

CONFERENCE «SUSTAINABLE AND INNOVATIVE BUILDING AND URBAN DESIGN TO ADDRESS INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS»

A refugee is also a potential new resident!



Associate professor Lise Herslund
University of Copenhagen
Denmark

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Refugees in Denmark

- Refugees have been decentrally placed since the 1990s – all municipalities have to take a share
- When granted asylum – the municipality are responsible for finding a cheap dwelling, provide language classes etc.
- Some refugees are placed in small towns – can they be a resource?
- Most are placed in social housing in municipal centres



Ghetto package – A Denmark without parallel societies

- When a ghetto? Criteria like percentage of migrants, unemployed, convicted etc.
- Physical changes
 - Urban design: safety, destinations, infrastructure to open up
 - Demolition of blocks
 - Max 40% social housing



Migrants and refugees as a resource! – in small towns

- Small towns; empty houses, schools and grocery shops closing – strategies to attract newcomers
- International migrants are becoming more frequent incomers in rural areas
- Refugees placed in smaller towns
- Statistics; refugees the group that leave again!
- **Refugees placed in small towns – how can we get you to stay?**



"They can first off cost money to receive but in the longer run they can show to be the best thing that has happened for the smaller communities in many years"

Mayors of Guldborgsund and Lolland municipalities

*"In a time when local areas are experiencing depopulation, these newcomers can contribute to new life in the small communities and they will be good at it.
If we help the refugees to a good start we can get reap the benefits in the years to come"*

Mayor of Varde municipality



Three ways in

- Refugees perspective: How is it to be placed in a small town, how do you use the town and what is important for you staying?
- The role of local communities: What have you done, what works and what challenges do you face?
Municipalities and NGO's: What do you do to support and how do you work with local communities?



The perspective of refugees

Bourdieu's 'capitals' – formed in one context but valuable in the new context



Everyday life approach: Integration in all spheres of everyday life

Local integration and sense of place: Experiences, use, functionality, discourses and local social relations?



Rural development - local mobilisation!

- Newcomers as a resource
- Small towns and marginalised groups?
- The capacity of local communities to mobilise and organise – a key development factor – endogenous development
- Social or community arena – different levels of capacity and mobilisation
- Interaction capacity - Nexogenous
 - - Co-production
 - - Social innovation
- Pop-up and facebook-organisation – characterising civic initiatives around recent refugee influx

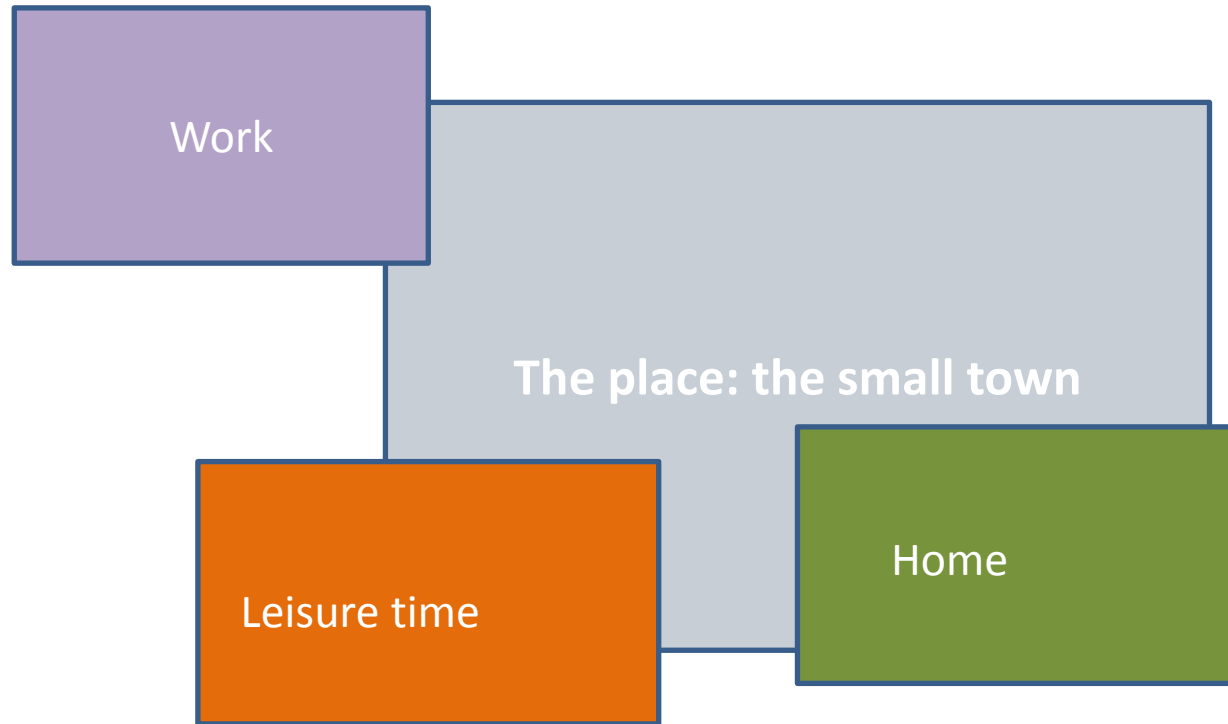


Methods

- 3 municipalities where refugees placed in smaller towns
- 7 smaller towns (600-3000 inhabitants) where started activities for refugees
- Interviews with refugees: 21 Refugee families, single men and larger groups
- Interviews with local communities: 12 local residents and groups
- Other actors: Municipality, NGO's and networks of local communities



An everyday life spread out



“We would like an ordinary dwelling like other people that live in the town. We have to move because we could not find cheap rented accommodation in the town”



“There are no people on the street and it looks strange if we just walk around. Where are people?”

Between urban and associational life



Used to more informal urban life outside – city folks

“I can still smell the freshly baked bread which was sold in the street and all the sounds of life”

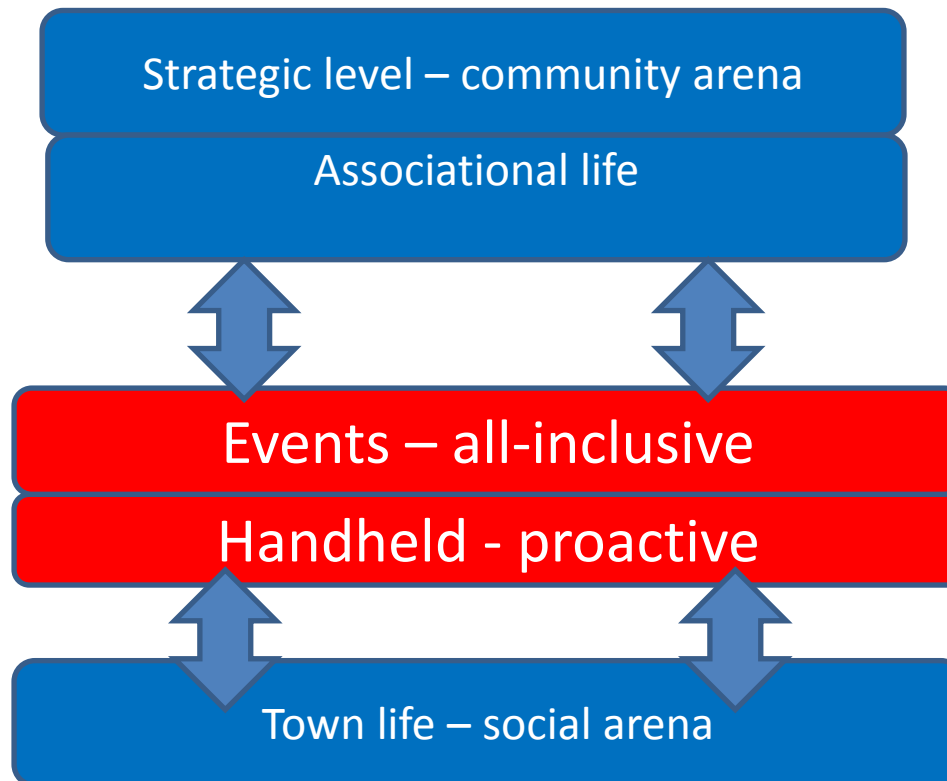
Few public spaces – where can we go?

“There are no people on the street and it looks strange if we just walk around. Where are people?”

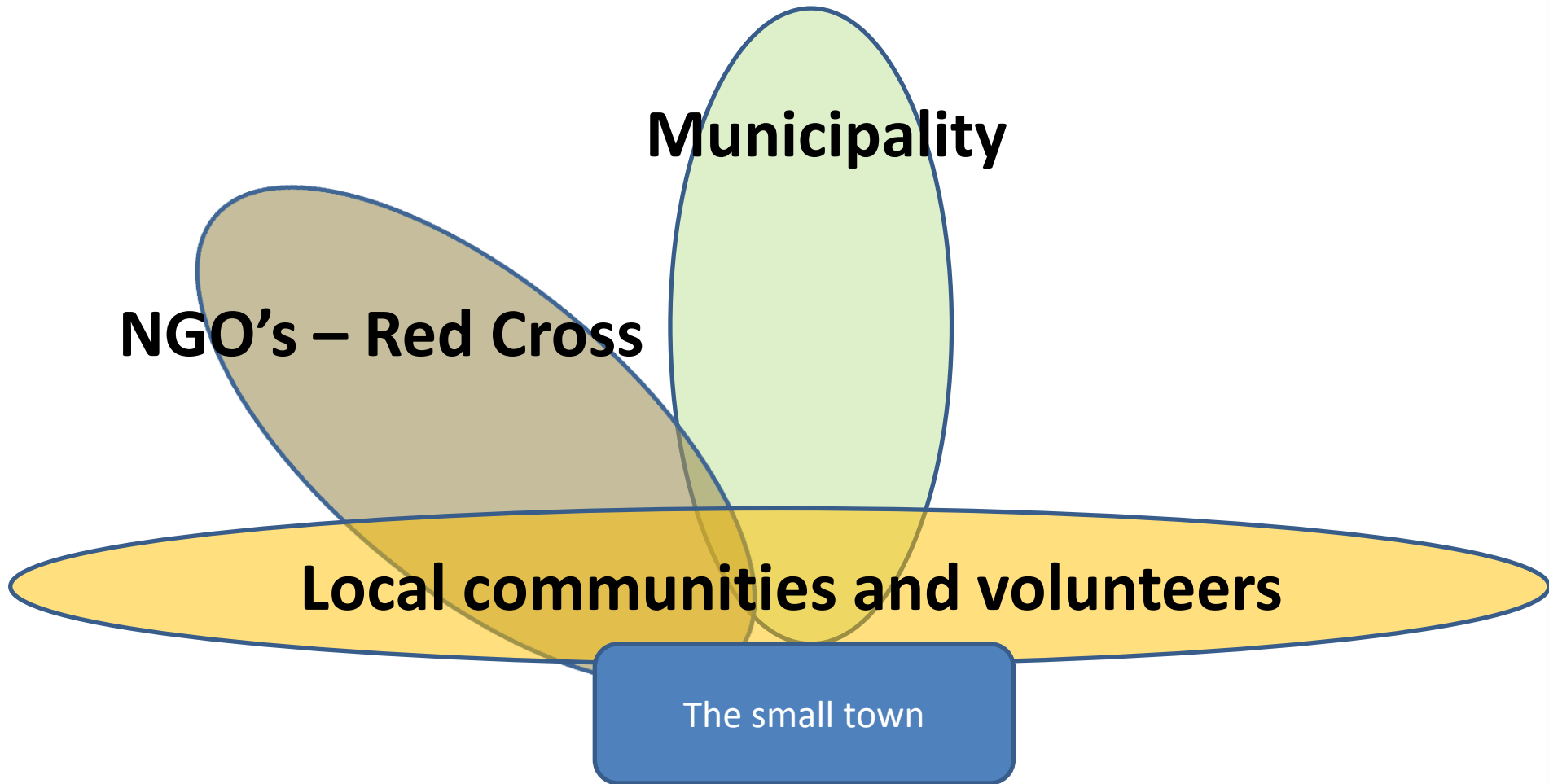
Leisure time and associational life is new – everybody is in the sportshal and clubhouses!



Local pop-up mobilisation but also for development?



Top-down or bottom-up – co-production!



Living in a small town – small town problems

Limited normal but cheap rented accommodation – even empty houses!

Limited public transport - A busy everyday life but with no car

Limited public spaces and life. Where can I meet people?

- New groups in small towns – what everyday life and capitals
- Sense of place – use and functionality but also stigma about small communities
- Supporting local social life - linking

Living in a small town – small town advantages



Local activities – but social innovation and development?

A complex task – new to the towns

More than facebook and coffee - continuous

From social project/facebook volunteering to also rural development?

Sparring and new knowledge from outside – not just endogenous?

Co-production – not with planners but with the social/labour market offices.



Summing up

- Discourses and different background
- Structural factors – small towns for everybody?
- Local communities – social innovation
 - All-inclusive activities
 - Mobilise whole communities
 - Interact for new knowledge and support
- For a better everyday life – not for development – no planners

