beings and avoiding having to choose "between paying the bills and doing what makes us human beings". In the fields of housing and migration, actors criticize the fact that institutions are not taking care of the needs of the people in relation to health, leisure and the right to inhabit the city. Generally speaking, we can say that the groups located on the outskirts of the metropolitan area place an even greater emphasis on the notion of care as care of the local area. In sum, the lack of care is framed both as a main cause of urban problems (a lack of care from institutions) and as a solution (to bring about care from below).

8 SOME CONCLUDING POINTS

To summarize our main results, it can be said that unequal access to services and opportunities emerges as the main diagnostic frame, with inequality as a leading concern, whose causes are attributed to political institutions more than to market actors. Moreover, the framing addresses local institutions more than national or European ones, even when the problems involved are national or international in scale (such as climate change or other environmental issues). The incredibly frequent reference to "inhabitants" testifies to the strong local connotation in how problems are perceived and contentious actions are organized.

A further point to note about the solutions presented is the central role awarded to self-empowerment, community work and mutualism. In this

sense, collective actors—such as associations and social movement organizations—seem to recognize direct social action as the main instrument with which to tackle inequalities but also to forge collective identities and social bonds. Self-empowerment and community work are framed in two ways. From a short-term perspective, they are considered as tools to force institutions to put in place measures to mitigate the effects of multiple crises. The pandemic crisis has certainly oriented claims towards collective rights framed in a universal way—i.e., not only as rights for specific groups that are the least endowed with social protection, but more generally as the rights of the inhabitants as a whole. In this sense, the pandemic played a pivotal role in making the “the right to change and rework the city according to our desires” (Harvey, 2012, p. 2) a real claim for collective organizations instead of a distant political horizon. The “right to self-management” (Purcell, 2013, p. 147), however, also implies that public intervention is necessary to implement the right to health, housing and work. In summary, the analysis has highlighted a concept of the city as a place that is “lived in”, while also revealing the major role played by the local dimension in the creation of a collective identity. Given the fragmentation of neoliberal cities, collective action is considered to be the most important factor in the development of a collective identity as well as a social actor and a political class. The transversal and multidimensional meaning of care has played a fundamental part in creating this broader notion of solidarity.

The focus on the local dimension, therefore, emerges as the basis of a transversal approach that brings with it new practices and meanings of solidarity. Thus, in the fields of housing, care and migration, but also in struggles around work and the environment, “taking care of the local” has become a central practice in post-Covid mobilizations.

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ANALYSED DOCUMENTS

<i>ID</i>	<i>Name of organization</i>	<i>Type of organization</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Field of action</i>
1F	Anelli Mancanti	Association	Florence	Migrant rights
2F	Florentine Anti-eviction network	Network of movement organization	Florence	Housing
3F	Squat of Via del Leone	Housing and student squat	Florence	Housing

(continued)

(continued)

<i>ID</i>	<i>Name of organization</i>	<i>Type of organization</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Field of action</i>
4F	Le Piagge Community	Social centre	Florence	Migrant rights/ Care
5F	Movement for housing struggle	Movement organization	Florence	Housing
6F	Movimento No Military Base in Coltano or elsewhere	Network of multiple collective subjects	Florence	Care
7F	Nosotras	Association	Florence	Migrant rights/ Care
8F	Squat of Viale Corsica	Movement organization	Florence	housing
9F	Collective of the workers of the former GKN and Fridays for Future	Movement organization	Florence	Care
10F_P	Fridays for Future Italy	Environmental movement	Italy	Care
11F	Non Una di Meno Firenze	Movement organization	Florence	Care
12F	Covid Clandestino	Network of multiple collective subject	Florence	Care/Migrant rights
13F	Si Cobas_Prato and Firenze	Grassroot trade unions	Florence	Housing/ Migrant rights
14F	CSOA_Camilo Cienfuegos	Squatted social centre	Palermo	Housing/Care
1P	Community Health Clinic BorgoVecchio	Self-managed health clinic	Palermo	Housing/Care
2P	Non Una di Meno Palermo	Movement organization	Palermo	Care
3P	CSOA Anomalia	Squatted social centre	Palermo	Care
4P	Anti-racist Forum	Network of multiple collective subject	Palermo	Migrant rights
5P	Fatima	Association	Palermo	Migrant rights
6P	No War champain	Network of multiple collective subject	Palermo	Care
7P	Scum Collective	Movement organization	Palermo	Care
8P	Zabut	Cultural and political association	Palermo	Migrant rights/ Care/Housing
9P	SOS Ballarò	Network of multiple collective subject	Palermo	Migrant rights/ Care
10P	MoltiVolti and Polo Sociale	Associations	Palermo	Migrant rights/ Care
11P	Booq	Association	Palermo	Care/Housing

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Demanding, Building, and Institutionalizing Infrastructures of Solidarity in Switzerland

Sarah Schilliger

1 INTRODUCTION: SOLIDARITY AND THE POLITICIZATION OF EVERYDAY NEEDS

This systemic neglect of human needs is not just tolerated—resistance is rising in many places. People who provide or receive care work are fighting in various ways against the dehumanizing austerity policy and for an alternative society that puts people’s needs at the centre. We aim to bring together the most diverse forms of this resistance, to learn to connect with each other, and to make alliances possible. We are all united in our criticism of the current situation and our desire for a better future. (16Z)

The crisis of social reproduction and the precarity of life, which is described above by the feminist collective Care for Resistance as “systemic neglect of human needs”, has become more visible in recent years in Swiss cities and has increasingly been politicized by various social movements. In the

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© The Author(s) 2025
M. Pajnik et al. (eds.), *Framing Solidarities in Times of Multiple Crises*, Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-82563-7_3

context of the polycrisis marked by the Covid-19 pandemic, an increase in the cost of living and a growing housing crisis, local activism has become centred around the question of what it means to sustain life and to focus on people's everyday needs. Such activism with regard to social reproduction engages in a "politics of everyday life" (Jupp, 2022, p. 119) in which social-movement actors not only articulate a fundamental critique of state and market institutions but also formulate alternative political imaginaries.

For many social-movement organizations and civil-society initiatives, the notion of solidarity plays a central role in articulating their "desire for a better future" and their visions of transformative possibilities. Conceiving of solidarity not as an abstract idea but as a collective practice, they engage in forming connections among different people and various places and struggles. Looking at different modes of activism and solidarity practices demonstrates that visible "acts of solidarity" (Schwiertz & Schwenken, 2020)—such as claiming rights, protesting in the streets, articulating dissatisfaction, and making demands of the state—are not the only forms for expressing solidarity. The articulation of solidarity often takes place in less publicly visible spaces of everyday life, through resistance and survival tactics in hostile environments as well as through practices that establish new collective and interdependent ways of relating, caring, and living together (Spade, 2020).

Linked to the urgency for place-based responses to situations of shared everyday needs, a trend towards locally embedded solidarity movements has been observed. In these movements, cities, neighbourhoods, and local communities are conceived as important and dynamic battlefields for enacting citizenship and solidarity and for experimenting with a fundamental democratization of urban life (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019; Ataç & Schilliger, 2022). Against a backdrop of nation-states cutting resources and services and marginalizing so-called non-citizens, movement actors are thereby looking for a new "progressive localism" (Featherstone et al., 2012) that empowers communities to have more control over their own lives and to promote inclusive decision-making processes. Through their entangled practices and micropolitics around social reproduction in the here and now, they draw the contours of future alternative "caring institutions" (Tronto, 2013) and are simultaneously engaged in the process of building concrete solidarity infrastructures from below (Gutiérrez Sánchez, 2023; Schilliger, 2020). Urban social infrastructures are thus becoming a contested terrain where actors question who cities are for and how solidarity is enacted within the urban fabric (Horton & Penny, 2023).

This chapter explores how solidarity is framed by city-based initiatives and grassroots movements in the two Swiss cities of Bern and Zurich. Looking at political actors engaged in the social fields of care, housing, and migrants' rights, I explore how they communicate and promote a specific understanding of current social problems (*diagnostic framing*) and how they formulate political objectives and strategies to promote social change towards a society founded on solidarity (*prognostic framing*). While social movements around migrants' rights are particularly opposed to the effects of locally implemented borders that have their origins in restrictive (supra-)national migration regimes, the disputes around housing primarily focus on the question of access to affordable housing, which is becoming increasingly scarce because of capitalist exploitation strategies by real-estate investors. And in the broad field of care, criticism has been directed against unequal distribution and the exploitative conditions of paid and unpaid care work.

By exploring the responses of social movements and solidarity organizations to these social grievances and political challenges, I identify similarities and transversalities in the ways local political actors across these three social fields formulate frames for possible future pathways. Drawing on a practice-oriented concept of infrastructure (Simone, 2004), my empirical analysis explores how social-movement actors relate to social infrastructures in the city and frame solidarity practices. I first highlight that in all the examined social fields, we find movements and initiatives that claim to advance more inclusive and needs-based social infrastructures and to defend them against privatization and commodification. Instead of organizing social provisioning as a commodity, social-movement actors promote guaranteeing universal access to social needs provided by public or non-profit institutions. Second, I identify within various movements' narratives a call for place-based solidarity practices in local settings. Their focus on everyday needs corresponds with a specific spatial framing of solidarity across the three social fields. A multitude of political actors consider neighbourhoods and spaces of everyday life the primary terrain of social transformation. They often encourage people to organize themselves in their immediate local environment and to build their own infrastructures of solidarity from below. Third, in addition to more confrontational demands of state institutions and the locally anchored creation of solidarity infrastructures, some frames I studied also exhibit efforts to formalize solidary relationships through collaborations with municipalities so as to promote the institutionalization of solidarity on an urban level.

The chapter proceeds as follows: I first introduce the theoretical foundations of my analysis in infrastructural studies before describing my methodological approach and the research context. I then present the analysis, first, of the diagnostic frames and, second, of the prognostic frames. In the conclusion, I discuss similarities and transversalities across the three social fields and evaluate the conceptual and political relevance of my empirical findings.¹

2 THEORETICAL APPROACH: URBAN SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURES AND INFRASTRUCTURAL CITIZENSHIP

To analyse how social-movement actors frame solidarity, it is crucial to avoid an essentialist view and instead see solidarity as a contingent and temporary phenomenon within its social context. I therefore start from the assumption that solidarity is both relational and spatial (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019, p. 25; Schwiertz & Schwenken, 2020). Examining solidarity from a praxeological perspective therefore means looking at situated practices and relating them to political structures and power relations. In the Swiss context, it is striking that the urban social-movement actors often relate their practices of solidarity to (neglected) everyday needs, politicizing in particular the gaps and exclusions of public infrastructures. They question existing social infrastructures that have been transformed by neoliberal policies and are characterized by intersectional exclusions. They are also fundamentally reimagining what a social infrastructure could or should be—beyond the often bureaucratized and economized provision of public services by the state. To better understand the framing of solidarity by movement actors, I therefore draw in my frame analysis on infrastructural approaches.

While infrastructure is commonly understood in physical terms, as reticulated systems of highways, pipes, or wires, I focus on an expanded understanding of “lively infrastructure” (Amin, 2014) as a relational, intersectional, and social process that serves to sustain life. In this sense, Silver and McFarlane (2019, p. 38) argue for a broader conception of urban social infrastructure “that emphasizes the dynamic relationship between citizenship, the failure of the state to provide service provision and the everyday actions through which communities [...] are able to

¹ I would like to thank my student assistant Natascha Flückiger for her helpful assistance in coding the documents.

socially reproduce”. Studies on urban infrastructure have shown that infrastructures strongly shape social life in cities and the ways in which residents navigate the city. Whether visible or invisible, they are involved in the human experience of cities, creating—or undermining—social relationships, senses of belonging, and the experience of solidarity. As a socio-political process, infrastructures mediate urban power relations and structure everyday life through differential access by demarcating “who can and should be integrated in the city, and who should be left outside of it” (Rodgers & O’Neill, 2012, p. 402).

Analysing (everyday) urban infrastructure can therefore offer nuanced insights into the complex processes that shape political subjectivities and urban citizenships. As Lemanski (2019, p. 16) argues, infrastructure is not only a primary medium “through which citizens relate to the state (in terms of both expectations and physical realities)”. It is “also the primary way in which the state is physically represented at the local scale”, as infrastructure “can play a role in creating and perpetuating (or potentially challenging and overcoming) marginalization”. Lemanski (*ibid.*) coined the term “infrastructural citizenship” to theorize how urban infrastructures shape specific experiences of and claims for citizenship and how, vice versa, citizenship practices become embodied in public infrastructures. She thereby emphasizes how infrastructures (such as housing and care) have become important sites for observing forms of protest aimed at claiming rights from the (local) state. Drawing on an expanded understanding of citizenship beyond a narrow legal status of rights and responsibilities towards a more dynamic and practice-oriented concept (Isin & Turner, 2002), we can conceptualize different ways social-movement actors politicize urban infrastructures (which I will further elaborate in my empirical frame analysis below):

1. **Demanding urban infrastructures:** First, we can analyse processes for contesting how the state creates conditions of differential citizenship wherein different populations have unequal access to the substantive benefits of citizenship. A lack of access to infrastructure is thereby politicized not only as a lack of citizenship rights but also as a form of “infrastructural violence” understood as continuous “processes of marginalization, discrimination and exclusion” (Rodgers & O’Neill, 2012, p. 401). Social-movement actors may thereby defend existing public infrastructures or demand a transformation of the way these infrastructures function, for example, towards more inclu-

siveness, less bureaucratic or profit-driven logics, better quality, or increased user participation.

2. **Building urban infrastructures from below:** Second, civil-society actors can create new infrastructural imaginaries and build infrastructures from below through place-based solidarity practices, which resonates with Simone's (2004) concept of "people as infrastructure". These urban infrastructures from below support those who are unable to afford market-based options or who face barriers to public provision, while also fostering new ways of living together. Citizenship practices emerge incrementally and less visibly through community organizing and caring practices within neighbourhoods. This leads to the building of solidarity infrastructures from below (Gutiérrez Sánchez, 2023; Schilliger, 2020), reducing reliance on the state, and constructing more mundane infrastructural citizenship practices based on community belonging. Place-based solidarity collectives (Oosterlynck et al., 2016) and mutual-aid networks (Spade, 2020) function as infrastructures of social reproduction and as gathering places for social encounters and political organizing.
3. **Institutionalizing new urban infrastructures:** Third, through collaborations between civil-society actors and municipalities, efforts are being made to sustainably transform the way urban infrastructures are imagined, perceived, and managed. This relates to municipal strategies of social movements that are "making the decisive move from 'occupying the squares/streets' towards 'occupying/building new institutions'" (Roth et al., 2023, p. 2017). The institutionalization of urban infrastructures represents a transformative process in which the municipal scale acts as a privileged "strategic entry point for developing broader practices and theories of transformative social change" (Russell, 2019, p. 3).

3 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH CONTEXT

Frame analysis is a way to understand how movements form a collective self-understanding of their purposes and a structured interpretation of the worlds they act in. Based on the analysis and contextualization of frames, we can gain important insights into how movements formulate alternative visions, relate to political institutions, call for solidarity practices, and

invoke connections and alliances. Furthermore, frames inform the choice of spaces pursued by movements and serve as a reference point for different mobilization strategies. I therefore focus on text-embedded narratives and political imaginaries of contemporary urban movement organizations and solidarity initiatives and inquire into the action-oriented frames that inspire and legitimize their activities. Looking at political actors who are engaged in the social fields of care, housing, and migrants' rights, I first explore how they communicate and promote a specific understanding of current social problems (*diagnostic framing*); and second how they formulate political objectives and strategies to promote social change towards a society founded on solidarity (*prognostic framing*), essentially answering the question "what has to be done and what is already done?" The empirical analysis includes 24 documents (public statements, self-descriptions, petitions, blogs) produced by movement actors in the cities of Zurich and Bern. In order to examine the interplay between civil-society actors and the local government in selected political disputes, I additionally analysed six public statements from the two municipalities. The database includes 18 documents from actors in Zurich and 12 in Bern. Eleven documents are related to housing, ten to care, and nine to migrants' rights. Most of the documents were published between 2021 and 2023 (except for two self-descriptions of solidarity initiatives that date from 2017 and 2018).

Zurich and Bern, both located in German-speaking Switzerland, represent left-liberal urban centres in politically conservative cantons. They differ in size and their position in the global economy: Zurich, with 447,000 residents, is Switzerland's largest city and a global economic hub, hosting the world's largest offshore financial centre and companies like Google. Over the past 20 years, Zurich's population has grown by 80,000 (Stadt Zürich Statistik, 2024), and 33.6% of its population lacks Swiss citizenship. This population is made up of migrants at both ends of the socioeconomic scale, including high-wage expatriates and a "service class" of migrant workers in precarious jobs like care work or construction work. An estimated 10,000 people are living without legal status in the city of Zurich (Morlok et al., 2015). Social inequalities are high, as Zurich has the world's third-highest millionaire density but also inhabitants who move out of the city as life in Zurich has become too expensive for them (Kaufmann et al., 2023). Rents have risen significantly over the last ten years, and affordable housing has become a rarity. The population without Swiss citizenship and single parents are disproportionately affected by displacement (ibid.).

Bern, with around 146,000 inhabitants, is smaller and serves as Switzerland's political capital, housing many public-administration employees (Statistik Stadt Bern, 2024). About 25% of Bern's population lacks Swiss citizenship (*ibid.*). This includes diplomats, international officials, EU citizens from German-speaking countries working in sectors such as education and healthcare, and migrants from southern Europe and Turkey (*ibid.*). The canton of Bern has an estimated 3000 undocumented migrants (Morlok et al., 2015). Despite having a less severe housing crisis than Zurich, Bern faces rising rents and displacement issues, which particularly affect those with low socio-economic status, who predominantly live in the city's west. Social segregation is significant in Bern, contrary to its political aim of social mixing.

4 FRAMING THE PROBLEM: NEGLECT OF EVERYDAY NEEDS

Focusing first on the diagnostic frames, we observed how social movements and solidarity organizations in all three social fields are increasingly formulating their political frameworks in terms of the neglect of everyday needs. They criticize how the state and market actors do not sufficiently take care of people's social needs such as affordable housing, needs-based care services, and decent living conditions for refugees and migrants. In all the three fields, there is also a focus on growing inequalities in access to urban social infrastructures. Various diagnostic frameworks pay particular attention to the intersectionality of inequalities. They call for an increased recognition of the different social and spatial positionings of individuals and social groups within a matrix of power, privilege, and disadvantage.

While political institutions are identified as responsible for social grievances in all three social fields, they are most targeted in the field of migrants' rights, where the cantonal, national, and supranational migration regimes are seen as the main institutions driving social stratification and exclusion. In the field of housing, municipal actors are mentioned as responsible for capital-driven urban planning, especially in Zurich, but the main responsibility is placed on the profit-driven practices of private investors in the real-estate sector. Responsibility is least tangible in the field of care, where the frames analysed often blame patriarchal and capitalist society for the lack of resources, for the exploitation of female care workers, and for the low value attributed to care within society.

Problem Frames in the Field of Care

In Switzerland, care has become broadly and visibly politicized in the context of the large mobilizations around the feminist strike movements since 2019. This was furthermore triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic: even though feminist networks had already diagnosed a fundamental care crisis long before the pandemic, the experience of the pandemic made social-movement actors much more proactive in pointing out the importance of urban care infrastructure for the organization of everyday life—and how fragile and precarious this has become.

We found several narratives that state that no society can do without care, which includes well-developed public care infrastructures in the health, social, and education systems, care in the family and in friendship networks, self-organized care practices, and mutual-aid networks in neighbourhoods. The Zurich Feminist Strike Collective criticizes the fact that although care activities are now recognized as essential work, they are still not valued or well compensated:

Care work is central for the functioning of society and is the basis for the well-being of all of us. Nevertheless, it is often carried out at low wages, under miserable working conditions, invisible or unpaid. [...] The pandemic makes it clearer than ever: it is not the CEOs, bankers, real-estate owners, pharmaceutical or technology entrepreneurs who keep our society alive—but all care workers. Care should count more than profit. We don't want to go back to the unsolidary 'normality'. (17Z)

Here, the problematic “normality” is seen in particular in the profit orientation of the care sector and the quasi privatization of public care infrastructures. Confronted with the manifest inadequacies of both underfinanced public care infrastructures and a profit-oriented care market, several movements are problematizing the neoliberal reconfiguration of care. They criticize how time resources available for caring activities are becoming more and more limited due to administrative overhead and a fragmentation of care services. As a result, the needs of both care workers and care receivers are neglected. While patients do not receive the necessary, high-quality care they need, professionals are not granted dignified conditions and are prevented from working in line with their professional ethos. A network of professional care workers in Zurich called Healthcare over Profit frames it in the following way:

As healthcare professionals, we see it as our duty to stand up for this: Health in not a commodity, and patients are not production factors. (15Z)

Care workers who work in child-care institutions and who are organized in the grassroots union *Trotzphase*² similarly argue that “the needs of everyone involved” (both the childcare workers and the children) “are being neglected” due to a lack of time and human resources. They emphasize that “this massively jeopardizes both the safety of children and the mental health of care workers” (14Z). Paid care workers in Zurich and Bern are supported in their criticism by mothers’ collectives that have been organizing as part of the feminist strike movement since 2019. The collective *Eidgenössische Kommission Dini Mueter* created a unifying perspective by problematizing mothers’ lack of time, due to the incompatibility of care and paid work, and professional childcare workers’ lack of time because they have to take care of more and more children at the same time due to rationalization measures and worsening care ratios.

For us, it’s not just about money but also about time: we mothers want time with our children. We childcare workers want time for the children with whom we are entrusted. Because care work can’t be done any faster without a drop in quality—which affects both the children and us. (5B)

Through this framing, they made visible the interdependence between mothers and paid childcare workers, creating a link between the private and public spheres, which are often seen as separate.

The interweaving of productive and reproductive work is also an issue in other narratives of feminist collectives, which formulate a fundamental critique of the organization of care in an employment-centred, capitalist society that assigns little value to care. They criticize the fact that care in households has to be provided free of charge in addition to paid work, which not only exacerbates the income gap between men and women but also leads to pension gaps and a highly gendered risk of poverty in old age. When they criticise how “bringing forth new life and caring for it is seen as a natural and self-evident act” (18Z), they refer to feminist theories from the 1970s that redefined housework as labour and as the basis for reproducing labour power (Federici, 2019).

²The German word *Trotzphase* (“defiant phase”) refers to a developmental period between the ages of two and six years when children are defiant due to an increasing desire for freedom and self-determination.

While the solidarity expressed in the frames mainly relates to women, attention is also paid to various forms of inequalities between women, as well as to intersectional inequalities and discrimination in accessing care. While the Zurich Feminist Strike Collective criticizes the racialized dynamic through which “underpaid care work is often passed on to migrants, who are in turn exposed to even worse working conditions” (17Z), the network Healthcare over Profit in Zurich complains that access to healthcare is increasingly dependent on whether people can afford it (15Z). This statement also addresses racist and transphobic exclusion in relation to access to care and the limited inclusion of people with a precarious migration status in the formal care system. Lastly, it argues that since care is individualized and pushed to the private sphere (e.g., through austerity programs), people with special care needs (the elderly, chronically ill, or disabled) who are not embedded in strong social networks (families, neighbourhoods) suffer from unsatisfied care needs and isolation.

Problem Frames in the Field of Housing

In the field of housing, we found an unequal situation in the two Swiss cities: while the housing crisis, rising rents, and displacement have been strongly politicized in Zurich in recent years, we find hardly any such statements from social-movement actors in Bern. This can be explained on by the fact that the housing market in Bern is somewhat less dramatic than in Zurich and that Bern has a weaker tradition of a housing and squatter movement.

The main diagnosis frame in Zurich relates to the lack of available housing and rising rents. In November 2023, a large alliance of housing activists, local tenants’ associations, and squatters’ collectives called for a demonstration “against the housing crisis”, problematizing the situation as follows:

We’ve had enough of annually rising living costs, overpriced commercial spaces, and the loss of free spaces. We’ve had enough of [...] the fact that more and more people are losing their homes and their social environment. We’ve had enough of those who blame the problem on migration or who want to leave the solution to real-estate companies. We don’t want our rent to generate enormous profits [...]. No profit from land and rent! Housing is not a commodity! It is—just like electricity, water, and air—our basic necessity for existence. [...] Huge profits are made from the sale of land and the ‘development’ of real estate. [...] This has to stop if we want cities worth living in! (20Z)

The statement expresses “solidarity with all those whose housing is threatened or who have already been displaced” (20Z)—and thus addresses all inhabitants of the city who are directly affected by the housing crisis and whose basic existential need for a home is under threat. Interestingly, housing is compared with other everyday infrastructures such as electricity—a reference that is particularly important in the city of Zurich due to the historical and successful struggles against the privatization of the city’s electricity supply. Just as the actors in the social field of care argue that care is not a commodity, there is also criticism here that housing is organized as a commodity on a capitalist market and is used as an instrument for financial accumulation. Higher rents paid by tenants are directly linked to the rising profits of real-estate companies. The main driver of the rise in rents is considered to be the global real-estate companies, pension funds, and private-equity funds, “for whom the city is not the place where they live but merely an opportunity for profitable investments” (19Z), as stated in a letter by the squatter movement.

These statements mainly express concern about the process of upgrading through the renovation or demolition of existing housing stocks, which leads to both the displacement of tenants and the destruction of affordable housing. In recent years, these developments have been increasingly politicized by tenants who have started to organize in various districts. Tenants threatened or affected by displacement and solidary neighbours come together in assemblies to raise their voice. One example is the group *Not in Heuried*, in which residents are fighting against the demolition of 108 flats. In their petition, they criticize the property owner, Credit Suisse Group, for its demolition plan as follows:

The demolition of affordable housing, the destruction of green spaces and old trees, and the displacement of tenants also threatens the Heuried neighbourhood. [...] Long-time neighbours and beloved classmates are being separated. New, much more expensive flats are to be built in their place, which the current tenants cannot afford. (22Z)

In a similar vein, a neighbourhood collective in Bern is protesting the demolition of two high-rise buildings with an open letter to the property owner, the municipal pension fund:

They have cancelled our rental agreements. Bahnstrasse 59 and 79 are to be completely renovated and later relet at higher rents. We have to move out.

Your decision hits us hard. Some of us have lived in Bahnstrasse for decades. Our home will no longer exist like this. That's sad. Due to the housing shortage, it's also not easy to find a comparable living situation. Some people will be forced to move into a nursing home. Others will be forced into flats on the edge of or outside the city, and it will result in massively higher rental costs for many. (7B)

These two statements both emphasize the dual character of housing dispossession. They not only problematize the material consequences of losing a home but also the affective and emotional rupture that accompanies this process. Inhabiting and caring are thereby closely linked, as the loss of housing also threatens to erode social networks, friendships, and caring communities in the immediate local neighbourhood. This connection is addressed very explicitly by the activist collective Mieten-Marta in Zurich, which also problematizes the additional (often female) care work associated with displacement:

How much more difficult it is to be displaced from your home with children. Caregivers lose their support structures, their daycare spots, their helping neighbours, or possibly also their proximity to family. All of this must be found and rebuilt, probably in a place where there are fewer options. What's more, everything involved in a housing move—from finding a new home to settling in, furnishing, and building new neighbourhood networks—is classic care work. In other words, unpaid extra work for us. (21Z)

This statement is also interesting because it pays particular attention to the intersectional inequalities in displacement processes, pointing out that, in particular, migrant workers, single parents, and older women with small pensions are pushed to the outskirts or out of the city. It furthermore addresses the fact that primarily essential workers, who are often migrants, are displaced:

[...] the very people who ensure the basic supply of our city in the low-wage sector, who build our houses, clean our offices, or care for our sick, those who do a lot of care work—and continue to do so (because the city wants to keep your care work, even if it no longer wants you as a resident). (21Z)

With their reference to care, they intersect with the gender and class dimension of displacement processes, highlighting that these workers “also take on the care work that others have outsourced in order to work

full-time to be able to afford the expensive flats” (21Z). In this context, the housing activists in Zurich not only blame the large real-estate investors for fuelling gentrification processes but also the city administration. In an open call for a protest against the housing crisis, the city is accused of “profit-driven urban development” to “attract global corporations” and a highly qualified workforce instead of promoting an open city for all (20Z).

Problem Frames in the Field of Migrants’ Rights

In the field of migrants’ rights, the framings relate in particular to the exclusion of migrants from social rights due to restrictive national-migration and citizenship regimes. The diagnostic frames identified in the statements are quite similar for Zurich and Bern, which is not surprising given the social conditions mainly caused by national policies. While some statements are primarily concerned with the conditions of refugees living in camps, others focus more on the group of illegalized migrant workers who have never applied for asylum and who live and work in the city invisibly and outside the radar of national migration authorities.

In both cities, social-movement activists criticize in particular the neglect of the basic everyday needs of refugees who are forced to live in camps mostly located outside the city (on the problematization of camps, see also the chapters on Germany, Denmark, and Slovenia in this book). Interestingly, we find a similar diagnostic frame of “displacement” here as in the field of housing, as social isolation and the erosion of solidarity networks due to the relocation of refugees to the periphery are also problematized here. A statement by the Zurich Autonomous School—one of the most important hubs for refugee-rights activism in Zurich—describes the housing situation in the camps as “prison-like”. The activists of the Zurich Autonomous School, who visit the various camps on a weekly basis to observe “what the state is doing” and to support the residents of the camps, report:

The conditions in the refugee camps are devastating. Adliswil consists of a collection of barracks and containers. The doors of the rooms open directly onto the outside area. Every trip to the toilet, shower or kitchen in winter inevitably leads through the cold. Because of that, almost all the children are very often ill in the cold season. The rooms are small. They are often occupied by four or more people. In addition to babies and toddlers. When a baby cries at night, everyone wakes up—including the schoolchildren, who

have to get up early the next day. The sanitary facilities are often flooded with water. Often something is not working. Rats have repeatedly been spotted near the kitchen. The whole facility, which is actually a temporary solution, is completely overcrowded with people who have been here for years in some cases. The children have no real space to play or to rest and do their homework, especially in winter. The playroom is usually closed. (11Z)

The conditions described here are primarily attributed to the “system”, meaning the so-called emergency-aid regime that has been in place throughout Switzerland since 2008 and is implemented by the cantons. Refugees whose asylum application has been rejected or whose application is not recognized by Switzerland on the basis of the EU Dublin Regulation are assigned to this system. As the state has outsourced the management of the camps to profit-oriented companies, the statements also blame the companies’ practices for disregarding the basic rights of refugees. State authorities are most often accused, however, of failing to fulfil their duty of care and protection and even of endangering the lives of refugees. The Migrant Solidarity Network, a network of antiracist activists and self-organized refugee initiatives based in Bern, holds the state responsible for the suicides of camp residents:

The more the state restricts the freedoms in the camps, the more it is responsible for the lives and physical integrity of the camp residents. (2B)

They particularly criticize the situation of children living in camps. Solinetz, a network that coordinates various support initiatives in Zurich and politicizes refugees’ rights, argues that the situation of children in camps “is not compatible with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child” (10Z). They also point to the neglect of care and contend that because of the social isolation and lack of perspectives, “some of these children develop serious mental illnesses and their learning and educational ability is significantly restricted” (10Z).

While municipal authorities are rarely held responsible for refugees’ precarious situation in the camps, the situation of undocumented migrants living in the city is more frequently the subject of urban disputes. Undocumented migrants are primarily described as people who perform important care work in the city but whose own well-being is not taken care of. In both Zurich and Bern, the Solidarity City movement has increasingly highlighted how undocumented people only have limited

access to the urban social infrastructure. The Züri City-Card Coalition puts it in the following way:

Essential sectors such as childcare or elderly care in private households would collapse without the 10,000 undocumented migrants. These are the very people who are excluded from everyday life. (13Z)

In a similar vein, the citizen platform *Wir alle sind Bern* opposes the politically manufactured “distinction between groups that belong to the city and others that do not” (1B). At the same time, it criticizes the urban bordering practices and the fact that residents are endangered by deportations.

Interestingly, there are also statements from the city councils of Zurich and Bern criticizing the current living situations of undocumented workers in their cities.³ In a statement written in response to a campaign for a municipal ID card, the Zurich government acknowledged that although undocumented people form part of the city’s population and most are workers, they often live in insecure situations and are exposed to “abuse, exploitation, and isolation” (28M). In a similar vein, the councillor for social affairs in Bern criticized in a press release that “there are people who are afraid of interacting with the authorities because they do not have regular residence status” (25M). While the municipal authorities in Bern and Zurich were already addressing the issue of illegalized residents before the pandemic, it has become more urgent since the pandemic. They seem to have increasingly recognized the importance of integrating illegalized migrants into the urban healthcare infrastructure so as, for example, to provide them with vaccinations to contain the pandemic.

5 FRAMING ALTERNATIVES: DEMANDING, BUILDING, AND INSTITUTIONALIZING SOLIDARITY INFRASTRUCTURES

When analysing the diagnostic frames, we can observe a common critique by social-movement actors in all three fields (care, housing, and migrants’ rights): the neglect of everyday needs. Gendered, classed, and racialized exclusion from urban social infrastructures such as housing and care

³The other municipal statements analysed (in the fields of care and housing) contain hardly any diagnostic frames and will therefore only come into focus in the next chapter on prognostic frames.

services as well as gaps and the insufficient quality of existing social infrastructures were identified as the main problematizing frame—a critique that can be termed, following Rodgers and O’Neill (2012), as “infrastructural violence”. However, while social infrastructures are an integral part of the production of intersectional inequalities, they are also a contested terrain. Infrastructures are not just sites where exclusion, exploitation, and discrimination can be observed but also “a potential place for imagining more positive politics” (ibid., p. 402) and “a realm of dispute over whom cities and infrastructures are for” (Horton & Penny, 2023, p. 1716). As I analyse in the following, the prognostic frames found in the statements studied revealed different practices of “infrastructural citizenship” (Lemanski, 2019). I thereby present some interesting similarities and transversalities in the ways social movements and solidarity organizations across the three social fields imagine social transformation by a) laying claim to solidarity infrastructures for the provision of everyday needs, b) building place-based solidarity infrastructures from below, and c) institutionalizing solidarity infrastructures through collaborations with municipalities.

Demanding Infrastructures for the Provision of Everyday Needs

Some of the prognostic frames by social-movement actors and solidarity organizations contain political demands both to expand the reach and openness of formal or public social infrastructures and to defend them against privatization and marketization. Instead of organizing care and housing as a commodity, they assert that essential social needs should be accessible for all and organized as a public good that is provided through municipal or nonprofit institutions.

In the field of care, various prognostic frames are calling for a transformation of the profit-oriented care system to a needs-oriented one. With the slogan “health over profit”, self-organized healthcare workers in Zurich are demanding “people-centred healthcare and working conditions that make this possible”. This would entail the abolition of neoliberal financial measures and “more time for direct contact with patients and fewer administrative tasks” (15Z). They also refer to the pandemic situation by calling to “convert the applause into real action” and argue that more public resources and more staff are required to achieve better working conditions. Similar prognostic frames can be found in statements by childcare workers employed in daycare centres. The collective *Trotzphase*

of young childcare workers were very active in Zurich during the pandemic. In the context of the feminist strike, they also demanded “higher wages and more time” to respond to the individual needs of all children (14Z). The mothers’ collective Eidgenössische Kommission Dini Mueter (EKdM) argues along the same lines, calling for mothers to be listened to and involved in political decisions “when it comes to the distribution of funds or the conditions for good preschool childcare” (5B). Together with the public-services union VPOD, Trotzphase and EKdM have advanced the political vision that preschool childcare should no longer be considered a private matter; instead, it is necessary “to integrate childcare into the public education system so that it is part of the free public services” (14Z).

The prognostic frame of the expansion of *service public* (French term) is central in the Swiss context, where it refers to state-provided or subsidized essential services like transportation, education, and healthcare. This concept, often seen as counter to neoliberalism, emphasizes collaborative, universally accessible, high-quality services that are at least partly financed by tax redistribution and that address users not as “customers”, but as “citizens”. This vision of collective responsibility for essential activities has been further expanded by feminist-strike collectives. In addition to the demand for an expansion of care services within the public sector, the prognostic frame of “collectivization of care” is extended by feminist collectives to unpaid or underpaid care that is performed in households and families. Work such as childcare should be taken out of the private sphere and organized as a societal responsibility, in particular by providing material security for all care workers. The mothers’ collective EKdM therefore refers to the feminist demand from the 1970s for a wage for housework, which they understand to include the following:

We call for extended maternity leave. We demand parental leave. We demand that our work be recognized in all social insurance schemes. (5B)

The mothers’ collective AMAK in Zurich even imagines a “collectivization of motherhood” with universal motherhood (not linked to gender) as a condition of care for every human being: They demand that “all of society be maternalized, all of society take on the role of mothers” (18Z). Only in this way can those who have given birth to children “be freed from the pressure of expectations, from the burden of this so important task” (18Z).

The demand for a collective, not-profit-oriented organization of everything we really need for a good life is also one of the important demands in the housing movements in Zurich and Bern. They demand the deconstruction and collectivization of housing, which different groups have pursued in various ways. While political campaigns for the squatter movements in Zurich (19Z) and Bern (8B) advocate for a right to housing beyond capitalist structures and challenge both the state and the market, bottom-up tenant networks such as Mieten-Marta call for political regulations, stronger tenants' rights, and a right for affordable rents (21Z). They are making a plea to look to Berlin, where "the Deutsche Wohnen + Co. Enteignen movement has won a previously unimaginable vote: That the city's largest housing developer should be socialized. And this through a bottom-up or grassroots movement!" (21Z). Inspired by the housing movement in Berlin, activists called in a petition in March 2023—when the large bank Credit Suisse was transferred under state guarantee to the even larger UBS—for the expropriation of all properties owned by Credit Suisse:

The real estate portfolio of Credit Suisse Funds AG and its subsidiaries should be socialized and thus permanently withdrawn from speculation. [...] The aim is to secure long-term affordable living and working space for the Swiss population, who are guaranteeing the 'bailout' of Credit Suisse with their taxpayers' money. (23Z)

After this nationwide petition, tenants living in buildings owned by Credit Suisse in Zurich were threatened with displacement in spring 2023. In a petition directed at the municipality of Zurich, tenants called for the Heuried neighbourhood to be preserved from demolition and demanded that "the municipal council enter into sales negotiations with Credit Suisse Asset Management AG" in order to sell the apartment blocks and thereby "maintain affordable housing in Heuried" (22Z). While this petition has so far been without effect, as Credit Suisse is not willing to sell the houses to the city, another political initiative was won by a municipal vote in autumn 2022. The Noigass 100% initiative demanded that land owned by the state railway SBB should be bought by the city to create 375 affordable, nonprofit flats together with housing cooperatives (24Z).

The promotion of nonprofit and cooperative housing is a political strategy that has been called for repeatedly in both Zurich and Bern. What all these housing movements share is an understanding of housing as a

common: housing should be taken off the market to be democratically governed by and for urban residents. At the centre of this are demands comparable to those promoted in Berlin. On the one hand, it is about preventing further rent increases by capitalist players; on the other, it is about democratic self-determination by urban citizens about how and for whom buildings are built. According to Andrej Holm, an urban sociologist from Berlin, these progressive, transformative housing activists contribute to a fundamental understanding of “housing as social infrastructure” by transferring the social challenges of housing to public responsibility and no longer leaving them to market forces (Holm, 2023).

While the diagnostic frames in the social fields of care and housing strongly emphasize a non-capitalist provision of public goods and a democratic organization of everyday needs, in the field of migrants’ rights, the focus is particularly on the frame of more inclusiveness in social infrastructures. In particular, pro-migrant activists are calling for equal rights for all in accessing social services by removing barriers and racist discrimination. For example, the platform *We Are All Bern* relates to an understanding of urban citizenship in which not national status or origin but rather presence in the city is the criterion for inclusion in urban social infrastructures:

All people who live together in a certain place and participate in everyday life there should have the same social and political rights and fear-free access to urban resources and to social, political, and cultural participation. (1B)

This expresses a municipal strategy for countering isolation and racism with a more open, solidarity-based approach, which should pave the way out of the migration-policy deadlock at a national level. While demands focused on national migration policy—such as the right to stay, an end to deportations, and freedom of movement—remain important demands of various migrants’-rights movements, the urban level has been increasingly seen as a place where the everyday lives of illegalized migrants can be humanized. *We Are All Bern* is pursuing this strategy with their proposal to introduce a Bern city card that would enable the urban migrant population to identify themselves to public and private institutions in the city without automatically disclosing data on their residence status and national origin. This is linked with a call to the municipal government to ignore residence status and to grant all city residents fear-free access to city services (1B).

In Zurich, the Züri City Card coalition is fighting for the same cause. The activists expect the city card not only to enable illegalized migrants' access to the city's social infrastructure but also to facilitate the actualization of existing rights. For example, they emphasize that the city card would make it easier for illegalized migrants to enrol their children in school without having to rely on support organizations. The enactment of citizenship rights is also a central concern for the activists of the Zurich Autonomous School. Refugees, who have hardly any access to German courses in the asylum system, learn the language in the self-organized school with the aim of changing the existing system and taking their fate into their own hands, as reported here by an activist in a public statement:

Do you know how difficult it is to fight for your rights when you have no rights? Thanks to the Autonomous School, I can stand up for myself and demand my rights as a human being. (11Z)

This statement refers to a form of infrastructural citizenship in which marginalized urban dwellers refuse to be seen merely as beggars and (often excluded) consumers of public infrastructures. Instead, they intervene as active citizens and attempt to claim their hopes, aspirations, and "rights as human beings" in the urban political arena. Similarly, by referring to human rights such as those set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, refugee families living in camps under very precarious conditions are calling for decent housing and access to public infrastructures such as education and healthcare in order to live materially secure and meaningful lives (10Z, 2B). The "capacity to claim those rights" (Amin, 2002, p. 1) through local organizing and solidarity practices in communities and neighbourhoods is an important aspect of infrastructural citizenship, and I will focus on it in the next section.

Building Solidarity Infrastructures

When analysing the prognostic frames in the three social fields, it is striking that the emphasis on everyday needs goes hand in hand with a particular spatial dimension of building solidarity. Numerous grassroots initiatives view neighbourhoods and everyday spaces in the city as the preferred terrain for promoting and organizing social change. They often encourage people to organize themselves in their immediate local environment and to build their own place-based solidarity infrastructures from below

(Gutiérrez Sánchez, 2023; Schilliger, 2020). By offering mutual support in different areas, but also by experimenting with new collective ways of living and caring together (Spade, 2020), people themselves function as infrastructures (Simone, 2004).

We find these locally embedded solidarity initiatives in all three social fields. In them, place is often “both an object and site of struggle as well as encounter” (Leitner & Strunk, 2014, p. 4). In housing-related struggles, both the housing and squatter movement and the network of neighbourhood-based tenant assemblies in Zurich have called for self-organized resistance in local urban settings to fight gentrification and mass evictions. By strengthening social relations in neighbourhoods and creating networks of mutual support, activists from Mieten-Marta are trying to empower tenants affected by displacement and rising rents to organize in self-defence for their right to stay.

So, what can we do? Let’s support each other! Let’s build solidarity structures in our neighbourhood to support people affected in their resistance. (21Z)

Building these solidarity infrastructures includes various aspects such as sharing knowledge about tenants’ rights, fostering caring relations between victims of evictions and their neighbours, and forming coalitions, as formulated by Mieten-Marta activists:

Inform yourself. Set up your own tenants’ group in your neighbourhood or street. Contact people who are particularly affected. Join forces with others. (21Z)

Neighbourhood assemblies offer open spaces for sharing experiences and planning common political practices and struggles. In these assemblies, the sense of community linked to a specific place is vital for mobilizing collective action. By using the phrase “we, the tenants of neighbourhood XY”, activists aim to foster collective subjectivities based on cohabitation in the same area (22Z; 7B). They acknowledge their interdependence as tenants facing the risk of displacement and thereby avoid categorizing supporters and directly affected tenants separately, thus steering clear of charitable and paternalistic support forms.

A second form of place-based solidarity infrastructures is being built by the squatter movement, which is occupying urban spaces for

non-commercial housing and for cultural activities. The *Alles wird besetzt* network in Zurich is calling on activists to take rebellious action in their immediate neighbourhood:

If we want a place in this city, then we must take it ourselves—and we can! [...] Squat a house! Occupy a place! Stop paying your rent! Make an open-air cinema, graffiti, banner, rally! Do it! (19Z)

This appeal primarily targets a select group of experienced activists from the squatter scene rather than the broader neighbourhood. But there is a notable connection between place-based self-defence practices and the creation of solidarity spaces. Referring to the Kochareal, a vast area that had been squatted for ten years before being closed in February 2023 to make way for housing cooperatives, activists highlighted that there was “no other space in the city where political resistance, counterculture and the most diverse lifestyles come together in such a concentrated way”. It was also “a supportive environment for those who have fallen through the cracks, have no citizenship, or are otherwise not ‘functional enough’” (19Z).

Finally, the movement for affordable housing in both cities features several bottom-up and commons-based housing cooperatives. One example is the Warmbächli cooperative in Bern, which not only provides flats but also creates communal spaces to encourage networking and revitalize the neighbourhood:

Our housing community aims to keep rents as affordable as possible. A solidarity fund is intended to enable people with limited financial means to participate in the housing project. But the aim is to create more than just a collection of affordable flats. The housing community wants to create a lively place with several generations that offers plenty of space for exchange, encounters, synergies, and interaction. (9B)

In all three solidary housing initiatives presented here, the creation or appropriation of local spaces or built environments for affordable collective housing is tied to cultivating place-based relationships of proximity, encounter, and assembly. These relationships foster collaboration and mutual support in everyday life. Self-organized, place-based solidarity practices in housing can thus be seen as infrastructures of care (Gutiérrez Sánchez, 2023; Power & Mee, 2019).

In the field of migration, similar narratives emerged in the analysed prognostic frames. In Bern, the community centre Medina, which expanded during the pandemic, repurposes a shipping container in a central square to serve as a low-threshold contact point for people facing challenges such as precarious citizenship status, economic precarity, homelessness, or addiction. Through the collective practice of cooking and eating together twice a week, Medina creates a space of encounter where individuals can foster a sense of belonging regardless of their backgrounds. This initiative builds an emancipatory infrastructure independent of state control, promoting “encounters at eye level” where “the resources and skills of each individual person can be recognized and included” (3B).

The Zurich Autonomous School (ASZ) was similarly created in response to the exclusion of migrants from public infrastructures, particularly the right to education. However, as noted in a public statement, the school, which offers German courses to around 300 migrants at a central location in the city, is much more than just a language school:

The ASZ is a meeting place and is open to everyone. With a café where we share food, a sheltered women’s room, and events. We run projects with radio stations, theatre groups, and artists. We publish a newspaper [...]. And together with other organizations, the ASZ stands up against racism and for the rights of refugees and migrants. [...] The protest continues. Every day that people come to the ASZ to learn, to cook, to exchange ideas, to support each other, to create something new together. (11Z)

Self-organized solidarity infrastructures like Medina and the ASZ see themselves as a practical response to concrete (neglected) everyday needs and frame their activities as emancipatory practices. These initiatives aim to politicize precarious living conditions and envision alternative ways of living in and against crises. In these contexts, more explicitly than in housing, the focus is on the caring dimension of these self-organized structures. Here care is understood broadly—not only as a collective means of sustaining our lives but also as a powerful political concept for addressing exclusion and domination and for establishing non-hierarchical forms of mutual aid.

We also see this empowering concept of care in public statements by the feminist strike movement, where women engaged in both paid and unpaid care come together. With slogans such as “Care for Resistance”

(16Z) and “We Care—We Fight! Care-Work Unite!” (14Z), care workers advocate for a strike day, “pointing out the often-invisible nature of care work and making noise” (17Z). Moreover, through various personal connections, assemblies, and virtual communication channels, this movement extends far beyond the annual strike day in June. It aims to build up a resistant caring community over the long term. This solidarity infrastructure is rooted in diverse urban spaces, from workplaces in the care sector to everyday locations such as children’s playgrounds, neighbourhood centres, and kitchens in private households.

Institutionalizing Solidarity Infrastructures

In addition to more confrontational demands directed at state institutions and the grassroots creation of solidarity infrastructures, the prognostic frames studied also highlight efforts to formalize these solidary relationships through collaborations with municipalities that promote the institutionalization of solidarity at the urban level. Analysing the prognostic frames articulated in public statements by both municipalities and movement actors provides some insights into these collaborations.

The most progressive example, which works even on an international scale, is in the field of migration in both cities. Inspired by the sanctuary-city movement in North America and driven by political demands by local movement actors, the city administrations of Zurich and Bern have undertaken a process to introduce municipal ID cards over the past four years. These political initiatives centre around the concept of urban citizenship, in which presence in the city and belonging to local communities are considered qualifying criterion for accessing urban social infrastructures. The municipality of Bern formulates their vision as follows:

We want everyone who lives here, including people who do not have a legal citizenship status, to be able to identify themselves as residents of Bern and benefit from city offers and services. We can achieve this with a city card. (25M)

The city’s perspective underscores that a “city for all” can only be achieved “in a joint process” with civil society (25M). The *Wir alle sind Bern* platform similarly advocated for inclusive participation in the implementation process. The activists therefore also call for expanding democratic participation to include individuals without citizenship.

The city of Zurich is also in favour of introducing a city card. With it, they want to enhance “the living situation of undocumented migrants, as they will be able to identify themselves more easily to the authorities” (28M). In such efforts to broaden access to social infrastructures, the city council also aims to strengthen existing institutions, enhance collaboration between various agencies, and secure funding for essential services such as healthcare for illegalized migrants living in the city. The city also emphasizes, however, that granting legal residence status falls outside municipal competence and underscores the necessity for action at the cantonal and national level “so that undocumented migrants can exercise their fundamental constitutional and human rights without danger” (28M).

In the field of care, the city of Bern is particularly committed to supporting informal mutual support networks within neighbourhoods, which have become increasingly important during the pandemic. The city provides financial support to initiatives like Neighbourhood Bern and the Mütterzentrum Bern-West, both led by social workers. These initiatives aim to connect individuals who need everyday care support with volunteers, thereby also promoting exchange within neighbourhoods. But this municipal approach remains limited because it is unable to significantly change the material conditions of caregivers and the gendered division of care work. The city of Zurich has taken a further step by materially enhancing care work through its initiative for a municipal collective labour agreement. This effort aims to improve working conditions for all childcare workers in the city, whether employed by private companies, non-profit organizations, or municipal institutions (29M).

In the area of housing, both cities are advancing similar paths by mandating that one-third of all rented flats be offered on a non-profit basis in the future. Non-profit housing providers, such as cooperatives, are considered crucial partners in implementing this urban policy (27M, 30M). Additionally, both cities have established funds aimed at purchasing properties from private owners and converting them into urban housing. While this strategy enjoys general support from many housing-movement actors, there has been criticism, particularly in Zurich, that the city has not been proactive enough in recent years in this regard (24Z).

While prognostic frames demonstrate municipal efforts to institutionalize solidarity practices, a more nuanced examination of negotiations between movement actors and municipal administrations would provide deeper insights into the challenges, including co-optations and other tensions inherent in these collaborations.

6 CONCLUSION

In Switzerland, a country known for its wealth but also high social inequalities, various precarities within urban populations have become focal points of political mobilization by social-movement actors in recent years. Analysing the diagnostic frames of solidarity initiatives in the fields of care, housing, and migrants' rights in the cities of Zurich and Bern reveals a consistent critique of these actors: the neglect of everyday needs. They highlight intersectional exclusions from urban social infrastructures and point out gaps and deficiencies in existing social infrastructures. Furthermore, urban social infrastructures serve both as arenas for political activism and as references for shaping future political visions. In my analysis of prognostic frames, I distinguished three different forms of references to infrastructures and citizenship for achieving social change: *contention*, that is, making demands to improve or expand formal social infrastructures; *subversion*, that is, building place-based solidarity infrastructures; and *collaboration*, or interaction between municipalities and movement actors with the aim of institutionalizing solidarity practices.

The analysis showed that these strategies are often combined and should not be conceptualized as opposing each other. It seems important to resist the tendency to make a sharp distinction between contentious practices of resistance to state oppression and the work of building alternatives. Instead, we should acknowledge the “increasingly blurred [...] lines between contentious and non-contentious forms of civil society” engagement (Della Porta & Steinhilper, 2020, p. 176). As Donatella Della Porta (2022) points out, building mutual-aid networks—in which social-movement actors respond to precarious living realities by bridging “advocacy with the provision of goods and services” (ibid., p. 16)—is of growing importance, especially in times of crisis.

What is interesting here is the understanding of citizenship that social movements bring to their engagement with infrastructures. Citizenship is negotiated in direct confrontation over access to and the design of public infrastructures and in resistance to the privatization and marketization of public services. As the analysed frames of the movement actors in Switzerland show, these disputes revolve around criticism of an understanding of infrastructures that treats the urban population merely as passive consumers. Social-movement actors' notion of public services refers to the vision that essential needs should be organized collectively and democratically.

In addition to demanding public infrastructures that are caring institutions (Tronto, 2013), movement actors emphasize the importance of building solidarity infrastructures within communities and neighbourhoods to meet everyday needs. The prognostic frames highlight place-based practices of solidarity and incremental, less visible citizenship practices of community organizing and collective care within neighbourhoods. The creation of grassroots solidarity infrastructures responds to “infrastructural violence” (Rodgers & O’Neill, 2012) and to the structural carelessness of public institutions, particularly towards individuals with limited citizenship rights who face systemic exclusion. But it goes beyond a mere response; these initiatives represent attempts to experiment today with an envisioned future society. This “prefigurative” approach to activism and social change “inscribes the goals of the movement into its practices and activities, creating the (vision of) alternative society, both in the present, and through a future-oriented creation of alternatives” (Asara & Kallis, 2023, p. 58). As manifested in the visions and practices analysed in the prognostic frames, this involves creating common spaces in the “urban everyday” (Beveridge & Koch, 2023), where horizontal forms of decision-making, self-organization, and collaborative social relations are promoted. This aligns with abolitionist perspectives, which are gaining importance in some social movements in Switzerland. In this context, abolition is not seen as “an event of a radical break in a utopian future but an experimental practice embedded in the existing everyday routines of marginalized communities” (Loick & Thompson, 2021, p. 1). It is with this understanding of solidarity, not as an abstract idea but as a collective practice rooted in everyday urban life, that social movements and solidarity initiatives point towards an alternative, people-focused, and needs-centred future.

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ANALYSED DOCUMENTS

<i>ID</i>	<i>Name of organization</i>	<i>Type of organization</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Field of action</i>
1B	Wir alle sind Bern	Urban-citizen platform	Bern	Migrants’ rights
2B	Migrant Solidarity Network	Grassroots movement	Bern	Migrants’ rights
3B	Medina	Grassroots project	Bern	Migrants’ rights/care

(continued)

(continued)

<i>ID</i>	<i>Name of organization</i>	<i>Type of organization</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Field of action</i>
4B	Feminist. Streik Kollektiv Bern	Collective of feminist groups	Bern	Care
5B	Eidg. Kommission Dini Mueter	Network of mothers & care workers	Bern	Care
6B	Mütterzentrum Bern-West	Neighbourhood centre for mothers	Bern	Care/ migrants' rights
7B	Bahnstrasse vernetzt	Tenants' solidarity initiative	Bern	Housing
8B	Unlock the City	Squatter collective	Bern	Housing
9B	Warmbächli	Housing cooperative	Bern	Housing
10Z	Solinetz	Refugee support	Zurich	Migrants' rights
11Z	Autonome Schule Zürich (ASZ)	Solidarity project	Zurich	Migrants' rights
12Z	Autonome Schule Zürich Frauengruppe	Solidarity project	Zurich	Migrants' rights/care
13Z	Verein Züri City Card	Political coalition	Zurich	Migrants' rights
14Z	Trotzphase	Grassroots union	Zurich	Care
15Z	Netzwerk Gesundheit vor Profit	Grassroots union	Zurich	Care
16Z	Für Widerstand sorgen	Coalition of care workers	Zurich	Care
17Z	Feministisches Streikkollektiv Zürich	Collective of feminist groups	Zurich	Care
18Z	AMAK	Mothers' collective	Zurich	Care
19Z	Kampagne Alles wird besetzt	Alliance	Zurich	Housing
20Z	Wohndemo Bündnis	Alliance	Zurich	Housing
21Z	Mieten-Marta	Investigative collective linked to tenants' network	Zurich	Housing/care
22Z	Petition Heuried bleibt	Neighbourhood initiative	Zurich	Housing
23Z	Credit Suisse enteignen	Petition	National	Housing
24Z	Initiative Noigass	Political initiative	Zurich	Housing
25M	Bern City Card	Municipal statement	Bern	Migrants' rights
26M	Nachbarschaft Bern	Municipal statement	Bern	Care
27M	Wohnoffensive	Municipal statement	Bern	Housing
28M	Zürich City Card	Municipal statement	Zurich	Migrants' rights
29M	Kita Paket	Municipal statement	Zurich	Care
30M	Neuer Wohnraumfonds	Municipal statement	Zurich	Housing

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From the Ghettos to the Camps: Interrelational Solidarity between Housing and Migration Regimes in Denmark

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I INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the global community has been beset with multiple crises—economic crisis, a so-called migration crisis, housing crisis, health crisis, military crisis, and the environmental crisis. Meanwhile, crises are also moments of social reproduction of tensions, radical imaginations, contestations, and innovative practices (Haiven & Khasnabish, 2014). Indeed, various actors at urban, national, regional, and international scales have reacted differently to these multiple crises. With the Covid-19 pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine war, and most presently right now the Israeli war on Palestine and other ongoing international conflicts, people have lost their livelihoods, and the number of refugees and displaced persons

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© The Author(s) 2025
M. Pajnik et al. (eds.), *Framing Solidarities in Times of Multiple
Crises*, Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-82563-7_4

has increased. To confront their impacts, actors at various geographical scales have responded with different measures. The variety of actions and responses are primarily due to the varied conceptions and interests of the actors in dealing with the global crises (Jørgensen & Schierup, 2022). At the national scale, more restrictive and exclusionary policies and practices have been selectively deployed by nation-state authorities. Neo-liberal austerity measures and surveillance have intensified, and borders become not only more mobile but also more hostile—mostly towards refugees and precarious migrants (*ibid*). However, cities, local and international civil society organisations, and activists are responding with more humanitarian and solidaristic approaches ‘from below’ (della Porta & Steinhilper, 2021a; Schwiertz & Schwenken, 2021).

In Denmark, studies have demonstrated how crises and national restrictive and exclusionary policies have resulted in the formation of diverse social movements (SM) and social movement organisations (SMOs) ‘from below’. By SM we refer to looser networks and self-established often autonomous organisations. By SMOs we refer to established civil society organisations that may have emerged from social movements but have professionalised and often have established strong ties with other civil society actors. These SM and SMO are present in the social fields of housing (Olsen & Larsen, 2023; Fallov & Birk, 2022), migration or migrant rights (Agustín & Jørgensen 2016, 2019; Jørgensen & Thomsen, 2016), with their direct and indirect bearings with care as a cross-cutting practice (Jensen & Fersch, 2019). For example, the Danish social housing sector is currently being restructured by national policy that seeks to combat so-called ‘parallel societies’, entailing two things: (1) tearing down and/or privatising non-profit housing in marginalised and vulnerable neighbourhoods and (2) repressive strategies of governance which focus on ethnic minorities (Fallov & Birk, 2022). Meanwhile, SM and SMO in the field of migration aim to contest national restrictive policies and create “safe spaces” where people feel welcome, where people can learn about daily experiences from asylum seekers and refugees, while recently arrived migrants can also learn skills from volunteers to navigate the Danish society and institutions (Carlsen et al., 2022). These various studies have shed light on the development of SM to negotiate and contest policies and practices amid multiple crises. Our research contributes to understanding of how multiple crises, national policies and practices in Denmark affected SM and SMO also in-between housing, migration, and care. It does so by examining the following question: How do emerging overlaps between

the politics of housing, migration, and care in the Danish context might contribute to develop forms of solidarity ‘from below’?

For many social movements, the concept of *solidarity* plays a central role for their reimaginings and transformations, in explicit as well as implicit framings. In this chapter, we therefore build on Agustin and Jørgensen’s (2019) threefold typology of autonomous, civic, and institutional forms of solidarity. This theoretical framework helps us to capture these transformations in articulating newly formed (re) articulations and (re) imaginations of solidarity, but also examine their degree of institutionalisation as infrastructures. On the one hand, this wide-ranging theoretical framework is ideally placed to examine a variety of different forms of solidarity between social fields. On the other hand, it also opens the possibility to analyse various forms of solidarity not as distinct categories, but as *interrelational*. With this theoretical distinction in mind, we therefore built a typology of SM and SMOs located in three Danish cities (Aalborg, Aarhus, and Copenhagen) between more (a) activist and autonomous and (b) civic and institutional examples, which we then examined for their interrelations across the social fields of housing and migrant rights. We are also building this new typology considering della Porta & Diani’s (2006, p. 20) definition of SM as “a distinct social process, consisting of the mechanisms through which actors engaged in collective action: are involved in conflictual relations with clearly identified opponents, are linked by dense informal networks, share a distinct collective identity” because of its conceptual connection to solidarity. Subsequently, we are then understanding SMO by drawing on Kriesi (1996) and his description of their internal structure as emerging from formalisation, professionalisation, organisation, and integration (see also della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 140).

Our research covers five social, political, and activist movements and organisations located in three major cities in Denmark: Copenhagen, Aarhus, and Aalborg. Almen Modstand and Boligaktionen København (Copenhagen) are examples of housing initiatives, while Trampolinhuset (Copenhagen), Aarhus for solidarity and Asylforum Aalborg are examples of initiatives focusing on migrant rights. This chapter focuses on the interplays and connections between social fields, practices, SMs and SMOs, and forms of solidarity, rather than their differences. We look, therefore, at both those fields through their strong intersection with cross-cutting practices of care. The practice of care is understood here more broadly as care for others and for the community (Gabauer et al., 2021). The chapter

examines the mobilising discursive strategies of these movements and organisations through the method of frame analysis, which is employed for the analysis of norms, beliefs, perceptions and (re)construction of affective atmospheres.

Based on the selected documents and theoretical reflections on the SMs and SMOs, we proceed to shed light on the diagnosis and prognosis framings of the initiatives ascribed in the social fields of housing, migrant rights, and by extension care. In this regard, we will demonstrate the strong contextual interrelationships of the selected movements in Denmark. Against this backdrop, this chapter explores how the framings of solidarities through these social movements, amidst simultaneous crises, could also create new (re)formulations of solidarity ‘from below’.

The chapter is therefore organised as follows: We first present our theoretical points departure focusing especially on conceptualisations of solidarity, after which we present the research design and methodological framework the chapter is built on. The analysis is divided into two parts, covering both the fields of *housing* and *migrant rights*, through the presentation of problem-solution pairs as framed by the five initiatives. In the final section, we summarise the results and discuss the relevance of our empirical findings relative to solidarity practices.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND CASE STUDY CONTEXT: SOCIAL FIELDS AND MOVEMENTS

In Denmark, as well as internationally, there is a burgeoning literature regarding social movements and practices of solidarity ‘from below’ (Ataç & Schilliger, 2022; Jørgensen & Schierup, 2022; Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019; della Porta & Steinhilper, 2021a; Bauder, 2021; Bauder & Godoy, 2020). In this regard, and considering the specific case of solidarity with migrants, della Porta and Steinhilper (2021b) argued that times of crises have altogether “blurred the lines between contentious and non-contentious forms of civil society engagement” (della Porta & Steinhilper, 2021b, p. 175). More precisely, they state that crises lead to “dynamics of hybridisation” (ibid., p. 176) for solidarity, which also produces a variety of new forms and changes in “repertoires, frames and organisational structures, which require conceptual and theoretical bridge-building” (della Porta, 2020). In this context, they suggest that the theoretical distinction between volunteering, third sector activities and SMO on the one hand,

and SM and political activism on the other, becomes an analytical and disciplinary oversimplification, because both SMs and SMOs activities “often intersect between humanitarian practices and contentious politics” (della Porta & Steinhilper, 2021b, p. 176).

In this chapter we are interested in investigating how, at local scales, solidarity practices by SMs and SMOs are progressively creating new collective subjects, relations, and institutions that re-negotiate national and supranational borders (Schilliger & Ataç, 2023; Jørgensen & Schierup, 2022). Indeed, studies have also provided theoretical conceptions about solidarity city movements (Bauder, 2021; Schilliger, 2020; Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). To Bauder (2021), urban solidarity (and sanctuary) could be conceptualised from philosophy, psychology, to legal and discourse forms which he termed as ‘infrastructure of solidarity’. In the same vein, Schilliger (2020) argues that formal and informal solidarity practices can thrive in four—political, spatial, mental, and social—differentiated but interrelated infrastructures.

The idea of ‘solidarity’ within social movements and their discourses comes with a range of conceptual notions and understandings: it is understood to be relational and spatial, as produced in but also itself producing space, and thus building and imagining alliances through that process (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019, pp. 14–15). In Agustín’s and Jørgensen’s (2019, pp. 39–42) actor-centred typology on solidarity practices, *autonomous solidarity* is conceptualised as relations and practices produced in self-organised (mainly urban) spaces; *civic solidarity* represents civil society initiatives that include refugee and precarious migrants; and *institutional solidarity* means the formalisation of solidarity, connecting the civil society arena with institutional policy arenas. This conception of institutional solidarity as a set of rights and obligations has often been associated with the welfare state “as a form of mechanical solidarity” (ibid., p. 41). In their perspective, solidarity is contentious; it emerges especially in moments or conjunctures, it is generative of political subjectivities and collective identities, it entails alliance-building among diverse actors, it is inventive of new imaginaries, it is situated in space and time and organised in multi-scalar relations, and it is linked in different ways to institutions (ibid., p. 25). The authors apply this typology of autonomous, institutional, and civic solidarity practices to three different city case studies—the City Plaza Hotel in Athens, Barcelona as ‘a refugee city’, and ‘Venligboerne’, which is one of the movements developed in responses to the so-called 2015 European ‘refugee crisis’. Coupled with other austerity policy measures in

Denmark, SMs and SMOs in the social fields of migrant rights and housing quickly developed across the country (Fallof & Birk, 2022; Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). Against this background, we proceed in this chapter with Agustín's and Jørgensen's (2019, pp. 39–42) typology, which we apply to initiatives and solidarity practices in three major cities—Copenhagen, Aarhus, and Aalborg in Denmark. The reason to examine those specific interrelations of solidarity is because of the tendency in the critical literature on social movements and solidarity to contrast institutions up and against the transformative potential of mobilisation from non-state and non-municipal actors (Agustín, 2015). Institutions in this literature are seen as impeding, controlling, coopting initiatives coming from SMs and SMOs, which has the consequence that interpretations of the role of institutions often exclude more progressive conceptualisations of inclusion and solidarity.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The focus of this chapter is on our chosen political and activist initiatives in Denmark, with the core focus lying on the two social fields of *migrant rights* and *housing*. The initiatives that were chosen for this frame analysis are all more explicitly embedded in either housing or migrant rights activism, which is the reason why the analysis provides the two structured sections on those two social fields. However, both *migrant rights* and *housing* fields are strongly interconnected with the cross-cutting practice of *care*, as the analysis below demonstrates—between housing and migration through the specific empirical context of the Danish housing policy known as the 'Ghetto law' as unique piece of both integration and housing policy, to which local residents responded in framing their neighbourhoods as 'caring communities' rather than 'parallel societies' like the Danish state. This interrelation also appeared between migration and care practices with regards to the three more explicit migrant rights movements. Therefore, the cross-cutting practice of *care* will be analysed in correspondence with the fields of *migrant rights* and *housing*.

In this chapter, we also observe the various intersectional strategies that the five initiatives and movements apply in their environment and examine translocal and transnational networks they manage to build in the process. Our aim is then first to observe how the chosen local social movements

and political initiatives in these three social fields communicate and promote a specific understanding of social problems and how they formulate or propose solutions (Entman, 1993), and secondly how those proposed solutions can and do inform critical approaches towards forms of solidarity ‘from below’ (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019).

For this analytical and political purpose, we have selected 25 documents produced by 5 different collective subjects or movements. The contents cover at least one of the social fields or practices we wanted to explore (housing, migrant rights, and care) for each of the movements. The selection has been done based on the content of the document and not necessarily on the field of action of subjects. Sixteen have been produced by two housing organisations and one by a migrant rights organisation based in Copenhagen (however, one of the two housing movements, namely *Almen Modstand*, is also present in other cities: Aarhus and Odense in particular), four by an organisation based in Aarhus (*Aarhus for solidarity*), and five by an organisation in Aalborg (*Asylforum Aalborg*). In our sample, 13 documents are more explicitly about housing questions (but show at times a strong interrelation with migrant rights), and 12 about migrant rights, with 6 of those on migrant rights also showing a strong intersection with care. Therefore, in the subsequent frame analysis we can find frames produced by housing movements that can also be classified as partly falling in the field of migrant rights, or discourses in migrant rights organisations that strongly resonate with the theoretical concept of care. We understand this cross-cutting not just as care work, but also with care understood more broadly as care for others, care for the community (Gabauer et al., 2021), or care as a material relation of solidarity. The balance between the different social fields has been looked for on the basis of the arguments rather than on the identity of organisations ‘from below’.

The documents we have chosen include a variety of types: public statements, self-presentation of the movements, public calls, antagonistic statements, social media statements (Facebook posts) as well as media representations and press releases. We selected documents that were written between 2018, which marks the year the Danish ‘Ghetto law’ was introduced, and 2023 to include the Covid-19 pandemic and to focus on the contemporary movement’s frames as well as their previous development. Almost all 25 analysed documents were written originally in Danish (some texts were also already translated into English by the authors themselves) but were ultimately coded in English to guarantee comparability within the research project. Lastly, in order to make it easier to distinguish

between our analytical concepts, and to construct a map/scheme of initiatives on an interrelational solidarity scale (see Graph 1) and the in-text ‘frames’ we found in our analysed documents themselves, in the following two sections the in-text ‘diagnostic frames’ are all marked with (–) and the in-text ‘prognosis frames’ are marked with (+).

4 FIGHTING THE ‘GHETTO LAW’: INTERRELATIONS OF AUTONOMOUS, CIVIC, AND INSTITUTIONAL SOLIDARITY IN DANISH HOUSING ACTIVISM

This section examines how social movements around housing in Denmark emerged and operate within the interrelations of autonomous, civic, and institutional solidarity. This context is of importance for examining social movements around housing in Denmark, because, their framings need to be read in the context of two important specificities: (a) the unique constitution of the Danish housing market and the importance of private, non-profit housing associations (in Danish ‘Almene Boliger’) (see Bach, 2019, Noring et al., 2022) and (b) the Danish government’s ‘Ghetto law’ that constitutes the institutional background to the Danish state’s assault on that particular form of affordable housing (Fallow & Birk, 2022; Olsen & Larsen, 2023). Indeed, social housing was developed and expanded under the initial paradigm of the Danish welfare state under which unprecedented quantities of social and nonprofit housing estates were being built, and it is these neighbourhoods which are now being targeted in policy documents like the ‘Ghetto law’ (Kajita et al., 2022, p. 149).

The affordable, non-profit housing sector constitutes a comparatively large part of the total Danish housing volume (roughly 20%), which are estates that are run by a great number of housing associations (Bach, 2019, p. 2). While these housing associations are private, they are also non-profit, as the rent is usually calculated in order to finance the expenses in running the estate (ibid.). This sector stands out through its multi-scalar and democratic organisation—it is one of the distinctive features of Danish non-profit housing (Fabian & Hansen, 2020). The housing associations have their own budget and residential board, elected by the estates’ residents. This element of residents’ democracy is a special feature of this sector; it is unique internationally and played an important role in stopping the privatisation of both social and non-profit housing in Denmark (ibid., p. 130). However, this affordable housing sector has

increasingly become the target of “anti-ghettoization strategies and policies” (Bach, 2019, p. 2). The goal is to change the composition of residents living in these specified areas to reduce the number of ‘problematic’ residents (as specified on the ‘Ghetto list’ itself). This can happen through forced eviction but also through privatisation of existing buildings. The law entitled *One Denmark without parallel societies—no ghettos by 2030* was first proposed in March 2018. However, similar strategies have existed for decades. In 2010 the first ‘Ghetto list’ was published and has been updated annually since. Since 2022, the Danish state has used the term ‘parallel society’ rather than ‘ghettos’.

The criteria for being put on the ‘list of parallel societies’ (former ‘Ghetto list’) are higher than average joblessness and crime rates, lower than average educational attainment and income rates, and importantly, for ‘hard ghettos’, the proportion of residents who are deemed to be of ‘non-Western background’, which includes recent, first, and even second-generation migrants, must be more than 50% in those areas. If an area has reached two out of the four criteria it ends up on the list. Indeed, the introduction of the ‘Ghetto plan’ read: “There will be no ghettos in Denmark in 2030. We hope to break down parallel societies once and for all”. For Kajita et al. (2022) this shows that the ‘we’ here is the Danish national government “[...] expressed as one voice, implying solidarity among those comprising a collective” (ibid., p. 153). However, it also shows that some “communities are presented as voluntarily outside the otherwise solidaristic community of the welfare state” (ibid., p. 149). These policies therefore redefine solidarity on what boundaries of inclusion and exclusion are established, but also importantly through measures that alter resident’s access to welfare-state practices of solidarity (ibid.)—like affordable housing. Indeed, one of the means for the eradication of those ‘parallel societies’ is to cut the non-profit housing stock in ‘ghetto’ areas to no more than 40%, while in ‘hard ghetto’ areas, it is common family-housing units to be reduced to that level. The municipality and the housing association are then required to provide plans for how to achieve this in their own (hard) ‘ghetto’ areas—either through the means of demolition, or the renovation and privatisation.

*Social Movements and Social Movement Organisations
on Housing: Almen Modstand and Boligaktionen København*

In our analysis we identify two main types of politically related but structurally different initiatives and movements targeting the question of housing and the ‘Ghetto law’ that can be analytically distinguished, each of them thematising, situating and linking the question of housing differently, as seen in the frame analysis of diagnostic and prognostic frames in the following section. The *tenant and resident-based social movement* Almen Modstand across Denmark (it is active in neighbourhoods in Copenhagen, Aarhus, and Odense) forms the first type, while the *anti-capitalist and anti-gentrification activist network* Boligaktionen København forms the second. While the former focuses often more specifically on neighbourhood-based question of rehousing, reconstruction, or destruction across Denmark with regards to the state’s assault on both non-profit housing and the targeted neighbourhoods through the underpinning ‘Ghetto law’, the latter thematises these localised struggles with regards to questions of gentrification in Copenhagen and a critique of capitalist relations in the housing market.

Almen Modstand (AM), translated as ‘Common Resistance’, is a social movement organisation that was created in 2018 in reaction to the commodification, privatisation, and area-specific stigmatisation of non-profit housing more generally and to the Danish government’s ‘Ghetto plan’, which is leading to the displacement of thousands of peoples (Fabian & Hansen, 2020, p. 125). Besides, their focus often lies on concrete practices and conditions of tenants. The movement organisation began mobilising in the local areas of Gellerupparken (Aarhus), Vollsmose (Odense), and Mjølnerparken (Copenhagen). Since 2018, it has been the main player in Denmark when it comes to mobilising the public against this policy. The group has managed to get a decent share of attention from politicians as well as the media (e.g., some seventy-five news articles have been published between 2018 and early 2022). The movement has attracted public attention due to its successful demonstrations in the main squares of Aarhus (in front of the city hall) and Copenhagen (in front of the parliament).

The internal structure works through local organising in these neighbourhoods. Here, AM collaborates, mobilises, and situates itself in the tenant associations, helping the tenants’ struggle against the respective housing associations at a local level. They often refer to their concrete

neighbourhoods and individual housing associations, with whom they are sometimes involved in active negotiations. But they also situate themselves against the overall ‘ghetto policy’ on the national level (through citizens’ petition, large-scale demonstrations, etc.). Intersectional discrimination and power relations are part of the framing and concrete practices of these initiatives. The individual local networks are also part of AM as a larger translocal network and alliance across Denmark. Moreover, the movement manages to mobilise a considerable number of racialised people from marginalised communities who have so far not been politically active—solidarity and resistance arose here around common threats to their homes (ibid.). While the movement sprung out of the housing field, it overlaps with the notion of commons and, in some cases, migrant rights, highlighting the interrelational element of solidarity. Likewise, the movement is interesting due to its translocal engagement, combining struggles and solidarities within housing and commons across various cities in Denmark that have neighbourhoods on the so-called ‘Ghetto list’.

Boligaktionen København, translates as ‘Housing-Action Copenhagen’, is a more activist-based network and movement that consists less of residents and tenants of the respective ‘ghetto areas’ (as the activists write in the analysed documents “we are not residents of Mjølnerparken”), and more of other residents of Copenhagen that are active in other activist networks and in anti-capitalist movements and struggles. The activists involved are supporting AM and the residents of the so-called ‘ghetto areas’ through assisting AM with the tenants struggles in Mjølnerparken, and are also involved in the organisation of demonstrations and direct actions that recruit other Copenhagen activists beyond Mjølnerparken to the cause of AM. While their focus is also on the discrimination of residents as part of the ‘Ghetto law’, their frames are focused on rent increases, affordable housing, gentrification, and capitalist relations in housing more broadly. In our frame analysis of the two SM and SMO’s documents, we found three main framings on *the diagnostic level*.

Almen Modstand and Boligaktionen København: Diagnostic and Prognostic Frames

Firstly, they both problematised the lack of democratic participation (-) for the tenants and residents of the ‘ghettos’, which are changing massively because of the ‘ghetto policy’. They are pointing repeatedly to tenancy rights being taken away, as well as to the “undermining and disregarding

of our resident democracy, which threatens our right to influence our own residential areas” (1C). These framings around a democratic deficit (–) relate to the structure of the non-profit housing sector and its multi-scalar and democratic organisation (Fabian & Hansen, 2020, p. 129) of residential boards in those housing associations (Bach, 2019, p. 3) as an international form of both *institutional* but also *civic solidarity* that needs to be defended. Resident democracy (+) emerged therefore as an essential frame for those two movements with references to democratic self-management and participation of renters in decision-making.

Secondly, the movement’s frames also thematise how profit orientation (–) makes way for what has been called a “commodification, privatisation, and white-middle-classification” (Fabian & Hansen, 2020, p. 128), suggesting that this plan is not an attack on the ‘ghettos’, but rather on the entire non-profit housing sector (Olsen & Larsen, 2023). While the Danish government is seen here as primarily responsible because of this legislation, housing associations and private investors are also seen as *active actors*. Boligaktionen København focuses on their framings generally more on those private capital interests, on the theme of gentrification and the more general terms of capitalist logic and the necessity of profit maximisation (–). Both movements show as a *prognostic framing* stopping the privatisation (+) of non-profit housing and subsequent gentrification of the city. Almen Modstand frames this with a focus on the non-profit housing sector that “must be strengthened” rather than “privatised or demolished”, referring often to “our commons” and “our housing”, with residents seen as the *active actors* capable of producing solutions. Boligaktionen København focuses on stopping the gentrification following this process of increasing privatisation (see chapter by Gerdes, Maaroufi and Schwiertz in this book on similar framings), as well as the affordability (“we want affordable housing and a city for everyone”) and the ‘right to the city’ (Lefebvre, 1996; Harvey, 2008).

Thirdly, the last *diagnosis framing* by these two housing movements was on the stigmatisation (–) of citizens and residents in targeted areas based on categories such as education, income level, and stereotyping notions of ethnicity and nationality by using ‘non-Western background’ as a “completely unheard of form of official state discrimination against a country’s citizens” that create “unequal social rights” (1C). These frames also thematise various repressive strategies of governance in those targeted ‘ghetto’ areas (Fallov & Birk, 2022).

In close correspondence to the problem of criminalisation of social issues, a *prognosis* framed by Almen Modstand is the decriminalisation of societal problems (+). Both movements call for the ultimate abolishment of the ‘Ghetto list’ and anti-racist activism. Both movements also frame more collective approaches (+) against a tendency towards individualising wider societal problems as a means of achieving this goal (for similar tendencies see chapter on Germany in this edited collection). This appears first in the framing of AM as a horizontal and democratic resident movement without a spokesperson or hierarchies. This framing of AM as an “extra-parliamentary and party-political neutral platform” highlights specifically that it is “rooted in the residential areas” (1C) as an example of civic solidarity, while Boligaktionen frames a more autonomous solidarity-based and activist approach: “... we are not residents of Mjølnerparken... we are Copenhageners who do not want to accept that the Ghetto law discriminates against our neighbours” (11C).

Furthermore, the dominant role of the Danish government as a target because of the importance of the ‘Ghetto law’ in Danish housing questions might constitute an important difference to our other country cases and their movement’s focus on capitalist relations in housing markets. Still, other actors framed as responsible for the emerging problems are often considered to be the housing associations (Bo-Vita in Mjølnerparken for example) and private investors (NREP in the same area). This issue of antagonism brings us to the analysis of *affects* with regards to problems and solutions identified by the housing movements. There are interesting findings. While with regards to problems it is not perhaps surprising that the most common emotional expressions were anger and frustration, distrust, and uncertainty. For potential solutions the most mentioned affect was empathy and compassion—in a repeated correspondence with the notion of ‘community’. This interrelation is interesting as it might point to a particular discursive response of the residents in ‘ghetto’ areas that challenges the notion of a ‘parallel society’ that is forced upon them and reframes this spatial stigmatisation (Olsen & Larsen, 2023) of their areas in affectual and empathetic terms as a ‘community’.

In conclusion, there are also some theoretical reflections which emerged from this frame analysis of housing movements in Denmark, which will assist us for further conceptualising new enactments of solidarity ‘from below’. One theoretical implication concerns the potential for protest and political and social transformation that forms of tenant organising might bring to the notion of ‘acts of citizenship’ (Isin & Nielsen, 2008).

Self-organised protests of non-citizens and migrants have been the focus of the wider acts of citizenship. Our analysis here shows that politically organised tenants' assemblies and struggles in Denmark for a 'right to home', by movements such as Almen Modstand could be reconceptualised as acts of citizenship also. They are connecting the discourse of citizenship rights to a new social field (housing) that it is commonly not associated with citizenship in general, and thereby create a new political subjectivity of tenants as *activist-citizens* (Bernhardt & Schwiertz, 2025).

5 FIGHTING THE CAMPS: INTERRELATIONS OF AUTONOMOUS AND CIVIC SOLIDARITY IN MIGRANT RIGHTS ACTIVISM IN DENMARK

While self-organised protests of non-citizens and migrants in Europe have indeed been the focus of the acts of citizenship literature, we argue that a renewed look at the social field of migrant rights in Denmark still provides new insights into how forms of solidarity are enacted 'from below'—through autonomous and civic forms of solidarity. This is because at the national level, almost all Danish political parties share similar positions regarding migration and asylum policy—these policies are largely restrictive and exclusionary. The 'paradigm shift' regarding asylum by the Danish government (Kreichauf, 2018; Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019) is an example of this development. However, the restrictive national immigration policies and practices, coupled with an array of crises—the so-called European 'refugee crisis' of 2015, Covid-19, and the war in Ukraine—have brought about various forms of solidarity movements 'from below' (Jørgensen & Schierup, 2022; Agustín & Jørgensen, 2016).

Social Movements and Social Movement Organisations on Migrant Rights: Trampolinhuset and Asylforum Aalborg

Diverse solidarity practices 'from below' are found in the analysed documents from the initiatives. The analysis covered three cities, while the socio-political movements examined include Trampolinhuset (Carlsen et al., 2022) established in 2010 in Copenhagen, Aarhus for solidarity emerged in 2015 in Aarhus, and Asylforum Aalborg formed in 2012 at 1000 Fryd (a volunteering cultural centre) in Aalborg. Imperatively, the initiatives in the three cities in one way or the other engage in place-based

autonomous practices of care between users and volunteers. The three initiatives, Trampolinhuset, Aarhus for solidarity, and Asylforum Aalborg, have all as part of their origin, core objectives, and activities engaged in visiting different asylum centres and sometimes bringing the asylum seekers to visit the cities within which they are operating. Trampolinhuset and Asylforum Aalborg emerge to be so much involved in place-based practices of care, whilst Aarhus for solidarity is visiting one of the asylum centres—Kærshovedgård. Therefore, between all three cities, two types of initiatives can be distinguished, each of them formulating and linking migrant rights and by extension care slightly differently. The first type of initiative is more of a *place-based voluntary and community centres*, while the second type constitutes an *autonomous and activist-driven movement*. The organisation of their activities is thus an important yardstick in differentiating them.

Trampolinhuset (translates as Trampoline House) and Asylforum Aalborg engage in everyday practices of care and solidarity (Schilliger, 2020; Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019) between and amongst users and volunteers in Copenhagen and Aalborg. *Trampolinhuset* is a pro-refugee organisation in Copenhagen, which describes itself as a “self-organised refugee justice community centre” (14C). The initiative was established in 2010 and developed from a series of workshops that were organised by artists Joachim Hamou and Morten Groll, and curator Tone Olaf Nielsen. The original group consisted of asylum seekers, art and architecture students and other volunteers (Carlsen et al., 2022) and begun with activities that still form a large part the program of the house today: language classes, free legal counselling, discussions, get-togethers, and a women’s club (ibid.). The initial trigger for the organisation was the tightening of asylum and migration policies in Denmark, including issues of racism in the Danish asylum system, the isolation of rejected asylum seekers in camps across the country, and the impacts of legal restrictions on people inside and outside the asylum system (ibid.). Indeed, the activists describe on their homepage how rejected asylum seekers “found a unique democratic community where they felt welcome and equal... in stark contrast to the insecurity and marginalisation that many displaced people experience in the Danish asylum and integration system” (14C).

Their activities are oriented not just on accommodating diversity among Danes and refugees and asylum seekers, but also on mitigating differences between founders, staff, asylum seekers using the space and local supporters. The group has two objectives. First, to offer practical knowledge and

counselling to counter isolation within the asylum camps. Second, to create a space for the learning of norms and skills that enable asylum seekers to survive in a Danish society often characterised by growing anti-immigration sentiments and hostile asylum policies. The aim is to create a safe space where people feel welcome, where they can participate on an equal level in the organisation and running of daily activities, but also where people can interact with asylum seekers and learn from their daily experiences, while asylum seekers can learn skills to navigate Danish society and institutions.

In December 2020, Trampolinhuset had to close because of the pandemic and a lack of funding as it is a self-governing institution supported by public and private funding through events and donations, demonstrating elements of autonomous solidarity, which left a huge gap for hundreds of refugees and asylum seekers visiting the centre on a weekly basis. In January 2022, a group of former users, volunteers, and staff members restarted the activities, even if on a smaller scale. It is still a volunteer-run and non-profit initiative with four part-time employees reporting to a board, and open once a week for legal counselling, language classes, workshops, and community dinners, which represents an example of elements of civic solidarity. They are also running regular events and campaigns to improve asylum seekers rights, equality, and participation in Danish society, and throw light on the continuous tightening of Danish immigration policies.

Also, the second movement organisations named Asylforum Aalborg, started in 2012, under a slogan “Nobody escapes for fun” (24AL), at 1000 Fryd in Aalborg. There, a group of volunteers got together to help Kurdish-Syrian asylum-seekers, as they believed that “it’s not just understanding and realisation that’s needed. We want equality, justice and a system that can see even people who are struggling...” (ibid.). Inspired by ‘Trampolinhuset’, and therefore highlighting the translocal interrelations between those movements, the group started visiting asylum centres in Hanstholm and Brovst. In 2013, Asylforum Aalborg became more active and organised. They started meeting regularly on the first Sunday of every month and expanded the visits to asylum centres in a broader geographical area. In the same year, the group initiated an annual diversity day, and since then, every December, they invite asylum-seekers to a gathering in Aalborg, with the objective to enhance the relationship between the group and asylum seekers.

*Trampolinhuset and Asylforum Aalborg: Diagnostic
and Prognostic Frames*

Besides strengthening the relationship between asylum seekers and civil society (+), Asylforum Aalborg also advocates for the closing of the asylum centres (+), as indicated in the following: “Yes, close the centres and don’t pull people out of their lives just to threaten them just to have politics bringing in votes [...] Don’t threaten everyone with a refugee background with the opportunity to sit and rot in such a centre for the rest of their lives” (23AL). We argue that Asylforum Aalborg, just like ‘Trampolinhuset’, emerged as self-organised volunteer groups, and that it is this self-organisation ‘from below’ which highlights the element of *autonomous solidarity* within their practices. Their aim and objective is to support asylum-seekers and refugees in those asylum centres (–), and to contribute to more open immigration politics in the country. They do this by visiting various asylum centres in northern Denmark with support ranging from food, clothing, among others to those in the camps. They also contribute to the discourse against national restrictive and exclusionary immigration policies and practices using social media and other available platforms (+). Indeed, this innovative measure raising awareness (+) about anti-immigration politics, and of visiting the camps to make asylum-seekers feel not forgotten, can here be theorised as exhibiting elements of civic solidarity (Agustín and Jørgensen, 2019), as it aims at the mobilisation of wider civil society and the inclusion of asylum seekers into Danish society.

Solidarity initiatives require some degree of infrastructure—time, place, and resources. In 2014, based on collaboration, which we describe as an interrelational form of autonomous and civic solidarity initiative (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019, pp. 39–42), the group moved from 1000 Fryd to Kofoedsskole, a community centre for socially disadvantaged people, which offered more facilities such as sewing machines and kitchens to support its solidarity practices. This move signals a first move towards a more collaborative approach with the municipality. At Kofoedsskole, the group started to meet twice a week—participating in sewing activities, Danish classes, cooking together, and showing new people around the city. However, the space was only provided by the municipality for a limited amount of time, and in 2016, when the group partnership with Kofoedsskole therefore ended, their weekly integration activities almost came to a halt, showing again the importance of infrastructure—space, social, and material resources—to the practices of urban solidarity ‘from below’ (Atac & Schilliger, 2022).

Crises are, indeed, moments of social reproduction of tensions, radical imaginations, collective, and innovative practices (Haiven & Khasnabish, 2014). After contemplating dissolving Asylforum Aalborg or limiting the activities to just visiting the camps due to lack of safe space for meetings, the new board in 2017 managed to secure another space, which allowed them to meet every Friday. Therefore, they survived and continued with their integration activities—legal counselling, language classes, renewal of residence permits among others—which were seen as critical to both the volunteers and the users. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the group stopped their physical meetings in response to the national measures and directives to reduce contagion. To fill in the gap, they adopted online actions—using Zoom and telephone calls—to support their users’ integration activities. These pragmatic and innovative measures had an important impact on the users and volunteers supporting them. As stated in a document, “It has never been easy to get in touch with the Board of Immigration, but the last 6 months have been close to impossible [...] The short period the immigration office by the police was open after Covid-19 was also a joke” (24AL). The Covid-19 pandemic has in fact added an additional layer or burden to the processes of assisting people of refugee background integration. After the pandemic restrictions were lifted, the group started the physical weekly meetings at a different location in Aalborg. This new venue, the International House North Denmark, came as a formal support from the municipality. In our understanding, this is both ‘top down’ and ‘bottom up’—and thus a form of both institutional and civic solidarity initiatives that enables new forms of solidarity ‘from below’ (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019, pp. 39–42).

Social Movements on Migrant Rights: Aarhus for Solidarity

The third movement, Aarhus for solidarity (Aafs) was established by a few friends in 2015 in Aarhus. It started as a response to the so-called refugee crisis and the aim was to help the residents of different deportation centres (–) in Denmark. Finally, after some years, the focus was put solely on Kærshovedgård deportation centre, which is one of the deportation centres, located in the Central Denmark Region, 70 kilometres from Aarhus, the second biggest Danish city. Kærshovedgård is a former open prison converted into a Deportation Centre in 2016. The camp is officially run by the Criminal Probation Service and has limited services such as recreational activities and emergency healthcare which are offered by the

Danish Red Cross. It is one of three Deportation Camps in Denmark. The two others being Avnstrup and Sjølsmark. Kærshovedgård is the one with the stricter regulations. The residents are not allowed to work and earn money, and even though they are allowed to leave the camp, they are required to sleep in the camp, which is controlled by the process of reporting one's presence in the camp at the gate of the camp. Not reporting one's presence can lead to a legal penalising of the residents, and therefore turn the rejected asylum seekers into criminals. Lastly, the camp is in a secluded area, around seven kilometres from the nearest train stop, isolating the residents from the rest of society. "It is like going to prison in a democracy" (18AA) stated one resident in an analysed article. These measures are, what Lindberg (2022) identifies as 'slow violence' from the state, which is characterised by "the creation of injurious conditions that are supposed to deter non-deported people from remaining in the country" (ibid., p. 95).

Even though the initiative started as an informal and self-organised activity, some years later they received a private donation from a priest and finally fundings from Caritas, which highlights the interrelation of autonomous and civic elements of solidarity in this example. In 2020, the group made the initiative more formal by getting registered as a recognised organisation. The group today is still made up of international students and young international workers with different backgrounds who meet in one of Aarhus' churches. AafS' main activity is visiting the camp every third Sunday of a month. The activities include anything from sitting and talking over a cup of coffee or tea, to practicing sports or cooking together. Next to the visits, AafS has also a strong online presence. The organisation works towards raising awareness (+) about bad living conditions not only in Kærshovedgård, but in all deportation centres (–) in Denmark, as well as keeping the debate about the issue relevant and prominent, not making residents feel forgotten and overlooked, which we believe highlights that the cross-cutting practice of 'caring about' also works here as a form of 'caring for'. Moreover, AafS uses their social media account to call civil society into action by advertising various refugee- and human rights-related demonstrations, protests, and events happening in Aarhus. They do so by also collaborating with other civil society organisations (+) interested in refugee and asylum politics in Denmark. AafS therefore represents interrelational autonomous and civic forms of solidarity and an activist-driven movement. Their work towards making life in Kærshovedgård better by giving the residents the chance to establish social contact outside of

the camp, but also by giving them an active role and platform to use their voice makes AafS a great example on how solidarity practices are shaped (Schilliger, 2020; Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019) ‘from below’.

The deportation regime (–) has emerged as a significant topic of discussion, not only in the context of migrant rights but also in relation to violation of human rights. “Being an agent of your own life is somewhat impossible when you are a rejected asylum seeker” (18AA) states one of the AafS’ documents. Deportation centres (–) in Denmark, infamous for their harsh living conditions, are a part of the so-called motivation enhancement measures that are meant to force rejected asylum seekers to cooperate with the Danish state during the deportation process (Lindberg, 2022, p. 94). Kærshovedgård is a former state prison turned into a deportation centre for rejected asylum seekers, which is still led by the prison service, with the Red Cross being involved in the everyday management. In the same vein, asylum centres (Hanstholm, Frederikshavn, etc.) visited by other initiatives, such as Trampolinhuset and Asylforum Aalborg, could be described or linked to that of Kærshovedgård.

Aarhus for Solidarity: Diagnostic and Prognostic Frames

In the frame analysis of AafS’ documents, at *the diagnostic level*, multiple clusters of problems are identified: institutional violence, criminalisation, and the deportation regime (–). The rejected asylum seekers are living in the same camp as people due to be deported due to criminal activities (residents with a so-called tolerated stay status), which might lead to negative labelling. The politicians often mention the isolation because of asylum seekers breaking society’s rules even though some of the residents in Kærshovedgård and other asylum centres have never been a part of Danish society, as they never left a camp after their arrival in Denmark. The negative discourse leads, therefore, to increased criminalisation (–) of innocent people. Moreover, many people living in the asylum centres do not know when or if ever they will be able to leave the camp. Most residents in Kærshovedgård belong to the Kurdish minority from Iran, a country Denmark has no repatriation agreement with, leaving some asylum seekers stuck in limbo for years. Another identified problem are deliberate efforts to make the living conditions in the deportation camps (–) as intolerable as possible. Not being able to work, earn money, or take education, and living in a secluded area, far away from the rest of the society, the residents are deliberately isolated in the attempt to make them leave the country as soon as possible to show them that they are not welcome. Additionally,

the efforts to worsen living conditions have serious consequences on the residents' health—both physical and mental. The medical assistance offered is either not adequate or fast enough. “Unless it is an emergency, physical pain and chronic illness are not treated in Danish detention centres” (18AA) states another text. The conditions were even worse during Covid-19 when many did not have the means to isolate, as they were sharing rooms with other residents, some of which did not respect the guidelines provided by the government, hence putting others at risk of getting infected.

The Danish government is, according to this part of framing analysis, responsible for most of the above-listed problems, as they are “not willing to spend more resources on the health and wellbeing of the asylum seekers” (18AA). The government is the one that has the power to change the conditions in the camps, change the discourse and with that public opinion, and eventually close the camps within which human rights are breached. Hence, the *active actor* in both problem and solution is the Danish government.

An important *active actor* on the *prognostic level* is the Danish civil society (+). It lies in the nature of migrant rights initiatives and activism to encourage civil society to contribute to making a change. They do so by actively trying to change public opinion (+), raise awareness, and show the government that their policies are not agreed with, though, among others, participating in protests and demonstrations as well as signing petitions to close the deportation camps (+). Therefore, according to all AafS: “The only way to change [the situation] is to put pressure on the government and the system as a whole” (18AA). The prevailing *affects* identified at the *diagnostic level* of the frame analysis are frustration, concern, distrust, and uncertainty, which also substantiate the responsibility of the Danish government. On the other hand, the prevailing affect connected to solutions is, by far, rebellion, followed by empathy and compassion. Rebellion is reflected in the desire to fight against the restrictive policies and in the constant effort to put the conditions of deportation centres (–) back on the political agenda when politicians try to disregard the problem.

Care Across the Initiatives

Throughout the frame analysis it becomes clear that the notion of care plays a big role in activism around deportation centres (–). The notion of care is equally present in the place-based formal and informal practices of solidarity by volunteers and users in Asylforum Aalborg and

‘Trampolinhuset’, through assisting residence permit renewals and cooking together. It is expressed as care for others, care for the forgotten ones in society. This is also evident in that the second biggest affect identified is concern.

In summary, when talking about migrant rights activism in Denmark, the notion of care is very present. Taking the example of residents of deportation camps, the expression of care is especially seen in the cases that focus on the mental and physical health of deportation camp residents and how their health is being negatively impacted by the conditions. Moreover, it can also be found in the case in which Covid-19 and inability to isolate were discussed. Likewise, when talking about institutional violence, but also deportation regimes, care is prevalent in the way in which texts are characterised by empathy and compassion for refugees and asylum seekers, which is also seen in the affects found in solutions. In all the above-mentioned examples, care is presented as ‘care for the other’ and protection of certain rights. In the place-based solidarity practices, free migrant rights provide legal counselling, language class, application family reunification, and housing among others are provided to the users. The notion of care in terms of organising community kitchens, birthday parties for users and volunteers, and sharing of gifts are also part of the initiatives’ everyday activities. In the same vein, the politics of care—caring with and caring for each other—are an integral part of Aarhus for solidarity, Trampolinhuset as well as Asylforum Aalborg in supporting refugees and their families, asylum seekers, and volunteers.

6 CONCLUSION: INTERRELATIONAL SOLIDARITY AND NEW ‘ACTS OF CITIZENSHIP’

In conclusion, the Danish government (and its restrictive and exclusionary policies) is seen as the main problem actor in two social fields (migrant rights and housing) as well as the cross-cutting practice of care. The 2018 ‘Ghetto law’ targeting non-profit housing estates and the asylum ‘paradigm shift’ of the Danish state constitute the distinct empirical background for this. Shared frames therefore centre on problematising the role of the Danish state in those social fields, but also the privatisation and profit-orientation in the field of housing. Moreover, the state’s assault on, or sometimes absence of, strong democratic, civic, and institutional solidarities, as well as participation in those infrastructures, are equally noted as contributing factors to the diagnosis. Other critical scholars (Keskinen et al., 2019, p. 13) have started to explore how racialised migrants are

“increasingly blamed for the erosion of the welfare state (which in fact is a result of several decades of neoliberal policies)”, which can indeed be interpreted as a sign of an exclusionary form of politics of solidarity (Ålund et al., 2017). On the other hand, the suggested prognosis lies often in the strong and active mobilisation by social movements against these exclusionary and restrictive migration and housing policies, but also in the socialisation of institutional infrastructures of solidarity as a formalisation of solidarity, connecting the civil society arena with institutional policy arenas (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019).

Moreover, as Fig. 1 indicates, the organisations included in the frame analysis are often in-between autonomous, civic, and institutional in

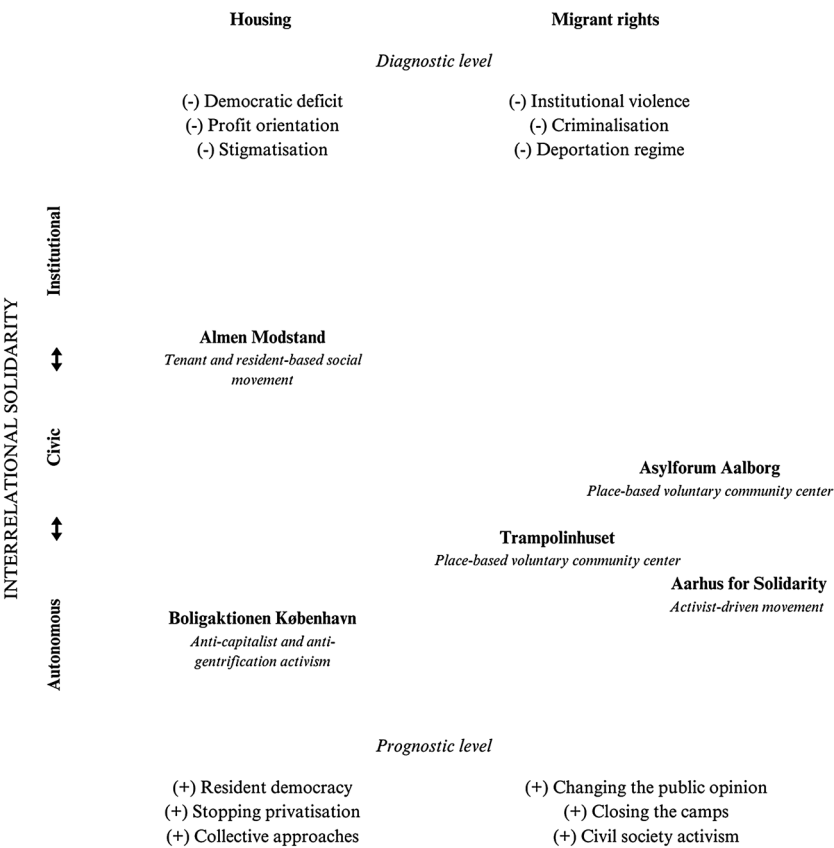


Fig. 1 Interrelational solidarity in Denmark

nature, and therefore what we call an *interrelational* form of solidarity, as they represent self-organised activist groups, but also NGOs and local communities (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). The type of initiatives also opens the discussion about the importance of spaces of encounter and how they affect the everyday functioning of the five organisations (Schilliger, 2020). While all the initiatives operate locally, they simultaneously fight against restrictive national policies of the Danish government, demanding institutional solidarity, and establishing spaces on different scales (ibid.). Establishing spaces of solidarity is also seen in the initiatives of the first type functioning as a ‘safe haven’ offering solidarity in the middle of general restrictive and hostile national policies. Moreover, as we have seen in this frame analysis, practices such as “volunteering, protesting, resisting” (Isin, 2009, p. 368) which Isin (ibid.) defines as “acts of citizenship”, are supported, and performed by the groups we studied. Through these practices, these movements aim to fight against restrictive national policies, which is seen in the initiatives demanding change from the government’s policies. The initiatives, moreover, include refugees and migrants themselves who fight for their rights. Different backgrounds of activists in the initiatives contribute to formation of autonomous and civic solidarity, which includes mutual support between actors experiencing the same political struggle (Schilliger, 2020; Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019).

The last theoretical consideration concerns the potential that forms of resident organising bring to the more theoretical notion of ‘acts of citizenship’ (Isin & Nielsen, 2008; Isin, 2009). As shown in our analysis, politically organised tenants’ assemblies and their struggles for a ‘right to home’ (Bernhardt & Schwiertz, 2025) are connecting the discourse of citizenship rights to the social field of housing—a connection underexplored in the citizenship literature. Moreover, the empirical interaction of housing, migrant rights, and care make it possible to advance the concept of ‘acts of citizenship’. Advancing acts of citizenship entails two main conceptualisations: theoretically, by re-thinking the acts of citizenship literature in terms of care and solidarity, and empirically, by analysing cases of activist citizenship in the field of housing, which has been less in the spotlight of current citizenship discourses.

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ANALYSED DOCUMENTS

<i>ID</i>	<i>Name of organisation</i>	<i>Type of organisation</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Field of action</i>
1C	Almen Modstand	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
2C	Almen Modstand	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
3C	Almen Modstand	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
4C	Almen Modstand, Nabosnak	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
5C	Almen Modstand, Nabosnak	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
6C	Almen Modstand, Nabosnak	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
7C	Almen Modstand	Housing movement	Copenhagen (also Vollmose, Aarhus)	Housing/Migration
8C	Almen Modstand	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
9C	Almen Modstand	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
10C	Almen Modstand	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
11C	Boligaktionen	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
12C	Boligaktionen	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
13C	Boligaktionen	Housing movement	Copenhagen	Housing/Migration
14C	Trampolinhuset	Social center	Copenhagen	Migration/Care
15C	Trampolinhuset	Social center	Copenhagen	Migration/Care
16AA	Black Lives Matter Denmark	Anti-racist organization	Copenhagen	Migrant rights
17AA	Aarhus for Solidarity	Movement organization	Aarhus	Migrant rights
18AA	Aarhus for Solidarity	Movement organization	Aarhus	Migrant rights
19AA	Aarhus for Solidarity	Movement organization	Aarhus	Migrant rights
20AA	Aarhus for Solidarity	Movement organization	Aarhus	Migrant rights
21AL	Asylforum Aalborg	Movement organization	Aalborg	Migration/Care
22AL	Asylforum Aalborg	Movement organization	Aalborg	Migrant rights
23AL	Asylforum Aalborg	Movement organization	Aalborg	Migrant rights
24AL	Asylforum Aalborg	Movement organization	Aalborg	Migrant rights
25AL	Asylforum Aalborg	Movement organization	Aalborg	Migrant rights

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Discursive Practices of Solidarity, Commoning, and Collective Subjectivation in Berlin and Hamburg: Framing De-privatization and Socialization

Jo Gerdes, Mouna Maaroufi, and Helge Schwiertz

I INTRODUCTION

[R]adical imagination is the ability to imagine the world, life and social institutions not as they are but as they might otherwise be. It is the courage and the intelligence to recognize that the world can and should be changed. But the radical imagination is not just about dreaming of different futures. It's about bringing those possible futures 'back' to work on the present, to inspire action and new forms of solidarity today. Likewise, the radical imagination is about drawing on the past, telling different stories about how

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M. Pajnik et al. (eds.), *Framing Solidarities in Times of Multiple Crises*, Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-82563-7_5

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the world came to be the way it is, and remembering the power and importance of past struggles and the way their spirits live on in the present. (Haiven & Khasnabish, 2014, p. 3)

The importance of social movement framings can be understood in terms of the imagination and inspiration they generate, which is necessary to sustain mobilization. Without the radical imagination of alternatives, “we are lost”, only left with “nightmares of insecurity, precarity, violence, and hopelessness” (Haiven & Khasnabish, 2014, p. 3). Yet, social movements also need to confront the nightmarish conditions of their present, analyse and criticize them, and consequently position their alternative projects in view of structural changes. Constitutive for such alternative projects are both problematizations and problem-solving approaches that move beyond the status quo.

In our case studies, we analyse how different political organizations active in the social fields of care work, housing, and migrant rights in Berlin and Hamburg frame the problems and solutions they consider and render relevant; how they frame the past, present, and future; and create connections between different people and struggles. The ongoing polycrisis affects all of these social fields (see introduction chapter in this book). It is a severe challenge, but at times also an opportunity for social movements to (re)connect struggles and envision new approaches. By examining their responses to this crisis, as well as their radical imaginations of different futures, we unpack the framings specific to each social field, but also highlight commonalities and differences across fields and movements.

In our frame analysis, we highlight two overarching arguments regarding de-privatization and socialization in a broader sense. The first argument centres on the *de-privatization of problems* as a cross-field framing in the context of the prolonged (post)neoliberal era, in which the mantra of “personal responsibility” and the individualization of social problems has become hegemonic (Tronto, 2013, p. 46). Countering the privatization of problems and reframing them as social problems is crucial to opening up new spaces for solidarities from below. Corresponding to this process of de-privatizing problems, the second argument focuses on framings that suggest a *socialization¹ of solutions*: the socialization of infrastructures in

¹ The German term for socialization is *Vergesellschaften*, and in an economic and legal sense it refers to the transfer from private to common property, but in a broader sociological sense it also refers to making something social or societal.

the fields of housing and care work but also, in a broader sense of socialization, the collective self-organization of community spaces and mutual aid, which we perceive in all three fields but is especially crucial in the migrant rights field.

We interpret these framings as discursive practices of relational and contentious solidarity (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019, 2021; Schwiertz & Schwenken, 2020; della Porta & Steinhilper, 2021), through which interdependencies are made visible and which enable to break out of isolation and build collective (infra)structures to face commonly identified grievances. After a short introduction to the theoretical concepts of solidarity, commoning, and political subjectivation, the method of frame analysis, and the local context of the cities of Berlin and Hamburg, we present the results of the frame analysis, looking first at a diagnostic (problem-centred) framing and then at prognostic framing. Based on our empirical analysis, we then argue for a more precise understanding of the practices, relations, and infrastructures of solidarity through the concepts of commoning and political subjectivation, as well as for a bridging of the debates associated with the two concepts. Finally, drawing on the concept of commoning (Federici, 2019; della Porta, 2024), we highlight the de-privatization of social problems and the socialization of solutions. Referring to the concept of political subjectivation (Rancière, 1999; Schwiertz, 2021), we show how particular collective subjectivities emerge in relation to different antagonisms.

2 SOLIDARITY, COMMONING, AND POLITICAL SUBJECTIVATION

Solidarity can be associated with different theoretical traditions and meanings, for example, varying from a Durkheimian conception of solidarity as social cohesion to Christian conceptions of solidarity as universal fraternity (Bayertz, 1999). In our frame analysis, we refer to a concept of solidarity, which, in a (post)marxist tradition, is closely linked to antagonisms and social struggles (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019; Schwiertz & Schwenken, 2020), leading in many cases to forms of “contentious solidarity” (della Porta & Steinhilper, 2021). At the same time, social movements’ framings address not only what they oppose, but also what they create in their organizing process. To better capture the de-privatization of problems and the socialization of solutions and to rearticulate the concept of solidarity more

precisely in this view, we refer to two theoretical perspectives linked to the concepts of *commoning* and *political subjectivation*.

A first theoretical reference to better unpack the examined practices of solidarity is to be found in the debate on the “commons” that has been going on since the 1990s. For our analysis, Federici’s concept of “commoning” is particularly suitable due to her radical democratic, marxist-feminist perspective. While referring primarily to self-organized economies and to reproductive activities (2019, p. 4), her conceptualization goes beyond these contexts in showing how political groups imagine and organize the common in a society that is fragmented in many ways.² This can be understood as a process of commoning in the broader sense of the “production of ourselves as a common subject” (Federici, 2019, p. 110). As Caffentzis and Federici stress, “commons require a community”, which needs to be built based on long-term relations of care, cooperation, and co-responsibility (2014, p. 102). This is why the observed collective practices of activists are so central to imagining a future based on common, rather than private versus public, interests. In this vein, commoning is meant to reshape not only ownership, but also our relationships with ourselves and others by overcoming the “isolation” of individuals and the “separation between the private and the public spheres” (Federici, 2019, p. 4). These two points resonate with the analysed approaches to de-privatization and socialization that aim to reappropriate the social through struggles that generate the common. The concept of commoning can also be related to the framings of socialization in a more specific sense of a reappropriation of the ownership, organization, and decision-making organs of public and privatized social infrastructures. This process can occur in cooperation or confrontation with municipalities and has also been described as “communalization” or “municipalization” in other urban contexts such as Barcelona (Buil, 2019).

Second, we refer to the concept of political subjectivation in order to describe the collectivities that emerge in such commoning processes and to highlight how different collective subjectivities are produced

² On the one hand, we conceptualize “commoning” thus beyond the debates on alternative economies and social reproduction in the narrower sense; on the other hand, our cases are also related to social reproduction, if we understand this in a broader sense: “Reproduction does not only concern our material needs—such as housing, food preparation, the organisation of space, childrearing, sex, and procreation. An important aspect of it is the reproduction of our collective memory and the cultural symbols that give meaning to our life and nourish our struggles” (Federici, 2019, p. 4).

depending on the specific antagonisms they engage in. Referring to Rancière, this concept sheds light on the processes through which “those who have no part” emerge as political subjects, demonstrating that they must be counted in as a part of society, despite their differential exclusion (1999, p. 30; 1992). Rancière highlights that any political subjectivation implies “disidentification” (1999, p. 36) by rejecting being positioned as a mere market participant; a body reduced to the private sphere, or a case of administrative proceedings. However, political subjectivation also creates subjects anew “by transforming identities defined in the natural order of the allocation of functions and places into instances of experience of a dispute” (ibid.). In this process, groups reject the marginalized social position assigned to them as migrants, women, (care) workers or tenants and, at the same time, in referring to these positions they construct a positionality of struggle that generates a specific political subjectivity. These emerging political subjects remain related to their old identity, but in an altered relationship (Schwartz, 2021). In this way, transversal or transgressing subjectivities emerge in radical democratic struggles against the privatization of the social (Rancière, 2006, p. 55). Tenants, for example, are confined to the private-law relationship with their landlord, whereas an organization as “we, the city residents” rejects this isolating position and creates a collective subjectivity. The concept thus allows us to elaborate how subjectivities are produced through antagonisms, the collective opposition to a specific wrong; a process that we could also describe in the vocabulary of activist and performative citizenship (Isin, 2017). From this point of view, we can also distinguish different forms of identification, such as “we, the city residents” or “we, the illegalized”, which constitute different subjects that are also linked to a different scaling of struggles (e.g. city/community/neighbourhood).

3 DISCURSIVE DIMENSIONS OF SOLIDARITY: THE METHOD OF FRAME ANALYSIS

In this chapter, we analyse the discursive dimension of framing solidarities and although the statements we analyse cannot be detached from the material and physical actions on the streets and in communities, they are crucial for social movements because they open up an alternative view of

the world and the corresponding options to act differently.³ In line with Haiven and Khasnabish's (2014) radical imaginary approach, we analyse social movements' "militant rejection of dominant social imaginaries" and their articulations of a different future. Therefore, we consider it important to understand which social imaginaries and discourses social movements criticize, complement, remove, or replace. Based on our mapping of organizations in Berlin and Hamburg, we selected cases of urban social movement organizations that have been active in recent years, and combine social issues around migrant rights, housing, and care work. We then selected texts from the organizations that we have considered suitable for frame analysis in terms of recency, length, and content, resulting in a corpus of 18 organizations and related documents. In most cases, these texts were published on the group websites as self-representations or public calls for demonstrations.

In our analysis, we focus on the frames articulated in these texts and how they resonate with each other, while not offering a comprehensive and representative account of the organizations we analysed. We analysed the 18 texts according to two basic frame markers related to diagnosis and prognosis (Benford & Snow, 2000; Verloo, 2016; see introduction chapter in this book), and extracted 44 problem-solution pairs. For each diagnosis and prognosis, we identified active actor, passive actor, affect, and normativity. We then proceeded to merge similar frames in fewer overarching main frames which form the basis of the following analysis. While the diagnosis-prognosis format is central to the method we used, the analytical perspective adopted here is not limited to it. Therefore, we have added three categories to the method that do not directly correspond to this format, namely references to the local and urban scale, translocal connections, and intersectional linkages. Due to the limited number of texts and the selective focus, our analysis cannot provide a comprehensive quantitative insight into the frames of the movements. Rather, we attempt to qualitatively analyse how different organizations develop frames and respond to societal conditions and crises.

³In our research project on the local enactment of solidarity and citizenship, we combine this approach with ethnographic research, the results of which also inform our interpretation of the framings.

4 THE LOCAL CONTEXT OF HOUSING, MIGRANT RIGHTS, AND CARE WORK ORGANIZATIONS IN BERLIN AND HAMBURG

The cities in which we conducted our research are characterized by different historical developments in recent decades, with Hamburg as a western German city and Berlin as a city whose history is marked by the “division of Germany” and the Berlin Wall. Yet, they share important similarities such as being city-states (cities that are also states in the German federal system) and also share trends in terms of political-economic transformations and urban social movements, which we outline below in relation to the social fields of housing, migrant rights, and care work.

In Berlin major transformations have been occurring since the country reunification in the 1990s (Holm & Lebuhn, 2020). Berlin remained a poor and fragmented city however, a situation that was amplified by increasing austerity policies in the 2000s (*ibid.*). Around the same time, previously publicly owned social housing units were progressively privatized reducing the amount of affordable housing units. Since the 2010s, growing rents and displacements, particularly in working-class and migrant neighbourhoods like Kreuzberg, have been opposed by new heterogeneous and inclusive forms of local organizing around housing, evictions, and gentrification by groups such as Kotti & Co, which is centred around the prominent Kottbusser Tor square in Kreuzberg. These groups and, more recently, the campaign for the expropriation of large real estate companies in Berlin were able to publicly introduce and spread the idea of socializing housing (Hurlin et al., 2021).

In Hamburg, neoliberalization processes began earlier and were met by a broad opposition of urban movements some of which gained prominence across Germany such as the right-to-the-city movement which emerged in Hamburg in 2009 (Hurlin et al., 2021). Due to the entrepreneurial governance of the city and corresponding processes of gentrification and displacement since the 1980s, the housing crisis in Hamburg has long been acute (Birke, 2014). Struggles against demolitions, gentrification, and rising rents have led to a particular social housing regime which binds the city to ensuring that at least a third of newly built housing units are social housing (Hurlin et al., 2021). Nevertheless, affordable housing is increasingly inaccessible which has led to the initiation of a campaign for expropriation in 2021 which follows the example of Berlin’s campaign.

Both Berlin and Hamburg have a relatively long history of loud and visible migrant struggles, exemplified by refugee movements and protests

such as Lampedusa in Hamburg and the occupation of Oranienplatz in Berlin-Kreuzberg in the first half of the 2010s (Odugbesan & Schwiertz, 2018; Ataç & Steinhilper, 2022). These struggles, which have generated broad support and solidarity in their neighbourhoods, are linked to left-wing organizing around (racist) police violence and evictions. However, the unequal power relations and conflicts among migrant activists and supporters have since led to the formations of self-organized refugee groups (Ünsal, 2015). The “long summer of migration” in 2015 has led to new volunteer mobilizations for refugees across Germany and attempts to unite and politicize these support structures through coalitions such as the Solidarity City campaigns or We’ll Come United in Hamburg and Berlin (Schwiertz & Schwenken, 2020). They address a range of lacking rights and services for migrants in health care, work, housing, and other social fields. These demands emerge from a general deterioration and precarization of social rights and infrastructures. In particular, the privatized and inadequate provision of health care has received more attention in recent years, not least because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, it is challenging to link the specific precarious situation and struggles of migrants and refugees to a broader debate about the deterioration, precarization, and privatization of public infrastructures and services, which affect racialized and marginalized populations in particular.

The healthcare system in Germany has been subject to much criticism and has become the arena for labour struggles—including migrant health-care workers—even before the Covid-19 pandemic. Since the mid-2010s, a series of strikes by healthcare workers in hospitals have highlighted poor working conditions and the corresponding substandard treatment of patients (Artus et al., 2017; Dück, 2018). While these changes are taking place across Germany, the recent hospital movement in Berlin has received much public attention and support (Dück, 2018). Due to the economic dominance of the large private hospital chain Asklepios in the city of Hamburg, calls for de-privatization and socialization have also become pronounced in Hamburg. These struggles, which have been mainly visible in paid care professions and in hospitals, are linked to shifts in gender roles and dynamics, and to two decades of restructuring of the welfare state that have decreased public spending (Artus et al., 2017). However, the resulting commodification and crisis of social reproduction does not only affect paid care workers, but is also addressed in the struggles of unpaid care workers, as exemplified by the translocal organization of feminist strikes or by the network Care Revolution.

5 DISCURSIVE PRACTICES OF SOLIDARITY IN BERLIN AND HAMBURG

Diagnostic Frames: Privatization of Social Problems, Individualization, and Isolation

The analysis of the diagnostic frameworks allowed us not only to identify statements that are characteristic of each organization, but also to indicate how social problems are presented in each of the three fields we studied. While housing and care work movements tend to focus on profit-orientation and inadequate resource distribution on the housing market or in care work structures, migrant rights groups tend to emphasize inequality and oppression caused by a divisive migration regime. Accordingly, they focus more on political decision-makers on municipal, national, or EU scales. Housing and care work movements refer to economic actors in addition to urban political decision-makers, naming in some cases concrete real estate companies or hospital chains. Concerning the passive actors of the identified problems, the organizations identify and address particular social groups that are most affected such as professional and non-professional care workers as well as care receivers, renters, migrants, refugees, or illegalized persons. It is striking that in the fields of housing and care work, the affected groups can be more easily broadened and inclusive—most inhabitants in the city are renters and almost everyone receives care at some point in their life—while only some people are targeted by the structures of the divisive migration regime, which excludes them not only from specific social rights, but more comprehensively from a legal status of full citizenship (even though a differential inclusion is taking place). This points to different possibilities for broader or more limited political subjectivities and, accordingly, different bases for commoning processes. Despite these structural differences, we were able to identify some similar patterns across the three fields.

While the organizations name a wide variety of issues as urgent in the post-pandemic, crisis-driven society, a main frame that spans all social fields concerns the prevailing privatization and individualization of societal problems. In this sense, the neighbourhood initiative Wilhelmsburg Solidarisch organizes regular meetings where people come together to tackle their conflicts with landlords, employers, or other authorities. They argue that social issues require societal solutions and cannot be dealt with adequately on an individual level: “We regularly find that our personal

conflicts have societal causes. Today, we can solve many problems only partially or not at all. That is why we strive for a society in which all people decide together on the issues that affect them” (H1). In this vein, the individualization of problems is not only divisive and disempowering, it also makes the problems harder if not impossible to solve as they are strongly linked with societal structures.

In the field of migrant rights, the individualization and societal isolation of problems is evident in the divisive and racializing asylum and migration regime, the differential inclusion into economic and societal structures, and the specific and intersectional challenges faced by refugees such as their forced accommodation in camps (the so-called Lager⁴ regime). The group NINA (Women IN Action) focuses on the situation of refugee women who suffer in particular from a lack of privacy in camps. As a result of the migration and Lager regime, their problems tend to be not only individualized but also isolated from the rest of society. This results in a double negation of the social character of problems: not only an individualization, but also the marginalization of the problems of discriminated groups, which only appear on the margins of society but not as socially relevant. Against this individualization, NINA argues that “The personal problems of individuals are our problems – we see them as problems of society that we face” (H2).

In the field of care work, groups criticize processes of individualization that detach care work from social conditions and concerns. Several health-care organizations point out that illness is individualized and that the conditions that cause illness are largely ignored. For example, the self-organization of trans* and non-binary BIPoC Casa Kuà denounces that the health system does not consider the effects of racism and other forms of discrimination, thereby exposing BIPoC and queer people to poor quality health care: “We see health as holistic and not only as the treatment of symptoms, because ill health can be caused by societal conditions, intersectional discrimination, and also loneliness and isolation” (B1). Similarly, the professional community healthcare centre Poliklinik Veddel in Hamburg-Veddel—a district characterized by comparatively low life expectancy—points to the prevalent narrow understanding of health in the healthcare system: “Political and social factors such as rent increases,

⁴The term for camp in German “Lager” is not used officially anymore due to its association to the Nazi period, however the refugee movement has reappropriated it to point to the realities and continuities of isolating and imprisoning unwanted populations.

low income, precarious employment, racism or poverty in old age have been shown to influence health more than the quality of medical care alone" (H3). In this context, it is criticized that social services are organized into distinct sectors and hierarchical positions, which does not do justice to a social and holistic concept of health.

In the diagnostic framings in all three fields, the individualization, privatization, and division of social issues are seen as disguising structural inequalities while also causing the isolation of affected individuals. While the broader causes and consequences of individualization and isolation are multifaceted, in our data it is particularly related to the problematization of profit-orientation, which is the most common framing in the fields of care work and housing. Many organizations criticize the profit-orientation and privatization of housing and health care since the early 2000s and see political elites as responsible for this development but also point to the capitalist logic of profit maximization itself. The Poliklinik Veddel explicitly connects the issues of individualization and profit-orientation within the healthcare field that prioritizes profits over peoples' needs, thereby triggering competition rather than collaboration, hierarchy rather than integration of different kinds of knowledge and fragmentation rather than interdisciplinary work. Similarly, the hospital alliances of Berlin and Hamburg point out that the importance of healthy living conditions is ignored by profit-oriented structures: "We need healthy living and working conditions to avoid getting sick and a functioning healthcare system when we are sick. However, health policy today is not geared towards good care for everyone. Rather, the healthcare system has been increasingly transformed into a market" (B2).

In the field of housing, the financialization of the housing market results in speculation and the necessity of steady rental increases so that real estate companies ensure profits for their investors. Accordingly, privatized and financialized housing unit owners become actors of speculation leading to more gentrification and displacement, lack of affordable housing, vacancies, and homelessness. As one of the housing campaigns puts: "Nowadays, apartments are no longer primarily there to live in, but rather for the owners to earn money" (B3). Political actors add to the problem, as publicly owned land is being sold to private owners while especially low-income renters are facing precarious living conditions. The squatting initiative Leerstand Hab-Ich-Saath also blames profit-orientation of political and economic actors for homelessness. They have been squatting an apartment complex in central Berlin since 2021 together as people who had

been homeless before and emphasize the responsibility of the municipality for failing to provide accessible housing and sufficient emergency shelters while continuing evictions. The group states that “For years, there has been a failure to create sufficient affordable housing. [...] It is estimated that up to 10,000 people in Berlin have to live on the streets, compared to only up to 1050 places in emergency shelters” (B4). Along these lines, the expropriation campaign Hamburg Enteignet describes a continuous displacement as a central consequence of developments on the housing market:

We tenants can no longer afford to live in Hamburg! The average asking rent on the free housing market is €13.40 per square meter – in some districts even over €16.00! Even people with medium incomes can hardly afford this. The consequence is a continuous displacement: to the outskirts of the city, to the surrounding area or even to homelessness. (H4)

Besides the critique of profit-orientation, the frames constitute collective subjectivities of “we, the tenants”, stimulating political subjectivations as acts of de-privatization. Many of the organization’s framings state that the individualization and profit-orientation of society is not only based on but also reproduces and reinforces uneven power structures. As the neighbourhood initiative Wilhelmsburg Solidarisch points out, many people are caught up in structures where they have little power, such as landlord-tenant relations. Other organizations stress uneven power relations that are based on specific (and often intersecting) forms of discrimination such as sexism, racism, ableism, homo, trans* or inter* hostility as well as illegalization. In the (health) care field this means that especially those people who fall out of the norm by being poor, queer, racialized, or otherwise othered, will be faced with less adequate treatment as Casa Kuà states.

The health care system in Germany is designed according to white and cis-male norms, and this goes hand in hand with sexist, racist, classist, ableist and body-negative discrimination. For this reason, many inter*-, a-binary, trans* people, women, disabled and fat people fall out of the regular health system and suffer from health-impairing conditions, or have to resign themselves to poor quality health care. (B1)

The group Kotti für Alle (Kotti for all) points out that insufficient and unequal access to housing leads to more, and particularly health-related, problems and therefore causes further precarization, racialization, and

criminalization. As they criticize, at Kottbusser Tor, the square in Berlin-Kreuzberg locally referred to as “Kotti”, the municipality has decided to further securitize and individualize social problems by investing in constructing a new police station, instead of providing more housing or access to health care and social work. The resulting heightened police presence and repression affects particularly refugees and migrants who have little or no access to work, housing, (health) care and other basic services and rights.

Inequalities are most clearly explained by migrant rights groups that argue that the current unequal and divisive migration regime only enables inclusion for some and does so in line with Germany’s political and economic interests, rather than providing equal access to rights and possibilities for participation for all. By classifying people according to their “prospect to remain⁵” and their countries as safe or not safe, as well as different legal procedures and status, divisions and inequalities are actively created by the migration regimes. The network We’ll Come United (WCU) opposes this approach: “There is no justification for unequal rights [...]. Whether it’s about the right to housing, education, work, mobility or the right to health care. Social and political rights exist for all those who are here” (B5).⁶ In this sense, WCU links the struggle against divisive migration regimes to a broader call for solidarity: “The law differentiates between different countries of origin and classifies us accordingly: those with a good and those with a bad prospect to remain. [...] We demand the extension of solidarity which doesn’t make any divide based on one’s origin” (B5). These types of differential migrant policies are not only divisive between those with migrant status and those with citizenship in Germany, but divisions are also rooted in intersectional discriminations. The Break Isolation Group from International Women* Space (IWS) puts an emphasis on the intersectional oppression that refugee women face as they are confronted with racism and sexism. Through the focus on the prevalent migration and Lager regime, mechanisms of exclusion can be pinpointed that span several issues at once. As such, also the fields of housing and care work are shaped by relations of inequality that have to do with exclusionary mechanisms as part of the migration regime.

⁵ In 2016 the administrative notion of good, insecure, or bad “prospects to remain” has been introduced which pre-classifies asylum seekers according to the average success rate of their country of origin in asylum procedures and distinguishes which rights and services they have access to.

⁶ German quotes have been translated by the authors.

In conclusion, across the three social fields, social movement organizations illustrate how the current political and economic regime as well as societal structures lead to a range of problems that end up not only *individualizing* social problems, but also corroding existing social structures of basic necessity. We understand the ways in which movements reframe these problems as acts of de-privatization. In further framings, *profit-orientation* is considered as a main driver behind political and economic decision-making at least for care and housing structures. *Inadequate resource distribution* within care and housing structures is seen to result from this kind of decision-making, affecting most people in society, particularly those who already live more precariously such as individuals that face intersectional discriminations and migrants whose position is made precarious by divisive migration regimes. A chance here seems to lie in the connection of struggles as seen in struggles for the right to housing that are fought by several migrant rights groups but also connect more broadly with other movements or struggles for the right to intersectional health care.

Prognostic Frames: Socializing Solutions and Commoning Social Infrastructures

Corresponding to the diagnostic framing of problems, we identified prognostic frames which express the movements' claims for change and visions for the future. In their framing of solutions, movements do not only make claims towards municipal actors and institutions, but also present visions and enact alternatives of a radically different future. As in our analysis of the diagnostic frames, we determined active and passive actors. The social movements themselves as well as urban citizens are considered central active actors whereas urban policy makers are less often envisioned as the actors that will bring about the proposed solutions—or at least not without substantial societal pressure. Instead of addressing policy makers directly, many groups focus on self-organization, mutual aid, and empowerment as solutions which are imposed and implemented by social movements and activists themselves. Approaches of autonomous and civic solidarity (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019) are therefore often preferred to state or municipal reforms. This is telling about the groups' imaginations for the future in which social rights and infrastructures and the provision and distribution of resources ought to be organized and administered collectively and democratically.

In such a prefiguration of a more democratic future, some of the analysed texts broaden the scope of active actors to all “the people living in the city”. In this way, they envision a unified urban society and encourage people to actively partake in the pursuit of social change which is central to the self-representation of the campaign *Deutsche Wohnen & Co Enteignen*:

We have very different backgrounds. We live on the green outskirts of the city or in the heart of Kreuzberg, in high-rise estates and old Wilhelminian neighbourhoods, have just moved here or have always lived here. Many of us have been committed to a liveable and affordable city for everyone for many years, while others have only just started. What unites us is that we do not accept rising rents and the sell-out of Berlin to the global financial markets any longer. The desire for real change on the housing market has brought us together. (B6)

In other housing organizations as well, renters are put forth as the most decisive actors fighting against rent increases and evictions. The housing organizations present the actors as part of a larger struggle that concerns all and that is increasingly organized transnationally for instance through the European Action Coalition for the Right to Housing and to the City. Other organizations—particularly in the fields of care work and migrant rights—are more specific in identifying particular actors that are most involved by forming active part of workers’ struggles, migrant struggles, or also queer and feminist coalitions.

While most of the framings we examined relate specifically to one or two fields, the shared critique of a privatization of problems in the diagnosis is at the basis of various approaches to socializing solutions. Many organizations see the solution in a transformation from a profit-based to a needs-based and democratic system of property and resource distribution in housing and health care. Changing the ownership and decision-making structure of social infrastructures and services has emerged as a common claim in the last years in reaction to ever increasing privatizations. The notion and need for expropriation were largely established and spread through the campaign *Deutsche Wohnen & Co Enteignen* (DWE) in Berlin which claims the socialization of 240,000 apartments that are owned by large real estate companies such as *Deutsche Wohnen* and should become public and common property once more—this time including the democratic self-management and participation of renters in

decision-making (Berfelde & Möller, 2023). Based on article 15 of the German constitution that mentions the possibility of expropriation for the sake of the common good, they call for an expropriation or rather “socialization” (*Vergesellschaftung*) of real estate companies owning more than 3000 housing units. That this endeavour is legally feasible has been established, in 2023, by an “Expert commission” on the subject. In a Berlin-wide referendum in 2021, 59.1% votes in favour of the socialization were achieved thanks to extensive organizing on the streets and in doorstep conversations to collect signatures for petitions as well as years of organizing by neighbourhood renter organizations such as Kotti & Co (Hurlin et al., 2021). Currently, migrants and their struggles are reflected mostly in an English-speaking working group called Right to the City that problematizes the fact that 22% of Berlin’s residents and those most affected by the housing crisis cannot vote in local elections.

The expropriation campaign in Hamburg, which was founded in October 2021 and started collecting signatures for a petition in 2022, is part of a translocal translation of the Berlin campaign’s strategy. With a similar framing, they reject the profit-orientation of the housing market and criticize that building more and more is seen as the only solution by the city. They aim for a petition that would require the municipality to consider the claim that real estate companies owning large amounts of apartments should be expropriated and their housing units re-included into public ownership and democratic self-management. Other organizations such as those against vacancy of houses and flats (*Leerstand-hab-ich-saath*) focus on the inadequate provision of social housing by municipalities which they ask to stop selling housing units and speak of “municipalization” rather than socialization, thus relying more on municipal actors. With municipalization they also imply a de-commodification of housing, though. So, whilst the modalities of the process of de-privatization may differ, the overall solution could be grasped with a broader concept of socialization.

The frames for socialization are related to a general call for a needs-orientation in the way social infrastructures are organized—particularly in the healthcare sector. Many care work organizations locate the solution in a transformation of the profit-based to a needs-based economy. The organizations speak of the goal of “health care provision based on solidarity” (B2) implying on the one hand the “prohibition of profits in the health care sector and reforming the financing system according to patients’ needs”, and, on the other hand, the “expropriation and socialization of

hospitals”, which goes hand in hand with “democratic self-management” (B2)—a framing similar to the one present in the expropriation campaigns in the housing field. Here, however, a needs-orientation would also manifest in better working conditions and more recognition for care workers which would decrease the shortage of care workers and increase the quality of care work.

In one way or the other, approaches to socialization can be found in most solution frames. Socialization is not always conceived as democratic and collective ownership on a big scale, yet the importance of sharing resources more equally and based on needs, of re-connecting individualized problems and linking them to a common societal context, and of providing collective and non-commodified spaces and services is voiced by most organizations. In practice such transformations are pursued mostly on a smaller scale by neighbourhood organizations, collective spaces or community healthcare centres. Many organizations convey that to realize structural change, people need to organize and struggle collectively in communities, cities, and neighbourhoods and to do so locally as well as translocally.

Self-organized spaces for mutual aid can help to reach such collective approaches as pursued by groups such as Wilhelmsburg Solidarisch (WISO). They attempt to create commonality and a local community based on a shared class position in society without necessarily taking up particular identities. They organize themselves to build collective support, solidarity, and struggle in a working-class neighbourhood of Hamburg by having weekly gatherings in the form of an office day and bi-weekly co-counselling:

We organize ourselves in a grassroots democratic way, i.e. we decide all important questions together – instead of deciding who should decide for us. We do not hand over our concerns to representatives, but take care of them ourselves. That is why we do not provide one-sided aid, but fight together. [...] We want to build a network of solidarity in which we can participate all our lives – no matter which language we speak, how many children we have, and how much we work. (H1)

The group focuses on common concerns such as unemployment benefits, housing issues, and problems at work. Legal questions around migration also come up frequently and as stated in the quote above, racializing and chauvinist discourses around language knowledge, family structures, and

work performance are critically addressed by the group. Their sub-group “Survival of the Sickest” also sought to bring together people with health concerns for mutual support and empowerment.

Besides such broader forms of neighbourhood organizing, organizations that demand holistic and intersectional approaches to healthcare focus on initiating and implementing such offers themselves locally. For health care to consider societal conditions and problems, they argue, it should be connected to neighbourhood and community work. Healthcare centres such as the Poliklinik in Hamburg-Veddel are therefore active actors and themselves part of the solution by exchanging interdisciplinary knowledge, conducting research that considers intersectional factors, and doing community work. They are attentive to the local socio-economic conditions whose improvement is actively claimed.

In the field of migrant rights, solution frames differ from the before-mentioned frames of housing and care work organizations. Due to the complex consequences of an unequal and divisive migration regime as well as the multitude of intersectional discriminations, migrant rights organizations cannot always break down the problems and solutions as common ones but need to consider them in their heterogeneity and particularity. This reflects the situation of migrant struggles, which not only claim social goods that everyone needs—such as housing and care—but also have to fight against their disenfranchisement as a marginalized minority. The campaign Legalization Now focuses on the legalization of undocumented persons to render their denial of rights and representation visible and to claim equal rights for all. Still the societal origins of the problems are recognized and despite being more specific and centred around particular groups, the framings of solutions also imply self-organizing of alternative and collective spaces. The Black Community Coalition for Justice and Self-Defense from Hamburg provides insights into such self-organized solution approaches based on the experiences of African refugees in Hamburg who cannot access health care due to their status:

Since the majority of the African refugees in Hamburg were denied protection by the government, we were challenged to develop alternative access to social, medical and mental health care. (H5)

Similar to the Black Community Coalition, most of the examined migrant rights groups rely on self-organization, autonomous provision of spaces and social services, and the empowerment of persons affected by the

migration regime as well as racism to realize their claims and change. Migrants' unequal access to rights and services is exemplified by the Lager regime and is therefore the subject of demands of self-organized groups. They demand to abolish the Lager regime, close all camps, give people the right to decide how and where to live, and provide access to decentral housing. By visiting camps and reporting about the situation, they also render the difficulties of people forced to live there visible and break the imposed isolation of refugees. They want to make their struggles visible as well as the central role of Female* migrants and refugees as protagonists. International Women* Space (IWS) states that they came together during the occupation of Oranienplatz and a school in Kreuzberg, "to form a women's front within the Refugee Movement that brings the fights against both racism and sexism together" (B7). They insist on speaking for themselves and making their voices heard as they "are fed up with people speaking about us and not with us" in a context in which "Women*'s resistance is often oppressed, and Women*'s history hidden or ignored" (B7). At the same time, the importance of internal relations centred around mutual aid and care, self-education, and solidarity in the face of everyday social problems are emphasized. Thereby, they contribute to realizing the pre-conditions under which unified social movements can exist in which all positions and voices can be heard and find equal relevance and recognition. While socialization can lead to the formation of comprehensive political subjectivities, these struggles underscore the importance of diverse particular subjectivities within collectives and commons.

In sum, we have presented the most frequent and meaningful frames of organizations and emphasized a common focus on socializing solutions which may lie in community and neighbourhood-based forms of organizing, commoning of social spaces and relations, as well as de-privatization and socialization of infrastructures, resources, and services. While these unified visions for a common, equal, and democratic future are shared by the examined urban social movements, they differ in how much they put forth universal or particularistic positions. Housing and care work organizations can frame the actors and beneficiaries of their struggles more broadly as housing and care work is required by everybody in the city and society. Migrant rights and intersectional groups of care work emphasize the heterogeneity and fragmentation of the current societal conditions. While the visions for the future are similar, the forms and focus of struggles of migrants or other marginalized, racialized, or otherwise discriminated persons in society need to consider the current uneven power

relations and hierarchies that affect the movements themselves. Therefore, their collective approaches also entail a consideration and empowerment of those most affected by the current conditions so that they can be heard and be part of political organizations and contribute to dismantling long-lasting hierarchies resulting from colonialism, patriarchy, and heteronormativity.

6 FRAMING SOLIDARITIES BASED ON COMMONING AND COLLECTIVE SUBJECTIVATION

As the analysed framings show, social movements offer insightful perspectives on the multiple crises of our times by producing knowledge and critical discourses that analyse social problems in distinct and more differentiated ways than the dominant narratives do. While we identified the differences between housing and care work on the one hand and migrant rights on the other hand, all movements are shaped in relation to the respective social fields and forms of organization. Building on this analysis of the complex network of field-specific framings, we now approach these different discursive practices in terms of how they generate relations of solidarity from below, processes of commoning, and political subjectivation.

In the framings we examined, we can recognize a commoning of both: problems and solutions. By rejecting the individualization of problems, by not reducing them to the private sphere, the organizations engage in practices of commoning to reframe them as social problems. They thus open new perspectives for the diagnosis of shared concerns and needs. In doing so, they also create a basis for a prognosis of solidarity that is based not on isolated but rather on interdependent individuals, whose interaction leads to further commoning processes. From this theoretical perspective, we can identify many organizations and spaces as a form of commons in the neighbourhoods and the city which do not only build relations of solidarity among heterogeneous persons but also enable them to care for each other very concretely in the everyday. Collective neighbourhood organizations characterized by relations of mutual aid demonstrate the sharing of resources and spaces in practice and experiment with forms of self-administration, co-responsibility, and direct democracy. On an urban scale, we consider the recent campaigns for a socialization of housing in Berlin and Hamburg and, to a lesser extent, of health care and the pursued transfer to a democratically managed common ownership as examples for such

a widening trend towards the “commons”. These organizations are working on conceptualizing how collective ownership and management of housing could look concretely and in doing so refer to radical democratic principles (Berfelde & Möller, 2023). The struggle against the isolation and individualization of problems and for their de-privatization is therefore more or less directly related to questions of property, collective ownership, and the building of commons in all three fields. In the areas of housing and care work this amounts to the expropriation and socialization of housing or health care; delinking them from the capitalist market and instead aligning them with people’s needs, whereas in the field of migrant rights there is less explicit criticism of profit interests and private property. However, here too, the aim is to escape, at least to some extent, the compulsion of individualizing, isolating, and divisive state regimes and the dependence on the public and uneven allocation of rights by building networks and infrastructures of mutual aid, which can also be understood as a process of commoning (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2013; Jørgensen & Makrygianni, 2020).

In addition to commoning approaches, the concept of political subjectivation helps us to examine the collectivities and scales on which relationships of solidarity are established. Thereby it is not necessarily the size and breadth of political subjects that brings about high democratic quality. Rather, what is decisive is the targeted confrontation with power relations and the specific wrongs that are brought to the fore by the respective struggles. In the area of housing, we can see a clear-cut antagonism between city inhabitants who are dependent on rental housing and a profit-oriented housing industry that rents out apartments. Large sections of the Berlin and Hamburg city populations can be located in this antagonism and potentially mobilized. The political subject that emerges here, disidentifying from the position of the tenant as a mere market participant, is potentially very extensive. However, on closer examination, this inclusive approach is fraught with tensions when specific concerns and differences, such as racism in the apartment search or the particular situation of refugees, may not be adequately addressed. As a result, very diverse positions have to be articulated in different ways, which cannot easily be articulated as part of a common life situation shared by all (e.g. can refugees in camps really feel part of the “we, the city residents”). In contrast, organizations of refugee women such as NINA and IWS assume a much more specific antagonism that considers not only the particularity of their common position, but also their internal differences regarding different legal

statuses, race, and gender identities. To build relations of solidarity in view of these specific antagonisms, it is precisely necessary to start at a more particular level and to form political subjects that re-negotiate and transform the social position of refugee/women reflecting diverse grievances. However, some sections of the DWE campaign, for instance, also develop particular migrant perspectives as well as feminist perspectives, thanks to the Right-to-the-City Working group, pointing out that women*'s situation on the housing market is more precarious due to unequal pay and care responsibilities.⁷

The different movements with their attempt to either generalize the social situation and create common interests and identities or to show the various differentiations and intersectional discriminations should not be considered as contradicting or mutually exclusive approaches. Rather, their coexistence and alignment points to the need for both approaches to be present in social movements and contribute to acknowledging inequalities and intersectionality while working towards a more equal, shared, and common future. Nevertheless, collective political subjectivations are accompanied by different exclusions. While it is important for the more universal political subjectivations to be inclusive and to consider as diverse a position as possible, it is a challenge for the more particular political subjects to form alliances with other political subjects. In some cases, organizations succeed in expressing the particular struggles as part of a more universal approach, or in rearticulating the more universal approaches in relation to the various particular struggles. It is also possible here to form transversal political subjects (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2021; Schwenken & Schwiertz, 2021). In our fieldwork we see potentials for such a process, for example, when—as seen in Hamburg through cooperation between NINA, WISO and Hamburg Enteignet—activists try to link the struggles against Lagers and for decentralized accommodation in apartments to the more general rent struggles, whereby a frame bridging is required that is sensitive to both the particular situations and the more universal concerns.

7 CONCLUSIONS

Articulating theoretical approaches of commoning and collective political subjectivation in the context of our frame analyses pointed to a multifaceted de-privatization and socialization of problems and solutions that

⁷<https://dwenteignen.de/aktuelles/neuigkeiten/feministisch-enteignen>

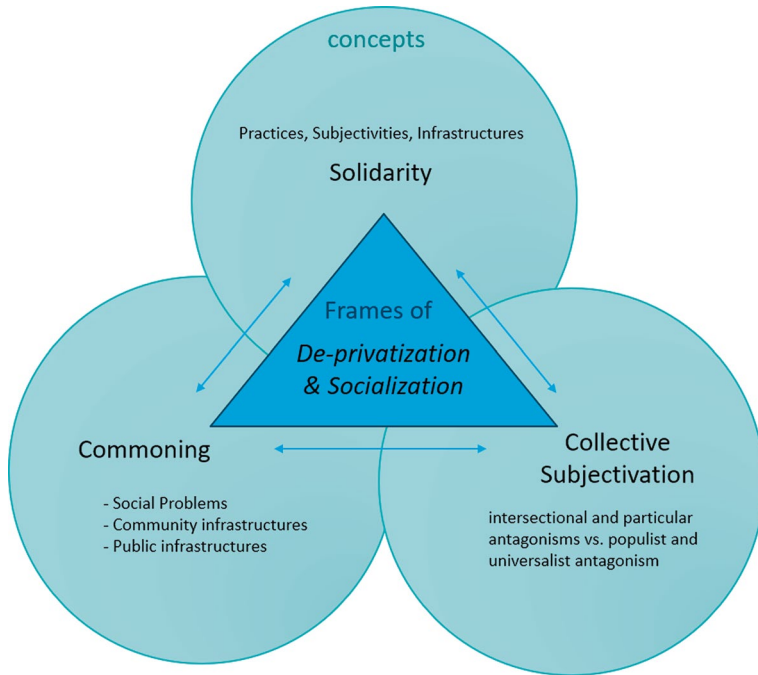


Fig. 5.1 Articulating commoning, collective political subjectivation, and solidarity through frame analysis

challenge ideologies of capitalist markets and states as well as the figure of the self-responsible citizen subject (see Fig. 5.1). First, we see aspects of *de-privatization in the diagnostic framings*. What connects the framings across fields is in particular a resistance against the dominant neoliberal individualization of social problems. Through discursive strategies of de-privatization, supposedly individual problems are framed as societal problems. Against the enclosure of social issues, identifying shared concerns and commoning problems in processes of collective subjectivation are crucial for enacting solidarities from below. Second, we see how concepts of commoning and political subjectivation resonate with the approaches of *socialization in the prognostic framings*. Based on the de-privatized problem diagnosis, alternative solutions are developed to deal with these problems, which now appear in a new light. We highlight how the organizations develop collective approaches on this basis against the isolation and

fragmentation of those affected, which is countered by new ways of producing the common: the commoning of public infrastructures through the socialization of care or housing as well as the commoning of community infrastructures through the self-organization of migrant, care, or housing collectives.

Reflecting the typology of Agustín and Jørgensen (2019; see introduction), we can distinct an approach of commoning public infrastructures, which is related to forms of institutional solidarity, and an approach of commoning community infrastructures, which is related to forms of autonomous solidarities. Especially in the fields of care and housing, deficient and privatized social infrastructures for the provision of basic goods and services are re-imagined and re-claimed through their socialization. Whereas in the field of migrant rights, but to some extend also in the fields of care and housing, community infrastructures are created and commoned in an autonomous manner without addressing and involving municipal and state actors. Both approaches represent forms of commoning that tend to relate to different scopes (more particular vs. universal), scales (local vs. municipal) and through different actors (social movements vs. state-civil society cooperation). Based on these two approaches, we understand commoning in a broader sense than the mere commoning of goods and services. Rather in the examined frames, we recognize a more fundamental and relational level of commoning in the form of a development of a common horizon of social experience and action, which makes it possible to frame privatized problems as social problems and to deal with them collectively. Based on this process of commoning, individuals re-connect their problems and develop collective political subjectivation and infrastructures on which the socialization of common goods and services can be built.

We describe these framings as discursive practices of solidarity. First, problems are de-privatized, associated and thus jointly recognized as social problems, which bring individuals out of their isolation and places them in solidarity. This could potentially go along with mutual empowerment as well as further collectivization processes. Second, the aim is to create collective political subjectivities and shared infrastructures of solidarity that are needs-oriented and democratically distributed. Thereby, it is important to emphasize that the framings of solidarity do not remain merely on a discursive level, as is sometimes the case with declarations of solidarity on social media or at rallies. In the concrete enactment of solidarity, close social ties, reciprocal relations of care, bodily co-presence, and affects play

a crucial role—all aspects that we have only been able to examine marginally in frame analysis. The solidarity framings are linked to material collective assemblages and social relations in the political organizations presented here, some of which we accompany in our ongoing ethnographic research. Yet, beyond hands-on solidarity practices, our analysis of discursive practices pointed to the importance of radical imagination in framing solidarities beyond the problematizations and solutions proposed by the hegemonic order, opening up spaces for acting and relating differently.

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ANALYSED DOCUMENTS

<i>ID</i>	<i>Name of organization</i>	<i>Type of organization</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Field of action</i>
H1	Wilhelmsburg Solidarisch	Neighbourhood organization	Hamburg	Housing/ Migrant Rights/ Care Work
H2	WomeN IN Action (NINA)	Movement Organization/ Self-organized group	Hamburg	Migrant Rights
H3	Poliklinik Veddel	Neighbourhood organization	Hamburg	Care Work
H4	Hamburg Enteignet	Campaign or coalition	Hamburg	Housing
H5	Black Community Coalition of Justice and Self-Defence	Self-organized group	Hamburg	Migrant Rights
H6	Lampedusa in Hambug	Self-organized group	Hamburg	Migrant Rights
H7	Bündnis Solidarische Stadt	Campaign or coalition	Hamburg	Migrant Rights
H8	Hamburger Bündnis für mehr Personal im Krankenhaus	Campaign or coalition	Hamburg	Care Work
H9	Hamburg Bündnis zum internationalen 8. März Streik	Campaign or coalition	Hamburg	Care Work
H10	Keine Profite mit Boden und Miete	Campaign or coalition	Hamburg	Housing
B1	Casa Kuà	Self-organized group	Berlin	Care Work
B2	Berliner Bündnis Gesundheit statt Profite	Campaign or coalition	Berlin	Care Work
B3	Bündnis gegen Verdrängung und Mietenwahnsinn	Campaign or coalition	Berlin	Housing
B4	Leerstand Hab-Ich-Saath	Squat and self-organized group		Housing

(continued)

(continued)

<i>ID</i>	<i>Name of organization</i>	<i>Type of organization</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Field of action</i>
B5	We'll Come United Berlin-Brandenburg	Campaign or coalition	Berlin	Migrant Rights
B6	Deutsche Wohnen & Co Enteignen	Campaign or coalition	Berlin	Housing
B7	International Women* Space	Self-organized group	Berlin	Migrant Rights
B8	Care Revolution	Campaign or coalition	Berlin	Care Work
B9	Solidarity City Berlin	Campaign or coalition	Berlin	Migrant Rights
B10	Legalization Now	Campaign or coalition	Berlin	Migrant Rights
B11	Kotti für Alle	Neighbourhood organization	Berlin	Housing/ Migrant Rights/ Care Work

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Facing the Polycrisis Storm: Divergent Forms of Solidarity in Slovenian Contentious Discourse Framing

Marko Ribač

1 INTRODUCTION

The following chapter focuses on the discourses of local activist collectives in three social fields in Slovenia: the field of migrant rights, the field of urban and commons struggles and the broader field of care infrastructure centred on healthcare and housing rights. I want to illustrate that these three social fields have experienced different (and sometimes even interwoven) crises in the last five years, despite the universal shock of the Covid-19 pandemic. I also argue that the development of antagonisms and solidarities presented by activist collectives have also been somewhat divergent and diversified when viewed in a comparative perspective. As different and divergent social struggles took place in all fields, activist collectives involved in these struggles produced field-specific critiques and divergent articulations of alternative paths.

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© The Author(s) 2025
M. Pajnik et al. (eds.), *Framing Solidarities in Times of Multiple Crises*, Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-82563-7_6

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Frame analysis will therefore serve as a helpful methodological tool that allows me to grasp the spatial and ideological separation of the three fields. The ways in which local (i.e. Slovenian) contentious groups communicated and promoted specific understandings of social problems (diagnostic frames) and the ways in which they formulated or proposed solutions to these problems (prognostic frames) clearly reveal their divergences. Based on a comparative frame analysis of public documents produced in three “communities of struggle”, I propose that the discursive differences of the activist collectives indicate the development of three distinct forms of solidarity in the context of the polycrisis. I suggest that we can observe an autonomous solidarity expressed in the field of urban and commons struggles, a civic solidarity articulated in the field of migration, and an institutional solidarity developing in the field of care and housing rights.

In the following sections, I argue that it is possible to distinguish between the three forms of solidarity by considering the social characteristics that constitute each material expression of solidarity: (1) its critical spatial and temporal points, (2) its multiscalar relations, (3) its imaginaries, (4) its alliances and (5) its institutions (see Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). I illustrate the idiosyncratic differences in the framings of the three social fields and draw a sharp distinction between the three forms of solidarity. The theoretical classification of the forms of solidarity in combination with the results of the frame analysis carried out will also serve another purpose. It will provide a vivid and dynamic snapshot of a local historical moment—a colourful picture of contentious politics in Slovenia and its various expressions of critique, radical imagination and political possibilities—at a critical juncture—in the face of multiple crises.

2 POLYCRISIS AND SOLIDARITY

In order to understand the contextual particularities of the Slovenian polycrisis and the forms of solidarity manifested in contentious fields, I will first sketch an understanding of both concepts by illustrating their rather idiosyncratic and localised manifestations in a context conditioned by shared experience (the pandemic). As I will try to outline, I do not see the Covid-19 pandemic as a crisis *per se*, but rather as an overarching external and escalatory shock in the form of a global health risk. As an unprecedented shutdown of global capitalism, especially in its early phase, it has exposed the internal long-term contradictions, *longue durée* social deficits and the inability to cope with various problems, even emergencies, in the

system. This unprecedented external shock, which was accompanied by various spatial and temporal stagnations, mismanagement practices and deficits in the three social fields, had significant consequences for Slovenian society. A mixture of crises emerged that were largely caused by local institutional architectures and internal historical dynamics.

In order to distinguish a crisis from polycrisis, I would first like to clarify the understanding of the concept of crisis. I see a crisis as a condition that entails a qualitative change in a given situation and brings with it a sense of uncertainty, risk, danger or even collapse of different configurations of knowing, speaking or being (see Gilbert, 2019, pp. 209–211; see also Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019, p. 5). This description is certainly apt when reflecting on the turbulent political events in Slovenia during the pandemic.¹ However, it does not seem sufficient to capture the overlap of multiple crises accompanying the critical shutdown of the economy, continuous lockdowns, rise of military conflicts and subsequent price inflation. Polycrisis is therefore a much more apt heuristic term to help scholars think about and study historical moments characterised by multiple global crises unfolding simultaneously on an almost unprecedented scale, from a health crisis to a series of inflationary pressures (food and energy), military conflicts and ecological collapse (see Morin, 1999; Tooze, 2018, 2021). In the Slovenian context, this concept helps us grasp the polyspheric reality, or rather, the complexity of three different fields in interwoven and overlapping crises: the struggles over migrants' rights, the struggles over urban and common spaces and the broader struggles for care infrastructure.

As Gilbert (2019) points out, the term crisis refers to an emergency situation characterised by a state in which decisions must be made and actions taken because the desired outcomes will not occur if events simply take their own course. In crises, human agency is required to intervene and steer things in the right direction. Crises convey a sense of urgency to address injustice, violence, exclusion and ecological damage, as well as a sense of responsibility to recognise and address them (Gilbert, 2019,

¹The political instrumentalisation of epidemiological experts, the longest police curfews and school closures in Europe, the restrictive closure of homes for elderly citizens and their isolation, the burnout of health workers, the failed vaccination campaign—all of these seemed to have contributed to one of the highest per capita death rates in the world during the Covid-19 pandemic. The ban on free movement across municipal borders, the ban on protests, the instrumentalisation of state institutions such as the police and the public media can also be added to this extensive list.

pp. 209–213). However, crises represent a certain “impasse” of hegemonic social systems, representing moments of potential change but without a particular solution (see Hall and Massey, 2010, p. 57). Institutional structures and policies can often solve the critical challenges, but are increasingly unable to do so. Often, the solidarity practices of social movements offer urgent help and support to vulnerable and excluded groups suffering from the consequences of the crisis in the form of various “direct social actions” (see Zamponi, 2017). Solidarity in these critical situations thus challenges existing forms of exclusion and invisibility and offers more coherent and satisfactory solutions (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019, pp. 28, 35).

The Slovenian Polycrisis and the Three Fields under Duress

The field of migrant rights is one in which the crisis has never really gone away, one in which a “state of emergency” or (permanent) crisis has been so thoroughly normalised (Zetter, 2022) that the pandemic has not brought about a radical reorientation of practices. One could even say that the mismanagement of migration policy continued somewhat more quietly and the abuses were barely visible to the public, who focused on public health measures and the immediate prevention of the spread of the virus. Several EU states abused the reality of Covid-19 as the focus shifted to public health emergencies to employ unlawful practices to deport at least 40,000 asylum seekers across European borders, resulting in at least 2000 deaths (Tondo, 2021). With the support of the European border police Frontex, European states carried out one of the largest mass deportations in recent decades to forcibly remove thousands of refugees, including children, using unlawful tactics ranging from assault to brutality in detention or transport (ibid.). According to the country’s official police reports, Slovenia alone deported 4000 people in 2021 and 2361 in 2022, most of them to Croatia, where around 90% of migrants reported experiencing at least one form of abuse or excessive use of force during the procedures (Tondo, 2020; Uprava uniformirane policije, 2022).

In the areas of care and housing, which differ in their thematic focus but which we summarise into one institutional type of solidarity based on the empirical data collected, the crisis was exacerbated by negligence and the free market approach to social reproduction. In the field of care, the emerging crisis was triggered by the pandemic, but even more by the perception that local institutions, the right-wing political class and existing

policies were unable to deal with the global health emergency caused by the spread of the new virus SARS CoV-2 (Hrženjak, 2022; see also footnote no. 2), after decades of ignoring the problems of the field. The mismanagement of the fight against the pandemic has given the impression that the abuse of executive power under the pretext of a health crisis was exploited by the right to consolidate its political power and establish an illiberal regime (Kovačič, 2024).

In the field of housing,² the problematic tendencies were caused by a prolonged restructuring process. Both Slovenian cities, Ljubljana and Maribor, initially experienced a transition from socialist-led public financing and the construction of large housing estates (socialist phase) to post-socialist privatisation of public housing construction. Later, the increased commercialisation of housing (neoliberal phase of restoring favourable conditions for participation in the housing market, characterised by the influx of debt-laden foreign capital) ended in the financial crisis of 2009–2013 (Ploštajner, 2016, pp. 184–189). The Slovenian housing market had already entered the 2020 pandemic underinvested, overinflated and open to all the seductive possibilities of “platform tourism” (Volk, 2023).

Closely linked to the housing field, but approached differently due to the widespread closures of public life, the struggles for the commons seem to be multiple crises at the level of municipal and urban politics. The transformation of the two Slovenian cities of Ljubljana and Maribor into neoliberal cities since the 1990s has reshaped their fabric to efficiently reproduce (labour for) capital and drive the accumulation of (value of) capital (Ploštajner, 2015, p. 483). Before the outbreak of the pandemic, both cities were at the peak of their consumptive (or entrepreneurial) phase, characterised by the increasing gentrification and touristification of their city centres, and both cities were characterised by an increasing inaccessibility of accommodation (Ploštajner, 2016). The encroaching touristification, the spectacularisation of their public spaces and the commercialisation of their urban design served the municipalities to market “authentic experiences” to their growing flock of foreign visitors.

² As I will show later, the housing issue became detached from a broader urban issue during the pandemic, as it was important on a national level to stop the spread of the virus. However, despite the refocusing of these collectives on institutional solidarity, their writings retained a more autonomous normative dimension and the aim of organising housing as common(s).

Solidarities in the Slovenian Polycrisis

In the context of multiple and overlapping crises in Slovenia during and after the Covid-19 pandemic, institutional frameworks at all levels were unable to cope with a multitude of problems and emergencies. Activist collectives challenged the failure of broad technical and bureaucratic structures as they strongly advocated for better, alternative, more inclusive, humane and solidarity-based solutions to the problems or crises at hand. Not surprisingly, different practices of mutual support and expressions of solidarity could be observed in the Slovenian contentious fields at that time. I argue that three different ways of exercising, organising and articulating solidarity could be observed during the polycrisis in Slovenia: autonomous, civic and institutional solidarity (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019, pp. 39–42).

I argue that the civic form of solidarity has been expressed in the field of migrants' rights, as I have analysed the discourses that argue for the expansion of migrants' rights with the shaping of a more inclusive "w-ness" and emphasise the abolition of vulnerabilities that prevent (often racialised) non-citizens from equal participation.³ Autonomous solidarity, practised in self-organised (urban) spaces, with its emphasis on horizontal participation and direct democracy, has been observed in municipal struggles for the commons at the level of urban politics. Finally, institutional solidarity has been observed in the field of (health) care and in the struggle for housing rights, which in this local context form a broader field of social reproductive care, as these activist collectives relate to more formal—mechanical, contractual and welfare state—forms of solidarity supported by the state. This formal delineation between the three forms of solidarity will help me to structure the argument of the chapter. However, I will explain on numerous occasions where cross-cutting issues, overlapping alliances or spatial proximity break the fluid boundaries between solidarities to show the overlapping development of the collectives' arguments and ideas.

³ Due to the sample bias, civic solidaristic responses are detected in the field of migrants' rights. I have included in the analysis the civil society collectives that are not located in the statist part of the migrant rights field (the space occupied, for example, by small NGOs and the Red Cross or Karitas). I therefore do not equate civic solidarity with the entire migrant rights' field, but only with the initiatives and organisations selected for the frame analysis.

3 FRAME ANALYSIS: DISSECTING SOLIDARITIES

In order to capture the dynamics of all three forms of solidarity in Slovenia, I have analysed 25 documents⁴ produced by activist collectives in the field of migrants' rights, in the field of urban and commons' struggles, and in the broader field of care infrastructure with a focus on healthcare and housing rights in the two Slovenian cities of Ljubljana and Maribor. The time frame of the published documents covers the entire period of the pandemic, but starts from April 2019, when the first document was published, and runs to September 2022, when the last public statement was created and published online. The selected documents were written by 19 different collectives, initiatives, organisations and individuals. The final database of Slovenian documents consists of 14 public calls, 10 antagonistic public statements and one self-presentation(al) document (a manifesto).⁵

Practices and forms of solidarity are thus elaborated and manifest in the collective framing of emerging problems and envisaged solutions, i.e. in structured pairs that overlap the analysed texts of social movement organisations in Slovenia. Following Verloo (2005, p. 20), in this book a frame is understood as an "organising principle that transforms fragmentary or incidental information into a structured and meaningful [...] problem in which a solution is implicitly or explicitly included". Every analysed text is thus, as the framing analysis postulates, dualistically structured, i.e. every document contains at least one definition of a certain problem within which at least one solution is implicitly or explicitly contained or offered (see Entman, 1993; Verloo, 2005, p. 20). Since most documents contain more than one pair, a total of 96 problem-solution pairs were found in 25 documents. The distribution of pairs in the three named subject areas is as

⁴The distribution of documents in the entire database ($n = 25$) is as follows: six documents belong to the care and housing segment, eight cover the thematic segment of migrant rights, and eleven letters deal with the topic of (urban) commons. The documents are referenced with a specific number (1–10), followed by the initials L (Ljubljana), M (Maribor) or S (Slovenia). The national designation (S) is reserved for documents where the geographical origin of an organisation or collective at the municipal level could not be determined.

⁵The authors of the selected and analysed documents are very diverse: from informal networks and activist collectives to journal editors, official organisations and engaged individuals. Documents from the city of Maribor dealing with issues in this region seem to be somewhat underrepresented in the database ($n = 4$), but could represent the comparable reality in relation to the other ten cities in the analysis of the VW ECS project when it comes to the overall size of the city, its degree of urbanisation and the (in)activity of social movements.

follows: documents in the care and housing domain contain 15 problem-solution pairs, in the field of migrant rights 36 and in the field of urban commons 45. One frame was assigned to each formulated problem ($n = 96$) and each elaborated solution ($n = 96$) in the database, so that the sum of all frames is 192.

Oscar Garcia Agustín and Martin Bak Jørgensen (2019, pp. 25–26) argue that each form or type of solidarity contains a set of classifying features, a set of comparable structural components. Solidarities emerge strongly in moments or conjunctures and generate political subjectivities as well as collective identities. Solidarities also presuppose a certain degree of alliance-building between different actors in the fields, they are also inventive of new and diverse imaginaries and they are situated in concrete space and time. Solidarities are also clearly organised in different multi-scalar relationships and linked in different ways to institutions that structure different fields. In addition to identifying diagnosis/prognosis pairs, the frame analysis also addressed the motivations, underlying norms and values and affects that were integrated into the activists' discourse in order to determine specific atmospheres and moods reconstructed in the documents, but also to highlight possible inconsistencies in these widely circulated texts. Consequently, the systematically applied frame analysis served as an epistemological lens that not only captured the articulations of the movements, but also allowed me to take a nuanced look at the concept of solidarity.

Notes on the Two Cities: Ljubljana and Maribor

Before continuing with the examination of the three forms of solidarity, I would like to briefly sketch a general demographic, economic and spatial picture of the two largest urban centres in Slovenia. The municipality of Ljubljana, with an area of 275 km², is the 11th largest municipality in Slovenia and with almost 294,000 inhabitants has the largest population in the country. Its centre, the city of Ljubljana, exerts the strongest gravitational pull for its approximately 284,000 inhabitants, who live on 163.8 km². This makes Ljubljana by far the largest and most populous city as well as the administrative, political and cultural centre of Slovenia, which has two million inhabitants (SURS, 2022a). The municipality of Maribor is the 40th largest Slovenian municipality with an area of 148 km² and a population of 112–113,000. Its urban part, which includes only the city of Maribor without the surrounding areas, occupies a quarter of the

municipality's area (41 km²) and with 96,000 inhabitants is the smallest city in our ten-city analysis with 96,000 inhabitants (SURS, 2022b).

Maribor's economy was one of the most developed in socialist Yugoslavia but it has been stagnating or even declining since the 1980s, which is reflected in mass emigration from the city, the declining share of GDP and the rate of new investment (Lavrič & Naterer, 2018). Ljubljana and Maribor differ today in demographic and economic terms: while Ljubljana recorded demographic growth of 10% in 2022, Maribor recorded a demographic decline of 0.2%; in addition, the population in Ljubljana is slightly younger on average (42.9 years) than in Maribor (at 45.2 years). In economic terms, Ljubljana has a higher employment rate than Maribor and the income of citizens in Ljubljana is 20 percentage points higher than in Maribor (SURS, 2022a, 2022b).⁶

4 THREE FORMS OF SOLIDARITIES IN THE SLOVENIAN POLYCRISIS

In each of the following sections, I follow the argumentation of Oscar García Agustín and Martin Bak Jørgensen (2019) and attempt to advance the explanation that three different ways of exercising, organising and articulating solidarity could be observed during the polycrisis in Slovenia: autonomous, civic and institutional forms of solidarity (ibid., pp. 39–42).

Civic Solidarity in the Field of Migrant Rights

The situation in the field of migrants' rights was not characterised by a broader institutional crisis as in the care field or by price increases as in the housing sector (see below). The recent dynamics were also a far cry from the refugee "crisis" of 2015–2016, when more than 400,000 people

⁶The employment rate for Ljubljana was 67.5%, while the rate in Maribor was significantly lower (60%). On average, Maribor residents earned €1,225 net per month in 2022, €45 less than the average Slovenian salary (€1,318), while this figure was significantly higher in Ljubljana (€1,497), 14 percentage points above the Slovenian average (SURS, 2022a, 2022b). The Slovenian Ministry of Finance measures the so-called development coefficient of Maribor at 0.98, the lowest of 11 urban municipalities in Slovenia, which means that the municipality of Maribor is eligible for 90% of the co-financing of investments from the state budget. With a coefficient of 1.21, Ljubljana ranks second among the urban municipalities and can co-finance up to 60% of investments.

passed through Slovenia⁷ from October 2015 to mid-January 2016, causing an effective “breakdown of European refugee policy” (Žagar et al., 2018). This brief episode, which ended in March 2016 with an agreement between the EU and Turkey, was marked by images of thousands of refugees crossing the Western Balkans, provoking a strong right-wing backlash and the erection of barbed wire fences on the borders of Austria, Croatia, Hungary and Slovenia (Kogovšek Šalamon & Bajt, 2016; Šelo Šabić & Borić, 2016, p. 14). The dynamics of the “summer of migration” in terms of pure arrivals and border crossings are different from the 2020–2021 pandemic period, but the administrative developments in the meantime, as explained in the analysed documents (see below), influence the pandemic period we intend to observe.

The pandemic in the migrant rights’ field in Slovenia was primarily characterised by the expulsion of foreigners. In 2021, 4000 people were deported by the Slovenian state and in 2022 another 2361, most of them to Croatia (Uprava uniformirane policije, 2022). Croatia has also accelerated its deportations to Bosnia and Herzegovina (18,000 deportations since the beginning of the pandemic), increasing the rate of violence (abuse and excessive force were found in almost 90% of victims’ reports in 2020) (Tondo, 2020, 2021). The deteriorating health, humanitarian and security conditions in various immigration centres or accommodation centres in Bosnia are therefore also a point of contention for activist collectives in this field. The expressions of solidarity by selected non-state activist collectives (Infokolpa, Skupina za azil, Časopis za kritiko znanosti) were thus conditioned by a different situation, but one characterised by a continuous process of racialised state exclusion and police and institutional violence, or at least the threat of it, not only on the Slovenian side, but also on the Croatian and Bosnian sides.

This is how activists argued to exercise civic solidarity with the migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in the ongoing “border struggles” (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013) in Slovenia, the second Schengen country—after

⁷I challenge the view that this situation can be described as a crisis and refer to this event as a “crisis”, as it was merely exacerbated by the centrist Slovenian government in power at the time, which was logistically unprepared to adequately register and organise the reception of refugees. Bureaucratic and procedural wishful thinking was quickly replaced by the militarisation and securitisation of the southern Slovenian border and the establishment of a “humanitarian” corridor to bring potential asylum seekers and refugees to northern Europe, primarily Austria and Germany (Ladič & Vučko, 2016).

Greece—on the so-called Balkan route to the north.⁸ Consequently, in their public addresses, the collectives express solidarity, mainly but not exclusively, with migrants along the Balkan route, where there is a lack of state solidarity and a humanitarian approach to migration. In the discourse on migrants' rights, two issues dominate the problem framing: "institutional and police violence towards refugees and migrants" and "inadequate conditions with regard to the integration process". In letters and public statements, four interrelated themes are mentioned that run through these two frames. The first two themes are linked to institutional and police violence towards refugees and migrants and point to a social right to free cross-border movement and mobility: The first theme seems to be a problematisation of securitised and racist border regimes of the Balkan states, and the second is the exposure of excessive and unchecked police violence in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia. Both issues confirm the regional configuration of "Fortress Europe" (6S) and Slovenia's role in it: the frames clearly go beyond the framework of national polity and they clearly manifest the transnational and translocal nature of migration problems and solutions.

In their description of the problem, the letters do not refrain from criticising the conditions along the Balkan route, especially in Bosnia, where asylum seekers and migrants in Bosnian detention camps are "subjected to beatings, torture and robbery" (4S) and where many migrants and refugees are "trapped in an alarming humanitarian and security situation" (1S). The Slovenian, Croatian, Bosnian and Serbian border regimes function as institutions of systemic violence and oppression, forming a chain of pushbacks affecting all countries on or along the Balkan route from Italy to Austria and further south. Groups in this contentious field describe a range of rights that are denied or violated: Slovenian police regularly violate the right of people to international protection, people whose right to security is already violated in their countries of origin. As they write in letters: "Deterrent technological innovations against people on the run, such as wire fences, drones and thermal cameras" are used as "criminal weapons" to monitor the secured border (5S). The letters also vividly report on "excessive and unchecked police violence in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia, while the police carry out 'preventive

⁸This applied until 1 January 2023, when the Republic of Croatia becomes an official member of the Schengen area.

measures’—interrogations, beatings, humiliation, intimidation—to prevent people from thinking up future attempts to cross the borders to the EU” (3S).

In contrast, the other two themes that feed into this elaborated problem frame relate to the internal Slovenian citizenship system and the exclusionary mechanisms of the local culture of rejection (insufficient conditions when considering the frame of the integration process). Firstly, activist collectives point to discriminatory practices of various Slovenian institutions and different social groups that exclude asylum seekers and refugees from participating in society as free individuals. Local spaces are therefore crucial for the negotiation of migrants’ rights. Forced detention in asylum centres in certain remote, non-urban locations such as Postojna or the Bela Krajina border region violates the fundamental rights of migrants and asylum seekers to freedom of movement and the right to residence by restricting their mobility options through police curfews and the limited spatial freedom to move, work and live autonomously in Slovenia or the wider EU area. Furthermore, collectives in the space of civil solidarity problematise inhumane conditions and overcrowded asylum homes, especially in Ljubljana, which activists refer to as “total institutions” and “concentration camps” (5S). Asylum centres, themselves institutions riddled with internal polycrises, are not only the institutions where human rights are violated or abolished (inadequate food, sanitation, social care, overcrowding), but also the institutions that actively intervene and create racialised “differential inclusions” (Mezzadra & Neilson, 2013). In this sense, expressions of solidarity with newly arriving Ukrainian refugees, who face a military crisis in 2022 on top of all the other crises, are mixed with cautionary calls that they are “clearly treated better and more favourably because they are of a certain race” (4S).⁹ On this translocal aspect of the Ukrainian refugee crisis, see also the chapter on German activist collectives in this book.

Secondly, the collectives in the migrant rights space point to the exclusionary and discriminatory nature of the Slovenian citizenship regime by pointing to the multiple racist barriers for asylum seekers, refugees and

⁹The official figures confirm this statement. According to the Ministry of the Interior, 7,666 people were officially granted temporary protection status (in Slovenian: *začasna zaščita*) in 2022, the majority, namely 7,588, were Ukrainian citizens. 203 people were granted refugee status, 158 of whom were Ukrainian citizens (AIDA, 2022, p. 14, 96). The differential treatment of Ukrainian refugees compared to non-European refugees is also confirmed in early analyses (Bučar Ručman, 2022, p. 176).

migrants. Outside the “camp regime” exclusionary practices such as the restriction of freedom of movement, the prevention of meaningful social integration and participation in the labour market as well as the racism of the police and landlords are uncovered. A system of discriminatory barriers is erected that reproduces marginalisation, exploitation and subjugation. Education and skill training are part of the systematic discrimination in Slovenia with endless hurdles for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants. They point to “inadequate training and language courses” run by “ill-equipped translators and teachers”; employers abuse the system of subsidised migrant labour by “dismissing migrants after the subsidised period expires” (all quotes in Letter 5S). Migrants are invited to move to an “integration house” in Maribor if they “cannot find other accommodation within two weeks”, forcing them to travel long distances. Landlords usually refuse to rent a flat to a refugee or migrant, so the migrants and refugees are forced to organise themselves and rent a flat on the market illegally, so they are basically forced to be on their own. All this discrimination is complemented and further exacerbated by the actions of police forces who racially profile non-European migrants or harass them on the street (5S).

Reimagining the Borders, Geographies and Identities

The notion of alternatives, new identities and new imaginaries presented in the solutions arise from a radical problematisation of the nature of the state in the documents analysed. Collectives advocating for the rights of asylum seekers and migrants see Slovenia as a translocal focal point and the state “as one of the countless collaborators” (6S) in a Fortress Europe border regime. The “local migration regime” implemented here is utilised and exploited to continuously produce a mixture of migrant polycrises, from “Ceuta and Melilla in Spain to Lampedusa in Italy or the Polish-Belarusian border in the East” (6S). The “critique of the state” is thus contextualised in a transnational and supranational framework in which national sovereignty—regardless of its exclusionary powers—is also diminished to a certain extent. The European Union is accused of being the enforcer of “the externalisation of the migrant and border regime” or of funding the “continued implementation of state violence on the Balkan route” (2S). The European Union is also described as an investor in inhumane and overcrowded reception centres managed by the IOM (International Organisation for Refugees). The European border police

Frontex is also mentioned and labelled as a human rights violator: “an even more corrupt and aggressive human rights violator” (6S).¹⁰

Several points are raised in the letters and statements when it comes to solutions, and these points can be divided into an internal and an external dimension. On the external front, which argues for legally binding solutions and has strong transnational overtones, activists and migrants call for the following: (1) ensuring existential and legal security along refugee and migrant routes, from countries of origin to transit and destination countries; (2) ending the practice of illegal refoulements and collective expulsions (pushbacks) to other Balkan countries, which would recognise and respect migrants’ rights to international protection; (3) ending the EU policy of externalising the migration and border regime and legalising migrant and refugee routes. Internally, however, the solutions focus more on local practices, constantly repeating demands for (1) fair and transparent asylum procedures, (2) improvements in living conditions first and the eventual closure of immigration centres and (3) a greater role for the state in the housing and labour market (subsidising rents, providing permanent addresses for migrants, improving education and training, increasing subsidies for employers, etc.). It is not difficult to see that their approach is completely different from the institutional and statist frameworks, ideas and proposals (see discussion on institutional solidarity below).

The last point in this section on civic solidarity reveals another specificity of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers actively intervening in racialised migration politics in the Slovenian context: a strong identification with the working class and the positioning of migrants and asylum seekers in global labour regimes and supply chains. The analysed documents relentlessly reveal how migrants from Africa and the Middle East are treated differently and more discriminatorily than the rest of the immigrant class by being institutionally discriminated against and excluded as non-workers. When comparing their situation with that of ex-Yugoslavs and Ukrainians when it comes to educational, vocational, accommodation and especially employment opportunities, the documents do not pit one group against the other. On the contrary, they attempt to form intersectional discursive alliances across class, race and ethnicity, as they see the solution to these divisions in the unification of a world proletariat.

¹⁰One of the letters also points out that NATO’s military adventures and its economic subjugation of foreign countries actively contribute to creating uninhabitable regions in which the migration of peoples begins.

Institutional Solidarity and the Field of Care and Housing

On the basis of the collected empirical data, I group the collectives for care and housing rights, which differ in their thematic focus, into an institutional type of solidarity. First, the collectives in both areas show a clear and elaborated imaginary of a broader overlap of (health and housing) care conditioned by the pandemic-induced crisis. Secondly, the claim-making towards the state and the collectives' relationship with ministries and governments as active partners in providing solutions show a clear proximity between the imaginaries of the care and housing collectives. Consequently, the discourses in both fields show compelling similarities and differ markedly from the ideas developed in the discourses of the other two types of solidarity analysed.

Discourses articulating pleas for a broader implementation of institutional solidarity were thus discovered in two rather separate domains: the domain of care, where injustices in generational (elderly care) and labour struggles were discussed, on the one hand, and the domain of housing rights, where the expansion (and reversal) of housing rights during the Covid-19 pandemic was articulated, on the other. In this section, I show what—despite their differences—connects these two separate fields and why I believe that activists in both fields advocate for what Agustín and Jørgensen (2019) call institutional solidarity. Also shown is how both fields remain rather separate and distinct in some of their articulations.

The first similarity between the two fields is revealed in the fact that the sudden shock of the pandemic had similar effects on the two contested areas of struggle and further conditioned the polycrisis conjuncture that can be observed in both areas: the spread of the virus exposed the long-ignored commodification and entrenchment of neoliberal regulation (as a strategy of the ruling classes) in both the health sector and in the accessibility of housing. Class is thus a central theme underlying all documents, regardless of the sector. Collectives and organisations in the health (care) sector (such as Cedra, Srebrna nit or representative unions of care workers) respond to the local crisis in care homes for the elderly (high infection and death rates), but mostly focus on the crisis of institutional care work: exploitation and exhaustion of workers, deterioration of working conditions, relaxation of standards and norms in care for the elderly and—given the post-pandemic period—total shortage of essential workers. The collectives in the housing sector (Kje bomo pa jutri spali, Najemniški SOS, Akademski kolegij), on the other hand, focus on the polycrisis that

developed in the first wave of the pandemic. According to them, indebted, non-owning and self-employed residents, as well as precariously employed or students, found themselves in a serious dilemma: default or non-payment, even homelessness on the one hand, or work that would further aggravate the spread of the virus on the other.¹¹

The discourse in the field of care oscillates between an institutionalised form (solidarity formalised in national policy as a provision of the welfare state) and an institutional form of solidarity (collectives critical of the state and appealing for the extension of its functions). The formulations of the problems (and the actual solutions) in the field of care have been articulated predominantly in the form of labour struggles due to the crisis of institutional care work: as a struggle for wages, as a struggle against the lowering of the standards of care provided and as a struggle against the increase of labour demands. This discourse is combined with resistance to the “anti-age” discourse: the public is mainly informed about age discrimination during the health care crisis, because “it seems that the elderly—distributed among retirement homes in Slovenia—were the most affected population group” (1L). Housing initiatives, on the other hand, view the struggle for housing as a class struggle: they link the risk of loss of income to the risk of loss of housing, which became a problem in the first wave of pandemic layoffs (2L).

However, class relations are emphasised quite clearly here, pitting coalitions of the rentier class (rather than capitalists) against other classes. The fractions of renters and non-owners are directly affected by the possible activities (upswing or downswing) in the housing market, while the wealthy landlords are the ones linked in these letters to the state (the political class) that facilitates the processes of commodification of the housing market.

Reimagining the Neoliberal State

Consequently, the state finds itself in the middle of the housing crisis: as a bureaucratic apparatus that supports neoliberal deregulation (in the field of care) and as an actor that deliberately renounces its active involvement

¹¹ They problematised a common and widespread doxa that calls for isolation to contain the spread of the virus #stayathome (in the original #ostanidoma), arguing that “people first and foremost need a home to stay in”. The need to abstain from work in order to maintain public health clearly demonstrated the importance of wages (or at least an income) as a guarantee of securing shelter in an overwhelmingly commodified housing market.

in ensuring systemic solidarity (in the field of housing). In the care sector, the state is responsible for facilitating the privatisation of care homes for the elderly and for continuously reducing the resources that would be necessary for sufficient and stable development of the sector. In the housing sector, the state exacerbates the tendencies towards commodification and temporarily withdraws from the market (through tax cuts, land sales, lack of non-profit and social housing), whereby the state has in fact facilitated the commodification of the housing market in the past.

State officials—i.e. the members of the national parliament, the ministries and the state bureaucracy—are thus seen as the actors who actively reproduce neoliberalism and can actively oppose it. Unlike the collectives analysed in the field of migrants' rights (with their appeals to civic solidarity) and urban struggles (with their appeals to autonomous solidarity), the state is invoked here as an indispensable counterpart in solving the problem of the precarity of the actors involved. State officials—members of parliament, government, ministries, state bureaucracy—are thus called upon, prescribed and urged to design new strategies, create other legal frameworks (replacing the current archaic laws with sufficient regulations) and apply other practices in order to reorganise both fields. In the field of healthcare or long-term care for the elderly, the solutions call for a substantial increase in government funding to enable the construction of new homes for the elderly, reversing the privatisation of state-run homes for the elderly and increasing wages for workers employed in these homes, etc. (8S). In the field of housing, short-term appeals were made to “socialise housing” for the duration of the pandemic: rent freezes, bans on evictions, moratoriums on loans and debts and the replacement of tourist accommodation with non-profit housing for marginalised groups (2L). However, these appeals went beyond a diminishing threat from the virus. The activist collectives called for state actors to intervene in housing policy in the long term and to expand: the acquisition of land, the financing and construction of non-profit, public and rental housing, the increase of taxes and the strengthening of the capacity of supervisory authorities to monitor irregularities in the rental markets (3L).

Autonomous Solidarity in Urban Space Struggles

The neoliberal (financialised and highly speculative) transformation of the two largest Slovenian cities, promoted by non-democratic or simply authoritarian city administrations, is at the heart of the injustices

articulated by urban movement organisations in what could be described as a space of urban commons struggles. In their demands for a “right to the city” (Lefebvre, 1996; Harvey, 2012; Purcell, 2013), various initiatives, collectives, social centres and individuals oppose a crisis of gentrification, “touristification” and elitisation leading to a “social cleansing of the city” (6L). These processes triggered by gentrification are only part of the contentious issues raised in the documents, which are also linked to a broader crisis of the commons: As biopolitical cities organise and enable the conditions for immaterial labour to flourish, cities also extensively monitor, control and secure their public areas (Abram, 2017). In their demands to “change and reshape the city” (Harvey, 2012, p. 2), contentious urban collectives articulate autonomous forms of solidarity that challenge the crisis of neoliberal urbanisation and propose to re-enact them. Namely, they are demanding their right to meaningful participation and essentially the right to gain “greater control over their urban environment” (Pruijt, 2007, p. 11).

Two of Slovenia’s largest cities, “brutally remodelled and uncontrollably gentrified, exacerbating inequalities between class and generations”, as one of the letters puts it (7L), are being remodelled in a process that brings about a general convergence of gentrification and a hegemonic influence of private interests. The political crisis, the authoritarian nature of communal power at a time when the ecological crisis is increasingly evident, reveals three main social fronts or directions that call for “collective self-organisation outside of capitalist logic” (Huron, 2015, p. 963): firstly, the right to affordable housing, secondly, the right to public space(s) and thirdly, the right to transparency and horizontality principles in local government.

On the first front, e.g. by student collectives, the housing crisis is presented as a municipal strategy of gentrification and touristification of the city. They criticise the mayor’s embrace of “platform tourism”, which “makes a larger number of flats in the city centre available for Airbnb rentals, leading to a sharp rise in property prices and rents” (12L). The protesting students, who were evicted from the public student residences managed by the city administration, point out that the mayor’s administration “has not provided a new student residence for 15 years, while 80% of students at the University of Ljubljana have to rent their room on the market” (4L). The city authorities were also accused of purging the city of all undesirable population groups (homeless people, drug users, street artists) in the name of tourism, while residential neighbourhoods “are being

pushed far beyond the motorway ring (that surrounds Ljubljana) at an ever faster pace by the unsustainable urban policy of capital” (12L).

On the second front, in their efforts to attract consumption to the cities, city administrations are trying to redesign public spaces, privatise them, restrict public access and reduce the size of public spaces. The problems elaborated by the activist collectives reveal the two-sided, almost paradoxical character of this process: the process of commodification motivates municipalities to boast of their architectural and socio-political heritage and to commercialise it successfully (11L). However, in order to satisfy private interests, municipalities also close, privatise or actively destroy the most important landmarks of the urban landscape: from historical and cultural monuments (Bežigrad Stadium, Central Market, Kolizej, Akademski kolegij in Ljubljana) to public spaces (parts of Tivoli Park, Republic Square in Ljubljana, Leon Štukelj Square in Maribor) and art institutions (Cukrarna Gallery, Rog Centre in Ljubljana, the disused Maks Centre in Maribor).

On the third front, criticism is also directed against the municipal political coalitions, which are increasingly authoritarian and concentrate power “from above”. The city councils ignore and discourage (Maribor) or actively suppress (Ljubljana) any attempt to build infrastructures of horizontal power in the neighbourhoods. The activists point to the lack of public participation in decision-making processes at the city level, claiming that “the existing mechanisms prevent citizens (as city dwellers) from decisively managing and planning the development of urban space when state or municipal institutions fail” (8L). Furthermore, according to the collectives’ letters, “declarative liberal postulates such as the protection of human rights in general are also “disappearing from the horizon of local politics” (8L).

The critical conjunction—spatial and ideological rather than chronological—that outlines this field of struggle is thus intersected by two important moments that have strongly anchored the debates on urban commons on all three fronts mentioned above: the accessibility of public space, the destruction of the history of cities in the process of gentrification, and the repressive political administration(s). As solidarities are spatially produced (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019, p. 35), autonomous solidarities form around two important urban landmarks, two “free spaces” (Polletta, 1999) that demarcate autonomous ideas in Ljubljana. Firstly, with the forced “illegal eviction” of the Autonomous Factory Rog (AT Rog) in January 2021 in the midst of the pandemic, and secondly,

with the establishment of a new autonomous zone called PLAC in September 2022, which took place after the formation phase of the new liberal government (see Abram, 2023). The destruction of Rog was a focus of urban mobilisation and resistance from the beginning in 2006. The destruction was accompanied by a critical mobilisation discourse described as a new “wave of gentrification and social cleansing” that “encouraged the extreme right’s lust for terror against the residents of Ljubljana and against those actively engaged in anti-fascist, anti-sexist and anti-capitalist circles” (13L). PLAC, the free space occupied in autumn 2022 in the Savsko naselje district of Ljubljana, was accompanied by a more hopeful, almost optimistic or even utopian view. Primarily as a “revitalisation of an abandoned, run-down building given back to the local community”, it was transformed into a social space that “breathes new life” into the community” and ultimately into a squat that promises to “make Ljubljana a different, open, inclusive and free city” (14L).

Reimagining the Neoliberal City

Autonomous forms of solidarity understand the city as something that is produced and constantly reconstructed, so that vocal activists challenge the prevailing doxa in their imaginative solutions and expand the imaginative possibilities of the communities that inhabit them. Urban collectives want to transform the two cities into a “solidary, democratic and creative community” (8L) and propose new ways to move away from the neoliberal urban experience. Autonomous forms of solidarity that they promote show an ongoing commitment against neoliberal urban transformation on the one hand and a concrete materialisation and embedding in the local urban space on the other. The activist collectives want to preserve the recognisable and irreplaceable structure of the urban architecture of Ljubljana and Maribor, increase its quality for all city dwellers and strengthen citizens’ self-governance processes from development planning to administration and the general economic principles followed by city administrations. The notion of commons (as community) is contrasted with the profit-driven motives of capitalism at the city level that lead to damaging urban crises: the selling off of public land, the construction of high-rise buildings on green spaces, the lack of available (public) housing, the construction of luxury housing and the displacement of autonomous and independent (cultural) spaces throughout the city.

A number of proposals on perceived problems are conceptualised both as social processes (Linebaugh, 2008) that reverse the dominant governing logic and as physical spaces (Federici, 2010) that resist it. More specifically, according to the authors' documents, existing concepts of development and growth must be reconsidered, and "management and planning of urban spaces" (8L) must intervene in the crucial polycrises of life, social policy, culture, art, tourism and nature, rather than following short-sighted (profit-making) objectives driven by economic logic. In general, luxury and speculative investments must be abolished and reversed; municipal centralisation must be transformed into municipal participation; public monuments must be reopened for public use and long-term accessibility must be guaranteed in order to become a meaningful part of the urban fabric. Similar to the "local migration regimes" formulated in the documents of civic solidarity, translocal references and parallels serve as dangerous reminders. Zagreb and Belgrade (Savamala) serve as translocal reminders of the violent redevelopment of old neighbourhoods, while London's post-industrial "revitalisation" (the Tate's Turbine Hall) of local industrial areas is a translocal reminder that the "revitalisation" of local cultural industries can drive the gentrification of neighbourhoods. In contrast to discourses on migration rights, however, these translocal references sometimes also serve as examples to follow—such as Berlin's Tempelhof Airport as a translocal example of the return of public space to the public.

Specifically, activists, especially in Ljubljana, imagine the city as a city with multiple arenas of autonomous economy, culture, sociability, care and politics, with an improved public transport network, a reduction in commuting, inclusive social policies, publicly oriented and accessible art and the preservation and constant creation of green public spaces (parks, playgrounds, squares) (8L). With regard to the democratic organisation of the city, all activist collectives propose a higher degree of self-organisation. They propose the development of an "Open Magistrate", a horizontally organised plural space of "public plans of initiatives, debates, dialogue and self-management", which would be opposed to the current arrangement of a "centrally planned, efficiency-based, paralysed and conflict-optimised city" (8L). As a "temporary autonomous zone" (Hakim Bey), PLAC embodies the promise of community in which its participants engage in daily social activities "from below": a collectively owned and horizontally (self-)managed autonomous space that is organisationally decoupled from dominant and prevailing social and economic models (14L). In PLAC, the

focus on self-organisation goes beyond specific moments of mobilisation and can be understood as an “infrastructure of dissent” through which solidarity materialises (see Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019, p. 40).

5 CONCLUSION

The administrative framework in Slovenia was evidently unable to cope with a multitude of multiplying problems, emergencies and crises. In the field of migration, a long-term stagnation, if not actual reversal, of rights and an intensification of violence by border authorities can be observed. This administrative violence is not directly related to the pandemic, but is rather intertwined with the crisis of securitised policy management since the “long summer of migration”. It can also be observed at all levels of border governance, from the macro (EU) level to the mezzo (national) level to the micro (personal or individual) level. I argue that a number of contradictions were already developing in the Slovenian housing market before the pandemic, ranging from commodification to the repression of socialised housing policies and the lack of state intervention. The unfolding crisis was further fuelled by a series of measures to protect landlords, by a process of gentrification and state inaction during and after the end of the pandemic. These processes exacerbated inflationary pressures and led to an overpriced and undersupplied market bubble that has yet to subside. The Covid-19 pandemic was a shock, a sudden standstill that turned into a health crisis after political mismanagement of a health emergency caused a major collapse in the fight against a viral disease. Finally, at the municipal level, I have highlighted a political crisis characterised by a democratic stagnation and a political deficit caused by unchecked political power and a crisis of the commons facilitated by a gentrification and tourism drive.

The pandemic itself combined with the political reactions that caused a crisis in one field (care and housing) served as a cover to reinforce contradictory tendencies in another field (the urban commons), or as a pretext to further impose long-standing problematic practices and policies in a third field (migration). The inability of local migrant regimes, government and city councils to meaningfully resolve all these crises has certainly exacerbated pre-existing problems for large groups in all three contested fields. However, Slovenian activist collectives counter-framed their public responses to ineffective administrative solutions. Activists’ responses differed both in their perceptions of recognised problems and proposed solutions, in the emotional and affective components of their messages and in their normative assumptions, in identifying adversaries and in imagining

or forging alliances. But, more importantly, the ideas of solidarity that were discursively articulated and communicated to the different publics were also highly differentiated.¹²

Finally, we must add that different fields and different responses that allow us to delineate different forms of solidarity do not mean that solidarities do not overlap. The housing crisis, for example, overlaps all three fields, and this issue was raised in most of the letters in the sample. Civic solidarity collectives go beyond the demands of civil rights and call for alliances to be formed between non-working migrants and underpaid migrant agency workers (care, etc.). Civic-solidarity collectives also advocate autonomous forms of self-organisation, as activists are active in different collectives in different fields. Translocal references can be found in both civic (Melilla, Lampedusa, Poland) and autonomous (Zagreb, Belgrade, London, Berlin) appeals for solidarity. Institutional solidarity collectives see student tenants on an equal footing with other neighbourhood residents, impoverished cultural workers and marginalised groups, all of whom are under the same pressure from gentrification-led redevelopment of cities. Free spaces like PLAC organise discussions about solidarity in migration, care, housing and urbanisation. Moreover, the cohabitation of different initiatives in PLAC allows different collectives to forge alliances, cross fields and organise against the municipal, state or transnational administrative regimes.

In all these aspects, solidarities are “inventive”, they create new configurations of political relations, political subjectivities and spaces (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019, pp. 34–35) and in this sense, solidarities come close to Isin’s understanding of “acts of citizenship”, as “acts that change forms (orientations, strategies, technologies) and modes (citizens, strangers, outsiders, foreigners) of political being by bringing new actors into being as activist citizens, by creating or changing places and expanding scales” (Isin, 2009, p. 383). These groups design, enable and realise revolutionary spaces of hope beyond capitalism and the state: they articulate how another world is possible, create the possibilities of another, potentially present, world and mobilise for a better, already present, world of solidarity.

¹²The differences between the two cities of Ljubljana and Maribor diminish significantly when nationally integrated fields encompass the entire country and thus both cities; I am thinking here in particular of the field of migrants’ rights and the field of care. However, the urban differences lead to considerable economic differences in the field of housing rights and in the field of urban struggles for the commons. The polycrisis has thus not only produced different dynamics in the three fields, but has also had very differentiated dynamics and effects in the two cities analysed.

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ANALYSED DOCUMENTS

<i>ID</i>	<i>Name of organisation</i>	<i>Type of organisation</i>	<i>City/location</i>	<i>Field of action</i>
1S	ČKZ	Editorial board of a critical journal	Slovenia/ border	Migration
2S	Infokolpa	Network of activists	Ljubljana/ Trieste	Migration
3S	Infokolpa	Network of activists	Slovenia/ border	Migration
4S	asylum seekers Vič/Kotnikova ulica	Asylum seekers (initiative)	Ljubljana/ Slovenia	Migration
5S	Ambasada Rog	Network of activists	Postojna	Migration
6S	Ambasada Rog (Delovna skupina za azil)	Network of activists	Ljubljana/ Slovenia/EU	Migration
7S	Ambasada Rog (Tukaj smo/Begunska skupnost Slovenije)	Network of activists	Ljubljana/ Slovenia	Migration
1M	IMZ (Maribor)	Network of activists	Maribor/ Slovenia	Migration
8S	Cedra	Association	Kranj/ Maribor/ Slovenia	Care
1L	Srebrna nit	Association	Slovenia/ Maribor/ Ljubljana	Care
2L	Kje bomo pa jutri spali	Grassroot collective	Slovenia	Housing
3L	Kje bomo pa jutri spali	Grassroot collective	Slovenia	Housing
4L	Akademski kolegij	Protest initiative	Ljubljana	Housing
5L	Najemniški SOS	Grassroot collective	Slovenia	Housing
6L	AKC Metelkova mesto	Association	Ljubljana/ Slovenia	Commons/ housing
7L	Jasminka Dedić	Individual	Ljubljana	Commons/ housing
8L	Ljubljana odprto mesto (LOM)	Grassroot collective	Ljubljana/ Slovenia	Commons/ housing
9L	Individuals in the name of Ljubljana odprto mesto (LOM)	Grassroot collective	Ljubljana/ Slovenia	Commons/ housing
10L	Collectives: Študentska fronta, Študentski domovi študentkam in študentom, Akademski kolegij študentom, Rezistenca, Društvo Iskra	Network of movement organisations	Ljubljana/ Slovenia	Commons/ housing

(continued)

(continued)

<i>ID</i>	<i>Name of organisation</i>	<i>Type of organisation</i>	<i>City/location</i>	<i>Field of action</i>
11L	Bežigrad stadion initiatives	Network of activists	Ljubljana/ Slovenia	Commons/ housing
12L	Anarhistična pobuda Ljubljana	Grassroot collective	Ljubljana	Commons
13L	Anarhistična pobuda Ljubljana	Grassroot collective	Ljubljana	Commons
14L	Participativna Ljubljanska Avtonomna Cona (Avtonomni PLAC)	Neighbourhood squat	Ljubljana	Commons
15L	Mladinska aktivistična organizacija (MAO)	Movement organisation	Ljubljana	Commons
2M	Citizens	Citizens	Maribor	Commons

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Framing and Politicizing Solidarities: Conclusions

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Intersecting global financial, migration governance, health, and military crises have significantly impacted European society in the last two decades, exacerbating social exclusion and inequalities. While European states have maintained a neoliberal approach, which has been unable to contest far-right backlashes, social movement organizations have struggled for social justice at the local scale. Our research on ten European cities in Denmark,

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M. Pajnik et al. (eds.), *Framing Solidarities in Times of Multiple Crises*, Palgrave Studies in European Political Sociology,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-82563-7_7

Germany, Italy, Slovenia, and Switzerland shows that these organizations are reimagining and transforming solidarities in the social fields of housing, migrant rights, and care work. They are doing this amidst and in response to the multiple and intersecting crises of recent years. Using frame analysis, we explored the political imaginaries of social movement organizations at the local level, highlighting how they construct collective frames for understanding the causes of problems and devise both immediate and long-term political, economic, and social solutions. Ultimately, this book demonstrates the crucial role of these groups in enacting intersectional solidarities and pushing for profound transformations in politics and society. While “solidarity” has become a buzzword in hegemonic calls for social cohesion and civic engagement to stabilize the status quo, we study how social movement organizations create framings to repoliticize solidarity in times of crises. By challenging the established structures of providing social goods and services, these movements act to transform societies.

In particular, the research explored how social movement organizations frame solidarity across the fields of migrant rights, housing, and care in the face of a multitude of intertwined crises. Although these three fields intersect in different ways in the cities analysed, maintaining an analytic distinction between them helps in addressing distinct structural characteristics. Simultaneously, this approach also provides a diverse array of theoretical insights into urban politics. Empirically, social movement organizations in these three fields are rooted in particular urban spaces, addressing specific social dynamics: exclusionary policies vs. inclusion and equality campaigns in migrant rights; struggles for affordable housing based on urban social imaginaries that contest gentrification and displacement; and the urgent need for democratizing and socializing care in urban communities. While

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the fields of housing and care often focus on the right to the provision and distribution of specific goods and services to an entire population, we have shown that migrant rights involve more complex framings due to conflicts over discriminatory, racist exclusion. In all three fields, we see differential inclusion and the type of institutional interventions as supporting capitalist interests.

In contrast to hegemonically articulated calls for solidarity as a form of generating social cohesion or interstate cooperation, solidarity is understood in this book as a relational and contentious practice that articulates political antagonisms (Schwartz & Schwenken, 2022; della Porta & Steinhilper, 2021a; Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). We have shown how urban movements, particularly in times of economic crisis and austerity, invent social alternatives, politicize action, and rethink relations with localities and states (Mayer, 2009; Walliser, 2013), devising new discourses of solidarity. Solidarity is in fact transformed not only through broader societal processes but also through the actual practices of local social movement organizations. These organizations enact solidarity by fostering collective identities, facilitating alliances among civil society actors, and proposing political alternatives. Building on such a concept of solidarity, we highlight its role in shaping social relationships among diverse actors, who are, in turn, transformed by these interactions. While acknowledging the broader structures of social inclusion and exclusion, we primarily conceptualized solidarity as a practice of mutual aid and collective organizing within political and social struggles. We examined how these structures, along with the associated processes of neoliberal subjectivation—where individuals are shaped by market-driven ideologies and self-reliant mindsets—are negotiated and contested through alternative political subjectivations. We have investigated how social movements organizations produce solidarity discourses, by bridging protest actions and the provision of social services.

The analysis of the diagnostic frames revealed different lines of conflict in relation to which the organizations and their political struggles are constituted. In contrast to mainstream discourses, which often scapegoat social groups, the organizations examined here framed mostly dominant institutions, but also general societal conditions as main sources of problems. In all of our cases, the general neoliberal restructuring towards profit orientation and commodifying logic in the housing and care fields are strongly criticized by social movement organizations. In the field of housing, organizations target real-estate companies and the capitalist private

sector much more often, though local governments and administrations are often considered complicit. In the field of care work, the problems that our analysis singles out are more diverse, ranging from the exploitation of workers as expressed in labour struggles, to a broader critique of patriarchy, particularly in relation to social reproduction activities. In the field of migrants' rights, state institutions are strongly criticized for their exclusionary policies and divisive migration regimes. The secluding, racializing, and stigmatizing effects of remote "lager regimes" emerge as an affective translocal theme, particularly in Denmark, Germany, and Slovenia, where there are calls for the complete closure of these dehumanizing institutions. The exploitation of migrants as workers as well as their discrimination in accessing housing or care is pointed out in the Italian case. Institutional violence is also identified as something embedded in the local expressions of capitalism. Racialization and discrimination underline the commodification of housing and care, and create additional barriers for non-citizens.

In general, with only rare exceptions, the groups we studied remained rather distant not only from (supra)national but also from municipal institutions, preferring forms of civic and autonomous solidarity (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019). Although we specifically looked for progressive coalitions with municipalities in our case studies, such as those that emerged in the field of migrant rights as solidarity cities and cities of "safe harbours" at the end of the 2010s (Schwartz & Steinhilper, 2020; Ataç et al., 2024), references to collaboration with local institutions were very rare in the documents we analysed (with some exception in the Swiss cases studies). This seems to reflect both the lack of openings by the local administrations as well as some growing scepticism by social movement organizations towards municipal institutions. We found in fact little evidence in support of the innovative capacity of the local municipal level, in spite of rising interest in many scholarly fields (Sassen, 1990). While the so-called "local turn" in critical migration studies has highlighted the key role of municipal actors, it has also pointed out their controversial role in the policies of integration and migration management, which often implies exclusionary policies (Zapata-Barrero et al., 2017). Moreover, others argue that the "local turn", driven by neoliberal policies and the logic of new public management, has led to the outsourcing of various (welfare) state responsibilities to urban movements and social actors (Bernhardt, 2023). Despite the lack of positive experiences of cooperation with institutions to build alternatives on the ground, movements continue to demand the state take

responsibility in this area. By problematizing insufficient and unequal access to services as a source of social problems and injustices, many social movement organizations critique neoliberal deregulation, increasing discrimination, and greater repression.

Through frame analysis, we have looked at how collective framing shapes the understanding of emerging problems and proposed solutions within social movements, while also considering motivational framing, values, and affects to capture the broader context and emotional resonance of frames (Snow & Benford, 1988; Gould, 2009). We emphasized the importance of the discursive context in which frames operate, understanding that framing is influenced by the particular social relations, rather than solely being the choice of individual actors (Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2016).

As for the prognostic frames, our research has shown how specific political subjects are formed in response to these grievances. New collective identities emerge through “acts of citizenship” (Isin, 2008) in moments of protest and rupture with the existing social order, shifting towards needs-based economies and the democratic involvement of the inhabitants. In all our cases, we find strong appeals for self-organizing practices, direct social action, mutual aid, and the collective creation of alternative structures. These frames highlight the importance of commoning as means of countering isolation and fragmentation, fostering new ways of producing and sharing resources. The movements we studied call for systemic changes, such as transforming profit-oriented care systems to needs-oriented ones, seeking to develop sustainable solutions to social challenges. They advocate for halting the privatization of housing and combating gentrification, promoting the idea of housing as a common good rather than a market commodity. Additionally, prognostic frames critique nation-state domination by calling for the decriminalization of migration and support for anti-racist activism. All of these translocal practices of commoning are crucial for the formation of collective political subjectivities that go far beyond the immediate effects of temporary public interventions (Schwartz, 2021). They outline comprehensive strategies for systemic change, emphasizing action, intervention, and infrastructures to address and transform social issues exacerbated by neoliberal policies and capitalist systems.

In this vein, our case studies have shown that especially during crises, the lines between contentious and non-contentious forms of solidarity blur, combining political activism with voluntary activities (della Porta &

Steinhilper, 2021b), or combining protest-based politics with everyday forms of collective action (Roussos & Malamidis, 2021). Developing a dialogue between concepts, we have discussed solidarity together with broader concepts of “care” for others and for the community (Gabauer et al., 2022), commoning as the practice of self-organization and social coproduction (Federici, 2019; della Porta, 2024), and the building of infrastructures of solidarity (Schilliger, 2020) to examine how grassroots actions and mobilizations recreate public goods and commons, resisting the individualization of social problems encouraged by capitalist markets and the exclusive and divisive approaches of hegemonic state institutions. This book thus shows that discursive practices of solidarity cannot be reduced to mere claims or symbolic statements, but are linked to concrete forms of collective action and organizing embedded in urban environments that are impacted by neoliberal capitalist processes of gentrification and commodification.

In sum, we have shown how periods of intense crisis reshape the framing of solidarity, fostering innovation and opportunities to reflect on the causes and solutions to emerging problems. At critical junctures in particular, social movement organizations act as translators, adopting and adapting concepts like “intersectionality” or “commoning” to reflect their struggles and aspirations. Solidarities with people on the move oppose the dominant discourses on the securitization of national borders and police violence, and question the totalitarian effects of asylum institutions and deportation centres in the field of migrants’ rights. In addition, care—essential to the reproduction of life—is also seen as crucial to social reproduction beyond capitalist relations, with demands for the decommodification of vital areas such as health, childcare, elderly care, and housing. Social movements also counter-frame the dominant discourses that legitimize the restructuring of entire cities and that lead to multiple sorts of urban crises, ranging from gentrification to over-touristification to financialization, and instead advocate a commons approach to community life and the democratization of the city “from below”.

In researching ten cities in five countries, we explored how solidarity is framed in different contexts. This book aimed to transcend being a mere collection of case studies on social movements, and instead pose critical questions about the knowledge and insights these movements offer. On an epistemological level, we regarded movements as key producers of knowledge about social issues and change, enriching both activist strategies and social science analyses. Studying movement framings sharpens

our understanding of reality and possibilities, identifying grievances and potential solutions. These insights are particularly valuable as they come from those directly affected by crises and engaged in related struggles.

Our frame analysis has revealed how social movements, diagnostically, highlight injustices such as racialized mobility, exclusionary security policies, struggles over affordable housing, and the conflicts arising from capitalist divisions of labour and the devaluation of care work. Prognostically, they call for intense public intervention against the neoliberal dismantling of public goods, and advocate the restoration of political, social, and civil rights for marginalized groups as well as the wider population. They also call for autonomous civic mobilization to create spaces of solidarity as well as institutional solidarity infrastructures. In this sense, movements act as agents of critical analysis and producers of radical imaginaries. Even if the framings of the analysed groups are not necessarily articulated in a radical manner, they fundamentally critique capitalist mechanisms of commodification and profit orientation (especially in housing and care work) and nation-state domination (particularly in migrant rights). However, while articulating these general (radical) critiques, they also prefigure specific responses according to their everyday practices.¹

The five chapters provided a rich tapestry of analyses on solidarity initiatives across various European cities, focusing on their responses to intersectional inequalities and crises. In Italy, the pandemic intensified existing inequalities, prompting solidarity initiatives to broaden their constituencies and deepen their engagement with marginalized groups. Solidarity, framed as both a right as well as a response to systemic injustices, became a rallying cry for progressive movements that called for a more comprehensive building of the commons. Moreover, the local dimension emerged as crucial for collective struggles, with a shift towards a broader conceptualization of care encompassing local areas and their inhabitants. Similarly, in Switzerland, urban political actors mobilized around an infrastructural perspective on solidarity, criticizing inadequate social infrastructures and advocating their expansion and socialization. Grassroots initiatives emphasized the everyday needs of communities, advocating accessible, non-commodified care and housing. Spatially, solidarity was localized, with a focus on neighbourhood-based organizing and place-based care

¹These practices are the focus of our next book, based on ethnographic research by the ECSEuro project (Schwartz et al., [forthcoming](#)).

initiatives. Efforts to institutionalize solidarity sought to formalize collaborative relations with municipalities and redefine notions of urban citizenship.

In Denmark, social movements navigated intersecting crises by mobilizing various forms of solidarity, ranging from autonomous to institutional. Grassroots initiatives contested exclusionary state policies targeting migrants and tenants, framing these policies as systemic injustices requiring collective action. The role of the Danish state emerged as a key point of contention, with movements advocating the formalization of solidarity by socializing the institutional infrastructures of solidarity, connecting the civil society arena with institutional policy arenas (Agustín & Jørgensen, 2019) and the creation of new forms of citizenship, from a grassroots perspective. In Germany, social movements in Berlin and Hamburg framed their struggles within a broader context of crisis, critiquing neoliberal individualization and advocating the de-privatization of social problems and the socialization of solutions. By commoning social infrastructures and fostering collective political subjectivation, initiatives sought to counter isolation and fragmentation prevailing there, highlighting the relational and contentious nature of solidarity practices. In Slovenia, the framings showed a multiscale critique of local, national, and transnational regimes that have exacerbated the continuous displacement of refugees and migrants. Organizations' critiques of neoliberal responses to health and housing crises were coupled with calls for greater involvement of the state. Turning to the ongoing crisis of neoliberal urbanization, which has exacerbated rising inflation and ongoing gentrification processes, these organizations also proposed horizontalism and the defence of commons.

While autonomous solidarity initiatives focused on grassroots mobilization and creating alternative infrastructures, civic and institutional solidarity discourses addressed systemic injustices and advocated broader social change. Transversal connections among similar groups underscored the interconnectedness of struggles and the importance of international solidarity networks in shaping movement strategies. Our analysis clearly shows that contextual specifics shape the forms and strategies of solidarity. Local histories, cultural contexts, and sociopolitical environments influence how solidarity is conceptualized and enacted, highlighting the diversity of these practices in response to varying challenges.

In conclusion, this book illustrates how urban social movement organizations navigate and frame political imaginaries of solidarity across these intertwined crises, emphasizing intersectionality and care to address

growing inequalities and reconstitute social ties. We have aimed to advance frame analysis by integrating emotional and motivational dimensions, contextual influences, and perspectives from critical theory, providing a richer understanding of how solidarity practices are framed and enacted in response to intersecting crises. The movements we have analysed offer framings that, although they are currently scarcely articulated by majorities, articulate alternatives to the unsolidaristic status quo and the discursive domination of regressive forces. We hope that these innovations will offer the readers new insights into the dynamic and contentious nature of social movements, highlighting the transformative potential of solidarity in addressing complex social challenges, opening up possibilities for a more inclusive and just society.

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