

Competing Logics from the CSO Perspective in a Partnership on Undocumented Migration with the State:

A Case Study of Villa Vrede

By

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Writing this thesis has been quite a ride. Undocumented migration is a personal topic that initiated an intense personal search. Sometimes it felt very confronting to choose a topic related to humans whose basic rights aren’t met, simply by denial of their existence by a law that should protect us. The helpless situation of the people I met often made me feel angry, small, and frustrated. It made me realize once again that a place of birth decides a big part of how much safety and freedom one has and what one’s opinion is allowed to be. At times, this realization made it challenging to continue my research. However, I would do it again, and I’d like to encourage others to choose a topic that touches them. Disbelief and anger can be the fuel that’s needed to address issues that need to be addressed, to fight for your beliefs, and to understand that your voice counts. Because it does – and if we don’t do it, who will?

**Abstract**

The Dutch state, municipalities, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) collaborate in a Cross-Sector Social Partnership (CSSP) to find long-lasting solutions to the problem of undocumented people in the Netherlands. Though they all wish for a sustainable solution, their goals, norms, and values differ, potentially affecting the collaboration. While literature in organizational studies lacks research on the perspective of CSOs in collaboration with the state in CSSPs, this research bridges that gap through the lens of institutional logics. It aims to understand how CSO members perceive such a partnership, if and where they perceive tension through competing logics, and which strategies they use to maneuver through them to sustain their activities to keep raising the flag for social justice.
 The case study contained ethnographic methodologies, such as participant observations and conducted interviews, and took place at Villa Vrede (VV), a CSO in this national collaboration in the Netherlands on undocumented migration. Data analysis occurred through thematic analysis. The findings show how dominantly state logics are perceived by CSO members and that strategies are chosen based on their perceived hierarchical position within the CSSP, acting with resourcefulness within the margins of their place of power in the partnership. For example, members use the strategy of defiance when this isn’t expected from the less powerful actor in the partnership*.* In line with the literature, members also use the strategy of avoidance, among other strategies.
 This research contributes to the literature by showing that impact and change can happen in the margins by collaborating with and simultaneously avoiding the powerful partner(s). Another contribution on a political level is that my research shows how the operational services of CSOs are needed by the state, creating space for CSO members to negotiate and maneuver and potentially push dominant and long-existing institutions back to open space for re-evaluation with a social justice perspective; thereby changing the CSSP landscape. The societal contribution of this research is that CSO practices like VV can continue to raise awareness on social justice and might shift the collaboration in the long term in their favor by understanding and mapping out where their services are vital for more powerful partners in the CSSP. It can encourage CSO members to – instead of trying to change the power imbalance – use strategies creatively by looking for alternative ways of exercising influence and creating change in CSSPs within their hierarchy. It can also help create a strategy and a more powerful position to negotiate the partnership's terms, conditions, and underlying values.

**Key Words:** Institutional Logics, Competing Logics, CSSP, CSO, Undocumented Migration

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# List of Abbreviations

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **AVIM** | Afdeling Vreemdelingenpolitie, Identificatie en Mensenhandel *Immigration Police, Identification and Human Trafficking Department of the National Police* |
| **AZC** | Asielzoekerscentrum *Asylum seeker's center* |
| **COA** | Centraal Opvang Asielzoekers *Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers* |
| **CSO** | Civil Society Organization |
| **CSSP** | Cross-Sector Social Partnership |
| **DT&V** | Dienst Terugkeer en Vertrek *Repatriation and Departure Service* |
| **IL** | Institutional Logics |
| **IT** | Institutional Theory |
| **IND** | Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst *Immigration and Naturalisation Service* |
| **LVV** | Landelijke Vreemdelingen Voorzieningen *National Immigration Service* |
| **VNG** | Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten *Association of Dutch Municipalities* |
| **VV** | Villa Vrede |

# 1. Introduction

In 2014, the Council of Europe slammed the Netherlands for its inhumane treatment of undocumented migrants. This resulted in a nine-day internal battle within the Cabinet of the time (Cabinet Rutte II) – the VVD (the liberal People's Party for Freedom) didn't want to make emergency shelters available, while the PvdA (the social-democratic Labour Party) did (Zembla, 2014). A cabinet crisis was averted last minute when the coalition parties decided that asylum seekers who had exhausted all legal remedies could be housed in only five locations, where they would also be prepared for repatriation. However, the five chosen municipalities didn’t agree with this approach. An administrative impasse followed in which consultations between municipalities and the governing parties were at a standstill. In 2018, to break the deadlock, the LVV program was created (Damen, 2022a). The idea was a collaboration pilot program between the Ministry of Justice and Security, the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND), aid organizations, and the municipalities of Utrecht, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Eindhoven, and Groningen. With this LVV program, collaborating parties assess whether a rejected asylum seeker can return to the country of origin or whether a renewed asylum application has a chance of success (WODC, 2020).

The previous secretary of the state and the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG) agreed that both return and legalization of residence of asylum seekers would be supported in the Netherlands; eventual changes would be discussed after a final evaluation of the pilot program (Damen, 2022b). However, the state secretary of the current Cabinet (Rutte IV) recently published a new coalition agreement with plans to drastically curtail the LVV program, stating that reception and guidance will only be available to the people who promise in advance to return to their countries. Furthermore, asylum seekers whose applications have been rejected must leave the country to avoid putting further pressure on the already jammed system and to avoid an extra pull factor for asylum seekers without the right to stay (Damen, 2022b). The VNG expressed their concerns, partly because the final evaluation report on the pilot program will only appear later this year, but also because they find the proposed plan unrealistic and unfeasible (idem).

The LVV program is an example of a Cross-Sectoral Social Partnership (CSSP), which aims to solve societal challenges that cannot be solved by one sector alone (Dentoni et al., 2016). Understanding such partnerships through Institutional Logics (IL), a theoretical lens that acknowledges the multiplicity of assumptions, practices, and actions, can help gain insight into current dynamics between collaborating parties and enhance understanding of its challenges.

In management and organizational studies, IL is used as a theoretical approach to analyze the interrelationship between institutions and organizational behavior. Hence, logics are seen as ‘a set of material practices, and symbolic constructions [that] constitute organizing principles for institutions’ or ‘supraorganizational patterns of human activity’ (Friedland & Alford, 1991, p.248, p.243). Logics link institutions (on an organizational (meso-) level) with individuals (on a micro-level) as they drive organizational members to a particular way of doing things. Understanding IL can be valuable to understand how and why individuals in CSSPs act the way they do, which could lead to gaining insight in the dynamics between collaborating organization within the partnership.

IL are helpful in understanding the potential conflicts emerging in the institutional field that is composed of multiple institutional actors and that hosts CSSPs. Logics with different interests and values, called competing logics, may lead to frictions in such a field and by directing attention to the micro-level behavior it is possible to shed light on the inter-institutional conflict surfacing in partners’ collaborative interactions. (Vogel et al., 2022). While these conflicts and frictions can be sources of social innovations (Kodeih & Greenwood, 2014), analyzing CSSPs members’ perception of (competing) logics provides a better understanding of challenges within the collaboration, which in turn affects the ability to address societal challenges.

CSSPs and logics have been studied in the perspective of public-private partnerships in the field of IT impact sourcing, researching how IL can help explain the outcome of such partnerships (Ismail et al., 2018). Hesse et al. (2019) researched what logics are present in a partnership on refugee integration in Germany, combining the perspective of public-private and governmental & nonprofit grassroots organizations. However, research on partnerships among governmental bodies and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from the CSO perspective is still needed (Vogel et al., 2022). Furthermore, a clear understanding of how individuals within partnering organizations experience competing logics is also scarce (Pache & Santos, 2013). This research attempts to bridge that gap. While my analysis will take place at an organizational level, individuals play an important role since they are essential strategic actors (at a micro-level) making sense of logics, perceiving them, acting accordingly, and translating logics into action (Pache & Santos, 2013). This way, using the lens of IL not only helps reveal the way of micro-level behavior aggregated at the organizational level within the CSSPs, but also, due to their competing character, sheds light on the sources of conflicts and frictions, potentially offering a dynamic view of the CSSPs. This could be helpful when creating new and evaluating already existing partnerships.

This research aims to understand how members of a CSO within a CSSP perceive competing logics in the institutional field of undocumented migration and navigate their way against the background of multiple needs and expectations.To answer this question, I conducted a case study using ethnographic methodologies - a combination of participant observation, (in)formal (semi-)interviews, and online documentation and analyzed the data based on thematic analysis. This case study focuses on Villa Vrede (VV), one of the operational CSOs within the LVV program in the municipality of Utrecht, supporting undocumented people[[1]](#footnote-2).

First, I will elaborate on the theory that forms the foundation of this research in chapter 2. Then I will discuss my methodological choices in chapter 3 and share my findings in chapter 4. Finally, I will end with the conclusion and discussion in chapter 5. Anonymized details of the interviews can be found in Appendix I, the interview topic list in Appendix II, and the code tree template in Appendix III.

# 2. Conceptual framework

This chapter covers the theory that forms the foundation of this research. First, I will introduce Institutional Logics (IL), and then explain the concept of competing logics. After that I will address what a CSO and a CSSP are and how they are relevant to this research. Next, I will show what competing logics can be found in a CSO within a CSSP. Finally, I will demonstrate five strategies through which actors can navigate through IL in the context of CSSPs.

## 2.1 Institutional Logics

The foundation of this research lies in organizational studies, the study of individuals constructing organizational structures, processes, and practices and how these, in turn, shape social relations and create institutions that ultimately influence people (Clegg & Baley, 2007).

One of the areas covered by organizational studies is Institutional Theory (IT), this theory can be seen as the root of IL. IT aims to understand and explain why organizations act by more than economic reasoning and rational strategic goals alone (Johansen & Waldorff, 2017). IT assumes that various exterior social norms and values put organizations under constant pressure, affecting organizational members and the organization itself (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). Therefore, organizations must deal with ongoing interaction between different, inconsistent, and continuously changing social norms and values. The importance of external pressure shows how focused this theory is on a (static) environment and structure (ibid.)

Many scholars have contested the explanatory power of IT when it comes to institutional change, and they have questioned the assumptions around the relationship between a static environment and structure (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Zucker, 1977; DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). This critique has opened new strands within the IT and brought the agency of institutions and their role in explaining institutional change and organizational behavior (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008).

Alford & Friedland introduced Institutional Logics (IL) in 1991 to define institutions' content and meaning (Alford & Friedland, 1991; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). Like IT, it focused on the effects of cognitive structures and cultural rules on organizational structures. But whereas IT focuses on homogeneity, IL argues that society is not a homogenous reality because not all organizations are the same. Instead, IL highlights heterogeneity – focusing more on individuals and organizations than on the environment (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). This perspective explains how a set of cultural elements or rationalities influence the behavior and cognition of both individual and organizational actors. Focusing on how logics drive individuals in organizations to a particular way of doing things links institutions with individuals (idem.).

Friedland & Alford (1991) put the contradictory assumptions and actions embedded within the western societies to explain the interrelationships between individuals, organizations, and society (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). This perspective offered new ways of looking at how change takes place in an institutional environment. Instead of looking at a duality between interests and culture, IL argued that the co-existence of ‘potentially contradictory’ institutions forms the basis of ongoing transformation (Friedland & Alford 1991, p.240; Thornton et al., 2012). IL as a theoretical concept is an interesting analytical tool because it makes it possible to understand the dynamic and contested nature of organizational fields (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008).

In the IL, institutional fields – so-called arenas – exist in various parts of society. To understand how different arenas are formed, Alford & Friedland introduced ‘central logics’ that, according to them, are 'the most important institutional orders' of Western societies – capitalism, family, the bureaucratic state, democracy, and Christianity (Johansen & Waldorff, 2017). These logics represent practices & symbolic structures that form principles institutions organize themselves around or influence ‘supraorganizational patterns of human activity' (Friedland & Alford, 1991, p.248, p.243). Each institutional field is a community held together by common beliefs, associated practices, and values (Scott, 2013). As a result, those fields usually have their specific combination of characterizing field logics. As multiple practices and values are present in a community, various logics and actors are also at play in one field. Actors in such a field are guided by the dominant organizing rules and principles which are derivatives of the institutional logics within that community (Friedland & Alford, 1991). Thus, an IL demonstrates the ‘deep-structural rules that coordinate and guide actors’ perceptions and actions’ (Geels, 2012: p.3). Therefore, IL embodies an institution’s rationality. Social institutions are seen as a construct of formal and informal rules. Rationalities, in their turn, are reflected in social institutions. On the one hand, institutions make behavior and change possible; on the other hand, they provide rules that affect agency, which is the capacity of individuals to act independently. Those rules guide and restrain agency (Fuenfschilling & Truffer, 2014).

There is a difference between the IL and the institution(s) it may support. Logics guide social meaning and institutions and may be less tangible than the institutions themselves (Johansen & Waldorff, 2017). Every field has its own rationality and resulting practices. Without knowing the institutional field, IL is an empty construction waiting for the context to make sense of the whole; the concepts of field dynamics and networks are meaningless without knowing which institutional orders the actors in the field draw from (Thornton et al., 2012).

## 2.2 Competing logics

Within the IL, several contributions shed light on how organizations can find themselves in paradoxical situations when incompatible logics create friction within the organizational field. Research shows how competing logics can create opportunity for innovation (Almandoz, 2012; Durand et al., 2013; Kodeih & Greenwood, 2014). A large part of existing literature on competing logics is focused on how a ‘new’ logic to the field starts to challenge the prevailing one and becomes the dominant one in that specific organizational field (Lounsbury, 2007; Marquis & Lounsbury, 2007). However, it’s not always the case that one logic overrules the other; sometimes, there are situations where different parties with distinct logics are forced to work together, not willing to abandon their own logic. That is why research emerged on conflicting logics and how they are dealt with and managed. For example, Reay & Hinings (2009) researched how conflicting logics are coped with simultaneously, and Saz-Carranza & Longo (2012) explored how participants of public-private joint ventures manage conflicting logics. The logics also play an important role in CSSPs as they host multiple organizational bodies operating within the same institutional field but through different logics.

## 2.3 Logics CSOs & CSSPs

CSSPs aim to ‘solve societal challenges that cannot be solved by one sector alone’ (Dentoni et al. 2016). This results in multi-institutional collaborative forms of organizations. Those collaborations can either be formal or informal. Because multiple parties work together with different objectives and interests, they play multiple games simultaneously, and CSSPs ‘are embedded within multiple normative orders’ (Kraatz & Block 2008, p.243). The institutional infrastructure of the CSSP field is made of formal and informal regulations, norms, and cognitions that decide the requirements that CSSPs needs to meet to be considered appropriate and achieve the expected results (Vurro & Dacin, 2013).

Literature on IL and partnerships shows big research clusters in collaborative governance, public-private partnerships, and business-nonprofit partnerships. However, research on partnerships among governmental bodies and CSOs is open for more studies and is ‘the Cinderella of CSSP research, deserving more attention’ (Vogel et al., 2022: p.408). Furthermore, a clear understanding of how individuals within organizations experience competing logics is also scarce (Pache & Santos, 2013).

Also, though much research has been done about the influence of institutional logics on organizations, there is little research available about this theme on CSSPs: Ismail et al. (2018) discussed how IL can help explain the outcome of public-private partnerships in the field of IT ‘impact sourcing’, and Hesse et al. (2019) researched what logics are present in a partnership on refugee integration in Germany. IL in CSSPs exists on the organizational level (meso) and the level of the actors within these organizations (micro). Based on their research on a CSSP concerning refugee integration, Hesse et al. (2019) introduce three logics at play: state, community, and market logics which can be relevant to take as a starting point to describe the existing logics in the CSSP on undocumented migrants. Both topics are complex and require multiple parties from different layers to work together. It is primarily nonprofit organizations active in this field, committing their time and energy to a project concerning justice and human rights collaboration with official authorities. Consequently, it is likely that the same logics could be present.

Examples of state logics are bureaucracy, adhocracy, and politics.Actions and attitudes fall under the logic of bureaucracy when actors perceive and describe their duties as fulfilling by law and following policies. This can be the case when they refer to a higher authority, a new policy, or an existing law to legitimize their point of view. Others can also describe, on a symbolic level, actors that use this logic, with words such as "policy", "law", "regulation", "government", and "authority": "Seeing him throwing his briefcase on the desk and starting to command. (Hesse et al., 2019, p.687)". An example of a representation of this logic in concrete action is of a deported asylum seeker from Bosnia and Herzegovina who got its language training canceled after the Balkan countries were declared safe origins (Hesse et al., 2019).
 Adhocracy comes to light when there is an absence of clear targets and monitoring, and the opacity of process steps is substantive and frequently mentioned by the interviewees. A lack of specific responsibilities and formal coordination is to be recognized in this category, especially in the initiation phase. Words and concepts used for this logic are "transparency", "non-transparent", "ad hoc", "opacity", "chaos", "mess", "unknown", "coordination", "figures", and "responsibility" (Hesse et al, 2019). An example of this can be practices that contradict financial responsibility. An example of an interviewee mentioning this logic in Hesse et al.’s CSSP on integration: "At this point, integration isn't happening in a structured way. Authorities, institutions, initiatives, and volunteers are like a swarm or a milling mass of well-intentioned activities." (p.690)
 The logic of politics refers to the political interest of getting (re)elected, of wanting a positive public opinion. Political decision-making and public debates by politicians are included in this category because participants of a CSSP can notice how the desire to be elected and liked by public opinion directly influences the partners' work. An example of this is when authorities in Germany changed allocation decisions so that, in the weeks before the state election, there were no incoming refugees in the district. As a result, members of a partnership on refugee integration postponed the starting dates of their language training (Hesse et al., 2019). Words that can indicate this logic are "politics", "politicians", "parties", "municipality".

 Examples of community logics are humanism and altruism.Humanism is seen as respect for the dignity of each individual and humanitarian benevolence or philanthropy. Actors following the humanitarian idea usually support equal treatment of all refugees and share the opinion that there shouldn't be a distinction between war refugees, economic refugees, and others in need. Terms used in descriptions or arguments in this logic are "equal", "needy", "first aid", "help", "support", "feelings", "emotions". These types of statements ‘tended to be martial in character', using words as "dramatic", "war", "danger", "escape", or "fear"’ (p.691).
 Altruism refers to altruistic behavior whereby one prioritizes the needs of others above its own needs; actors claim to go beyond their responsibilities and obligations to 'increase another's welfare'. Activities reflecting this logic include volunteers taking leave from work to accompany refugees to their asylum application interviews. Examples of words reflecting altruism are "others", "voluntary", "not an obligation", "for me", "for others".
 Two examples of market logics are resources and customer and cost factors. Resources are seen in the sense that value is a product of labor. Young immigrants and refugees, for example, can be seen as resources to fill gaps. Discussing refugees in terms of qualification needs and education indicates this logic. An example is organizing language training for refugees because this would increase their chances of getting a job. Words related to this logic are "resource"," job integration", "labor market", "manpower", "skill", "language", "education", "dual system", "qualification", "internship", and "orientation". Customer and cost factor refers to refugees being seen as consumers, as customers in the facilities they use. An example of an action representing this logic is the number of language courses that parties agreed on in the partnership Hesse et al. researched (2019). In this context, refugees were either solving challenges or burdening the German tax and pension systems. An example of a quote of this logic: "Each month they don't work, we pay for their housing and welfare. If they work, they pay for themselves, and they pay taxes. Payers subsidize beneficiaries – that is what we have to do…" Words indicating this logic are "costumer", "spending capacity", "budget", "tax", "beneficiary", "payment".

The civil society logic 'embraces a wide range of communitarian activities for the sake of public welfare such as (...) civil and human rights' (Vogel et al., 2022: p. 405). This logic promotes societal change, and values like altruism, humanism, benevolence, social justice, and charity (idem.). Market logics can also be present in CSOs; examples are fundraising (Hager, Rooney & Pollak, 2002), commercialization (Maier, Meyer & Steinbereithner, 2016), and marketing (Brown & Slivinski, 2006).

## 2.4. Competing Logics CSSPs: friction between the logic of government and civil society

The institutional logics of state and civil society co-exist in CSSPs. Although they have things in common – like democratic values and governance mechanisms – CSOs and government are incompatible with competing values and interests (Min, 2021). Some CSOs even create their identity and mission as opposed to government policies (Gazley & Brudney, 2007). This can raise tensions and conflicts at the micro-level (Vogel et al., 2022). Directing attention to the micro-level is helpful because it is between the individual members in those partnerships ‘where inter-institutional conflicts reside and surface in partners’ collaborative interactions.’ (Vogel et al., 2022: p.410).

Professionalism is one of the themes related to the state logic that can lead to friction (Salamon, 1987). Often, CSO members are volunteers without a professional understanding of administrative and legal requirements, while numerous public officials have a professional legal background and stick to rules and regulations (Knutsen, 2012). Another cause for tension is a big contrast between the hierarchical form of both logics. Whereas the logic of state often prescribes highly hierarchical forms of decision-making, CSOs consist mainly of personalized relationships and flat organizational hierarchies, sticking to strong norms of collective, informal decision-making (Skelcher & Smith, 2015). In addition, CSOs' financial dependence on the government results in tensions over control and power. As a result, CSO members perceive themselves as weaker partners and may fear a loss of independence and autonomy (Brinkerhoff, 1999; Gazley, 2008). They also tend to be more critical while evaluating partnership achievements (Gazley & Brudney, 2007). Also, the CSO can perceive the given public funds as an administrative burden because they require tight monitoring, compromising the shared mission of serving stakeholders' interests (Brandsen et al., 2017). This also relates to the tension of different outlooks on prioritizing costs and quality. CSOs are often most concerned with the quality of the services, while government representatives focus on monitoring costs through performance targets and procedural regularity (Brandsen et al., 2017; Knutsen, 2012).

## 2.5. Navigating through Institutional Logics: five strategies

 The previous paragraphs explained how competing IL can be found in the context of CSSPs. Here, I will elaborate on how actors can navigate through these logics. Understanding what and how members use these strategies gives insight into how they maneuver between the logics in the CSSPs.

According to Vogel et al. (2022), actors’ navigation through IL in CSSPs can happen through five strategies: acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, defiance, and manipulation.

 The first strategy is one of acquiescence. Here, actors from one sector may respond by adopting institutional elements from the logics of others, whether consciously or not (to adopt arrangements required by external institutional constituents).
 Second, the strategy of compromise. Actors may confirm to all involved logics, at least to a minimum extent (in the attempt [by organizations] to achieve conformity with all institutional expectations).
 The third strategy is avoidance, where actors may stick to the IL of their own sector while largely resisting adaptation to other logics (in the attempt to preclude the necessity to conform to institutional pressures or circumvent the conditions that make this conformity necessary). This strategy is reflected in accepting institutional conflicts without attempts to resolve them.
 The fourth strategy is about defiance. This happens when actors challenge or attack the IL of at least one partner to reduce the salience of this logic in the partnership (in an attempt to actively remove the source of contradiction). This can happen, for example, by undermining associated assumptions and beliefs of the IL or reframing (elements of) it as illegitimate. Vogel et al. expect that such a response occurs when partners aren't in conflict but strongly differ in power. Power imbalance often occurs at the expense of nonprofit partners who don't have the regulatory authority of governmental partners. Therefore, the more powerful actors may take advantage of their position & delegitimize their partners’ logics.
 Vogel et al. (2022) mention the fifth and last strategy is manipulation. This is the case when actors influence how the IL of partners are translated into demands on and requirements for the partnership and by whom the logics are translated (in an active attempt to alter the context of institutional requirements and to influence their promotors).

This results in the following research question: ‘How do CSO members within a CSSP perceive competing logics in the institutional field of undocumented migration and navigate their way against the background of multiple needs?’

# 3. Methodology

In this chapter, I will elaborate on the chosen research approach and outline the case study's context. Afterward, I will mention the data sources and explain how I analyzed the data. Finally, I will discuss the quality standards.

## 3.1 Research Approach

I chose a qualitative research strategy because this allows a more profound analysis of symbols, language, and acts - elements where institutional logics are expressed (Reay & Jones, 2016). This research can be characterized as interpretative research, where the researcher's task is understanding the subjective meaning of social interactions (Bryman, 2016). This research design is a case study because it makes it possible to consider the case's context and specific assumptions and relations (Flick, 2017).

## 3.2 Research setting

### 3.2.1 CSSP on Undocumented Migration in The Netherlands: LVV Program

An estimated 23.000 to 58.000 undocumented people live in the Netherlands (WODC, 2020). The reason for this can be a rejected asylum procedure, an expired or revoked residence permit, never applying for a permit, or being a stateless person (*Undocumented*, 2022). Due to critique of the Council of Europe for its inhumane treatment of undocumented migrants in 2014, the Dutch state created the LVV pilot program in 2018: a partnership of local social organizations, national chain partners, working under the municipality's direction. The aim is to find lasting solutions for undocumented people (Damen, 2022a). The collaboration takes place between the Ministry of Justice and Security (JenV), the Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG), the municipalities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Eindhoven, and Groningen, and three chain partners in the migration chain: the Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) the Repatriation and Departure Service (DT&V) and the Immigration Police, Identification and Human Trafficking Department of the National Police (AVIM). Figure 1 shows the organization chart of this construction.

**Figure 1**

*Organization chart of the LVV program – from the state to participating
 municipalities*



In every municipality, different CSOs are responsible for executing several parts of the LVV agreement, although some CSOs take on multiple roles. Figure 2 shows how this CSSP from the LVV program plays out at the municipality level in Utrecht, narrowing down to the position of Villa Vrede (VV), the CSO used as a case study for this research.

**Figure 2***Organization chart of the LVV program – from the migration chain to CSOs*



Table 1 shows an overview of the actors and activities in this network – the responsible CSOs in Utrecht, including their task(s) in the LVV-pilot:

**Table 1** *The responsible CSOs and their task(s) in the LVV in the municipality of Utrecht*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Guidance (tasks according to LVV)** | **Responsible CSOs** |
| **Daycare / reception / asylum** | SNDVU, Seguro, Weerdsingel, Huize Agnes (24 hr care), Toevlucht (night shelter for men) |
| **Social Guidance** | SDNVU, VluchtelingenWerk, Seguro, Huize Agnes |
| **Legal Screening & Guidance** | SNDVU, VluchtelingenWerk, STIL |
| **Return Guidance** | SNDVU, Seguro, STIL, VluchtelingenWerk |
| **Future Orientation** | SNDVU, VluchtelingenWerk, Seguro, STIL |
| **Daycare and Activation** | **Villa Vrede,** PAS (Utrecht partnership regarding activation) |

 *Note.* Adapted from *Eindrapport plan- en procesevaluatie LVV*, by WODC, 2020, p. 54

### 3.2.2 Case Study: Villa Vrede – A CSO in the LVV program

Villa Vrede (VV) is a CSO with the purpose of offering ‘a safe day room for undocumented people in Utrecht society and everything related to, that belongs to and/or can be conducive to it’ (VV, 2021). VV started as a foundation in 2013, created by a mixed group of citizens of Utrecht. VV wants to provide immediate support to these people, but their mission statement is more extensive: they ‘strive to make the (problem of) undocumented people visible to stimulate mutual understanding and commitment, through exchange and meeting with the city and its residents’ (VV, 2021). They do this by creating many indoor and outdoor activities and collaborating with various organizations on different levels – from keeping warm contacts in their neighborhood to the city of Utrecht to national collaborations (VV, 2021).

While executing their activities, with the arrival of the LVV program, subsidies became available for the same service they were already offering. Although VV doesn’t distinguish between people’s legal status and supports all undocumented people in Utrecht, they now also form part of PAS – a partnership in Utrecht regarding activating undocumented people participating in the LVV program. Since the program's start, organized activities have been financed by the municipality; the rest of the provided support and services are still externally funded (Villa Vrede, 2020).

VV’s project coordinator and daycare coordinator are paid employees. The rest of the organization consists of a continuously changing network of volunteers – some staying for years, others leaving after some weeks. Volunteers include people from the neighborhood, and visitors who often become volunteers once they are more settled. Other people arrive through universities and schools for research or internship purposes. Volunteers can choose to do different tasks. The underlying thought is that new volunteers show their skills and interests and that their contribution to the organization will be based on that. Some jobs are more administrative, such as being a board member, helping with bookkeeping, organizing events, writing content for the website, and helping to find external funding or collaborating partners. Other tasks are more on the direct operational level of the organization, such as assisting in the kitchen, doing groceries, helping to clean, being a host(ess) – chatting with visitors, and welcoming new people. Other volunteers assist by giving activities: gardening, sewing & knitting, Dutch or English classes, anti-stress support, bicycle repair, or music lessons such as singing and playing the piano.

With these activities VV participates in the LVV. The underlying idea of activation is that instead of passively waiting on IND’s judgment, participating in activities makes people more psychologically resilient and stable. This helps them to think about their future, what they want to achieve, and what their next steps will be to get there. The goal of activation within the LVV is that people return to their country of origin, VV’s purpose is to give people a place where they can learn new skills and guide them to their next step, wherever that may be.

## 3.3 Data sources Table 2 *Data sources in numbers*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Hours in the field** | 140 |
| **Pages of journaling (A4)** | 73 |
| **Number of interviewees** | 5 |
| **Average interview time** | 45 min |
| **Interview transcriptions - number of pages** | 110 |

I wanted to understand how VV’s members would describe their practices and environment and how I would perceive their daily operations with my own eyes. To get a complete picture, I wanted to know the organization first and access daily activities and practices by becoming part of their team. I used ethnographic research because this method allowed me to consider the context of the data (Flick, 2017). I chose the combination of participant observation, (in)formal (semi-)interviews, and online documentation about the organization and the topic of undocumented migration in the Netherlands. Becoming part of the community creates different relationships within the research context. For example, organizational members stop seeing the researcher as an intruder after spending an extended time in the same place (Bryman, 2016). Also, with a different role in the organization, members can forget that the main reason for being there is to do research (idem.). Finally, regular participation in organizational activities often makes it more likely to get a better view of the daily reality of the organization and its people than just a one-time visit. With these observations, I could describe settings, behavior, and events. The method is also very flexible, as it allows for thick journaling, taking the context into account; revisiting the notes is an iterative process that can lead to unexpected insights (Flick, 2017).

The semi-structured interviews provided more in-depth insights into situations and described the interviewees’ words to understand how they perceived their surroundings and daily operations. It was beneficial that my ethnographic fieldwork allowed me to not see the interviews as my only ‘truth’ or data of the situation. Interviewing also made it possible to deviate from a previously made topic list and continue asking interviewees in-depth questions to express their perspectives better when needed. Finally, the online documents helped with background research. This way, it was possible to contextualize the institutional field of undocumented migration, which was helpful with understanding events, preparing talks with organizational members, and mapping out VV’s position within the LVV program.

### 3.3.1 Participant Observation.

I started conducting participant observation shortly after my first meeting with the organization at the end of January 2021 and ended by the end of October 2021. For these nine months, I taught Dutch to the visitors at VV on Wednesdays from 09:30 to 11:00 AM, totaling 140 hours in the field and 73 pages of journaling. Since I am a Dutch teacher by profession, making this my access point into the organization as becoming a member of VV made sense. After Dutch class, I hung around, asked where and if I could help, and chatted with staff, volunteers, and visitors. This allowed me to experience the everyday practices of the organization. It had low and high levels of explicitness, as I could watch things happen or actively participate in informal, casual conversations. After every Wednesday, I wrote down my impressions of the day and journaled extensively. In the beginning, I explored all the facets of the organization a bit: I talked with visitors before, during, and after activities, got to know them better, and participated with games and coffee in the living room and garden or helped in the kitchen. After a while, I felt that I had a better impression of the whole and started to hang around more often at the office, where I spoke a lot with VV's coordinators and overheard their conversations and meetings to understand their daily activities, struggles, and challenges better.

The research took place during the early days of the COVID-19 virus. Although a big part of the Netherlands was in a semi-lockdown, VV was allowed to remain open because they were working with vulnerable people who otherwise wouldn’t have a place to go. Unfortunately, there have been COVID outbreaks at VV, where they had to close and cancel all activities, and I also had to be quarantined a couple of times.

### 3.3.2. Interviews: informal and semi-structured in-depth.

During my visits, I had many casual conversations with volunteers and visitors about several topics. Every week after my class, I chatted with VV’s coordinators in the office to catch up, find out about any updates or news, and have some small talk. Usually, one of us would get interrupted in the middle of a conversation; people keep walking in and out of the office, and phones keep ringing all the time. Those moments – a received phone call, a minor incident between visitors, or an intake of a new visitor – were interesting moments for me. When there was enough time and space, I asked for extra details about the matter, and often one of the coordinators would explain the situation and its context to me. However, there wasn’t always time, and those moments never lasted longer than a couple of minutes. At the end of the day, I remained with many questions. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to have many informal interviews during the nine months of being in the field. The remaining questions formed the basis of my interview topic list and the *sensitizing concepts* I had developed based on the literature (see Appendix II).

 I decided to conduct semi-structured interviews with key members of VV because strategic actors make sense of logics, perceive them, act accordingly, and translate them into action (Pache & Santos, 2013). In addition, I wanted to interview members from different organizational positions to get a more complete picture of how competing logics can be perceived in this organization from various perspectives. Therefore, I conducted five interviews with strategic organizational members with different roles – anonymized details can be found in Appendix 1. I did not interview visitors because the scope of this research is about the perception of competing logics within the partnership VV participates in – visitors aren’t directly involved in this collaboration. However, many visitors also volunteer at VV or visit very frequently. Therefore, they can be seen as part of the organization, too – many visitors have a lot of knowledge about the organization and need to be in touch with other collaborating CSOs daily; I considered the importance of their perception of VV’s operations and surroundings. To be as inclusive as possible, I had a lot of informal interviews and talks with them, and I included this in my journaling. I also interviewed a former visitor now working for VV – this way, I hope to include the voice and view of someone who has been a visitor before working for the organization, as this might change the perception of the logics in the field.

I conducted all interviews on location at VV. Although it can be a busy place, and it is a small building, I tried to minimize the risk of getting disturbed by going to a separate room so I could also guarantee the quality of the recordings. This was successful for some, but not all, interviews. After I conducted the interviews, I made transcriptions, which formed the basis for my data analysis. The interviews took approximately 45 minutes, resulting in 110 pages of transcription.

### 3.3.3. Online Documents.

 I used several online documents to get to know more about the organization: examples of this are VV’s group WhatsApp chats, weekly records of staff meetings, VV’s newsletters, VV’s website, and social media - their policy plan, annual reports, mission statements, contributions – and the website of the employees’ schedule for more information about colleagues and activities (hetrooster.nl). Besides, I also used documents to understand more about VV’s context and collaborating partners. LVV-pilot’s report, PAS documents, and other collaborations that VV takes part in are examples of this. The UN report *Scaling Fences* (a.o.) provided me with more background knowledge of the undocumented migrants' issue, news articles helped me gain an understanding of the historical context of the LVV program, and I gathered information about the municipality of Utrecht and the Dutch government to understand more about the policy side of this theme. As part of the VV language team, I attended meetings with other organizations about language learning in Utrecht. This way, I also extended my view of Utrecht’s social map.

## 3.4 Data analysis

I analyzed the data according to Braun & Clarkes thematic analysis (2006) because of its flexibility - through the iterative process of study, it becomes possible to shift the research’s lens and find unanticipated insights (idem.). This method also enables pinpointing the most important themes from a large body of data and offers a 'thick description' of the data set, considering the context and the social and psychological explanations.
 The data analyzation consisted of six phases. In the first phase, I familiarized myself with the data by transcribing the conducted interviews, re-reading my journaling notes, and jotting down initial impressions of the main themes coming to the surface. In the second phase, I started to generate initial codes of aspects and features that seemed interesting. I used coding principles for creating codes, according to Polit & Beek (2010), where a researcher narrows a large amount of data down to smaller segments. This is an iterative process without a finite interpretation, and it is up to the researcher to decide how abstract the final code will be. My starting point for the coding was the types of codes used by Vaismoradi et al. (2016): conceptual, relationship, participant perspective, participant characteristic & setting.

 I used the qualitative data analysis computer software NVivo to create codes and connect relevant data pieces to each code. In the third phase, I started looking for potential themes and gathered all data that seemed relevant to each theme. In the fourth phase, I reviewed the themes to see whether they worked with the extracted codes and the whole data set. This generated a thematic map of the analysis. In the fifth phase, I continued analyzing each theme, refining what characterizes each theme and providing clear definitions and names for them. Phase six is consists of the Findings chapter, showing a ‘selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts. Finally, in the Discussion chapter, I will relate back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis' (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It is important to note that although the steps are divided and categorized into phases, the reality is not that static, and I have been moving back and forth several stages, making it a cyclic process. The code tree template can be found in Appendix III.

## 3.5. Quality of the research

As this qualitative research rests on an interpretive paradigm, reflexivity is essential for the transparency of this study. I am aware and I acknowledge that both who I am as a person and my role as a researcher have influenced the construction of this research framework and its outcomes. To ensure the quality of this study, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are considered criteria of trustworthiness. (Flick, 2017, p. 576; Guba & Lincoln, 1989, p. 240-244). In this section, I will share how these criteria are met. I will also explicitly share my view, position on undocumented migration, background, personal values, and preferences. I also share how I experienced some challenges while conducting the research. Finally, I share this and large pieces of text with anecdotes in the findings section, as detailed as possible. This way, readers can judge if they agree with my conclusion and discussion based on the findings.
 This relates directly to the transferability of my study, as thick descriptions provide readers with data, so they can judge for themselves. In this view, readers are responsible for generalization (Flick, 2017, p. 541; Bryman, 2012, p. 392). To ensure the credibility of this study, I chose triangulation of methods by combining participant observation, interviews, and online documents. This enhances credibility as data from multiple sources either confirm or contradict each other, providing a more realistic view than with just one type of source (Flick, 2017). I made sure to choose key members for the interviews that represented different layers and perspectives of the organization to give a view that is complete as possible. Purposive sampling made the study more credible as I could show a variety of members´ perspectives and include important views throughout the organization despite conducting a relatively small number of interviews. As to the dependability of this study, I made sure my steps were retractable during the entire research. This means that whenever events occurred or unexpected data made me change course, I journaled about this and documented all steps. Extensively journaling this way about observations, experiences, and decisions also enhanced the confirmability of this study. I used my notes to reflect on my thought processes and data during sparring sessions with my peer students, supervisor, VV members, and others close to me during this research process.

 In reflexivity, acknowledging the researcher´s position in society and the organization is crucial (Cassell & Symon, 2004, p. 181-182).
 In my opinion, undocumented people deserve fundamental human rights, wherever their motherland may be and whatever their story is. Being the daughter of a man who was forced to leave his country and come to the Netherlands at a very young age shaped me into who I am today. I was taught to act beyond judgment and see people first and foremost as human beings, whatever their origin. In this sense, I believe current legislation lacks acknowledgment of reality, violates human rights, and should change. Therefore, I share the goals of VV, including its norms and values. At the same time, it's worth noting that religion has been important for the creation of VV, and the Christian church still plays a significant role in funding and facilitating VV’s practices. However, I consider myself agnostic and do not share the same religious beliefs.
 VV is an organization that deals with visitors who fled their countries, and many of them experience(d) very traumatizing events. This leads to frustration, anger, and sadness among the visitors, and some struggle with mental illnesses. Qualitative research can tax researchers when they study poignant topics, like people fleeing from their homeland and people who lead a life of violence (Boeije, 2014). As both my parents experienced traumatizing events, they unintentionally passed pieces of their stories on to me. This affected me more than I expected when I started the research. Although VV is a haven for many, it seems the only place these people can go during the day, which means that many visitors with complex backgrounds are together on a small surface. Of course, the tension differs, but it is always present and tangible when you’re a newcomer. In the first few weeks after my Wednesday visits, I felt drained. The tense energy, the heaviness of the topic, and the act of teaching a very diverse group of people made it, in the beginning, challenging for me to stay the entire day for observations.
 Furthermore, I was one of the few females, which appeared to be ‘exciting’ for most visitors, whose majority is male. I got asked for my number a lot, visitors wanted to talk to me all the time, and I had to repeatedly set boundaries. I did not always feel safe.

 I also noticed that occasionally I felt discomfort by conducting research at an organization where members were open about the fact that sometimes they choose to be civilly disobedient in grey areas. As a participant observer, being part of the organization and personally agreeing with their norms and values, I felt constantly conflicted about what information was helpful for my research and whether writing down certain information would disadvantage their operations. This resulted in an ambivalent feeling of not wanting to withhold information or wanting to make it harder for them to do their work. The same counts for specific political details that some people know but don’t feel comfortable sharing publicly because of loyalty conflicts or fear of consequences.

I also realized that I felt insecure about my role as a researcher, as I wasn’t used to conducting research and wasn’t entirely sure what was expected of me. I volunteered at many places and was used to ‘doing,’ being the helping hand where needed, and staying active. I noticed myself uncomfortable with taking a step back and ‘observing’ and felt guilty towards my supervisor and the organization for moving slowly, and not making enough progress. I reflected extensively on this with volunteers, VV staff, visitors, fellow students, friends, and family. By doing this and getting more familiar with the organization – and they with me - I noticed that the uneasiness started to fade little by little. I saw that my assumptions might have made things heavier than they were and that I expected a lot from myself that nobody asked of me. I realized most of my beliefs weren't necessarily accurate. When I let this go, I also noticed many happy moments and joy with the visitors, which relativized a lot. I also saw that allowing myself more time for the research helped me to process my impressions and take a step back from the operational work floor to have an overview and see the bigger picture of the study again.

 Concerning my position in the organization, many visitors mainly knew me as a Dutch teacher. When researchers perceive a help request from the investigated, insecurity in the researcher can often occur, leading to a role conflict (Boeije, 2014). Boeije (2014) states that this can be especially the case for teachers who want to support as 'aid workers' and simultaneously acquire information as a researcher. I experienced this throughout my entire research at VV. Furthermore, at times I felt that visitors felt depressed and appealed to me for some attention, that they just wanted to talk to me to forget about their problems for a while. The building is small, and there is no quiet place. It often occurred that I was listening to an important conversation between VV’s staff or was talking to them myself when my students walked in and asked me additional questions after class because they perceived me as ‘not busy.’ I liked doing this for the language and the students, but I realized that it kept me from focusing on my research. Although this continued throughout the observations, I felt more relaxed at a certain point because I had gained a sense of authority (and self-confidence) to tell them that the classes were in the morning and that they had to wait until the next class or until I would be available again. I started hanging out more at the office and chatting more with the project and daycare coordinators; this seemed to affect visitors. Maybe it was because they knew me better after some months, but they started to wait for my cue to approach me, and when I seemed busy, they would leave again. The visitors I felt who were testing me out a lot in the first weeks started to bring me food during lunch and helped me prepare the classroom throughout my visits. Reflection on the role-conflict matter, the fact that I started at a very early stage with my observations and constantly critically analyzed my data helped me solve this role conflict.

# 4. Findings

This chapter presents the findings from both interviews and participant observation data. These findings indicate the interplay of multiple logics at VV, and organizational members use these different logics to understand and make sense of VV and its practices. Some of these logics are competing, and members use several strategies to cope with the friction. I will begin with a note on the tension between power and control. Then, I will show examples of the competing logics of humanism versus bureaucracy and continue with the logics of altruism versus bureaucracy, resources versus bureaucracy, and politics versus bureaucracy. Finally, I will end this chapter with the logics of adhocracy versus bureaucracy.

## 4.1 A question of power and control

By participating in this LVV, VV shifted from being entirely financially independent (running on external funding) to receiving subsidies for the activities they already provided. Members spoke about the advantages they found it had on the continuation and consistency of their operations and the collaboration it stimulated. Interestingly, when I asked members about the LVV program, many of them weren’t aware of the program's details and what it entailed, including its effects on VV. There seemed to be an understanding that collaboration intensified since the program. Almost all of them, however, thought their daily operations didn’t differ from before participating in the CSSP. Yet, some members brought up changes and tensions: one of them becoming less pronounced in taking a stance on certain topics because of being financially dependent:

*"[The fact that we aren't financed independently] has influence too. (…) You get incapsulated (…) erm… [short silence] You keep the cards close to your chest. That's just… I think that's the effect."*

*"Less pronounced you mean, or…?"*

*"As well, so to say… [short silence]"*

*"You are getting very careful with your words now, am I right?"*

*"Yes, for sure, because you... You don't radically reject policies."*

*" And previously you did do that?"*

*"Yes."*

*(Interview 1)*

Another member recalled a situation in the past where another subsidized CSO had to cancel an awareness campaign because it reached the newspaper. Authorities feared negative public perception and pressured the municipalities to stop the campaign, which they did by threatening to stop the subsidies. I was told that this information was received from hearsay and that I probably couldn’t use this for my research as I couldn't check the story’s validity. However, whether true or not, this research is about how members perceive logics, and this example shows the underlying fear members perceive by the existing power structure – if at any point authorities don't agree with VV’s practices, they feel there is always a power dynamic at play where subsidies can be used as a threat to keep them ‘in line’.
 Because the state, its institutionalized parties and VV are collaborating in the LVV program, this results in a dependency relation, a tension due to their differences while being dependent. The examples above show that VV collaborating with the state through a funding relationship results in a power imbalance. It might be possible that this power imbalance potentially also shapes members’ perception of other competing logics.
 The fact that VV doesn’t radically reject policies anymore can be seen as the strategy of compromise: members decide this way that the continuation of the funding and maintaining the relationship with the state and institutionalized parties is more important than radically rejecting policies because of moral values.

## 4.2 Humanism versus bureaucracy

My findings show competing logics of humanism and bureaucracy. Members often emphasize that they see all human beings as equal (referring to the community logic of humanism), whereas according to the law, they are not (referring to the state logic of bureaucracy).

The daycare coordinator refers to the bureaucracy logic when talking about undocumented people’s situation, possibilities, and rights. By doing this, he refers to the existing law and how it changed over time, giving less and less space for these people to maneuver and live in Dutch society. He mentions that the exclusion criteria for undocumented people became harsher over the years and speaks about a hierarchy of rights, whereas the target group of VV is the lowest of the lowest in this hierarchy, referring to how changing policy affects the type and number of VV’s visitors:

*"So it used to be the difference between: what city do you come from? And then it became: Are you Dutch, yes or no? What also matters: if you need shelter, yes or no. And then, at a certain point, there came a distinction. If you are a foreigner: do you come from inside or outside the European Union? (…) And then: do you come from a dangerous country or not? (…) And then… Then there was undocumented. Because I thought in naivety, if you're undocumented, well, then you are at the lowest point. But now it turns out: you can be undocumented and be subject to a certain regulation, called LVV, or not be subjected to it. So, if you're not subjected to it, you don't have the right to shelter. And then, I recently found out, if you're undocumented and you're not known by the government, then it's the case that if you're getting arrested, they can lock you up immediately.”*

*(Interview 2)*

The example above follows the logic of bureaucracy. The coordinator makes it clear that he disagrees with this view. Referring to people falling at the bottom of this ‘hierarchy of rights’, he emphasizes that for VV, how a person behaves is more important than their background:

*"For us, what matters is: who is this person? And that partly determines the chance that people have. And then we never look… we don't look at: is this LVV or not? Does he come from a dangerous country, yes or no?"*

*(Interview 2)*

In the interviews, multiple members mentioned that they would like to see the situation differently and ideally want to change the system. However, they believe it’s more likely and realistic to change something on a small scale for their visitors rather than changing the entire system; all little pieces help the bigger picture. Instead of challenging the existing hierarchy, members navigate through this tension by sticking to the logic of humanism and acting from these values. This corresponds with the strategy of avoidance because although members largely resist adapting to the logic of bureaucracy as much as possible, there seems to be an acceptance that these competing logics represent an institutional conflict without immediately trying to resolve that conflict.

Data also shows that members frequently mention choosing between doing “the right thing” by obeying the law or being civilly disobedient. On the one hand, members find it necessary to have a good relationship with authorities and other more institutionalized parties. In interviews, they emphasize the importance of being on good terms with collaborating parties to smoothen their visitors' process and get more latitude in future cases. On the other hand, some stories in interviews also demonstrate how members maneuver in a grey area, trying to determine where the limits lie and playing according to the rules while not sacrificing their humanistic values. This corresponds with the strategy of compromise, where members attempt to achieve conformity with the state by confirming to the logic of bureaucracy to a minimum extent.

On other moments, field notes show that members can also act differently when they disagree with the status quo. In these cases, members use the strategy of defiance. Members challenge or attack the bureaucracy logic to reduce the salience of this logic in the partnership. This happened, for example, when VV started distributing food when an emergency shelter shut down and a lot of visitors were forced to sleep on the streets:

"*During an informal meeting, someone said there was trouble with the municipality because they [VV] don't distinguish to whom they distribute the food. They also distributed to homeless people; according to the municipality, this was only allowed to undocumented people and refugees. Everybody in the office was sighing loudly. One of them said they could never check this, and it would be pathetic if they did. Everybody agreed to continue distributing food to everyone as they wouldn't get caught anyways."*

*(Field notes, 19-5-21)*

By pulling through with the action of distributing food after a conflict with the municipality, it is implicitly challenging its value. This happens more often. For example, the coordinator explained how he disagrees with how the system is built in a way that makes the problem very abstract for officials. Therefore, sometimes, he lets visitors join a meeting with the councilor without warning in advance, so they are faced with reality. He knows in advance that this isn’t appreciated, and therefore this is a direct attack on the logic of bureaucracy, using the strategy of defiance:

*"Sometimes they don't like it. I took a visitor with me to the meeting with the councilor about the closure of the shelter, and they really didn't appreciate that. Later I got a call with like: 'you better don't do this again. If you want to bring people from outside to our meeting, we want to know in advance so we will have the opportunity to screen them, and then they can come.' Whereas I replied to them: 'You told me why the shelter is going to close, fine. Now you tell it again to him, who's going to be kicked out. Explain him.'*

 *(Interview 2)*

## 4.3 Altruism versus bureaucracy

My findings show that the logic of altruism is very present for VV’s members. I will give examples to show where this logic is at play. Afterward, I will show examples of how this logic competes with the logic of bureaucracy.

 This field note shows how a member seems to be more concerned with the care of the visitors than her own well-being, putting the community before herself:

*"I had two phone numbers of the same member and asked which of the two numbers I had to use to contact her. She said that one of the two was a personal number but that she checked that phone more frequently; it didn't matter what number I used. Later she said in a subclause that lately, it became a bit exhausting that she was busy with work also on the weekends, and it seemed to me that, in one way or another, she didn't separate her work life from her private life."*

*(Field notes, 3-3-21)*

Another field note shows how at VV, there doesn’t seem to be a strict line where work ends, and private life begins:

*"During the day, there is a job which entails a lot of acting quickly, being practical and solving problems: people walk in and out of the office with questions, and things have to get arranged while at the same time shelter has to be secured for a person, someone else has to be called, and again another person calls VV (all at the same time). When the working day is done, the visitors leave, and the VV building is quiet again. Then it seems to be about the long term: what are the plans for VV in the coming weeks/months? Which activities are being set up and/or what is needed? As if the time for thinking about these things starts when people can't walk in and out anymore and disturb the thought process. Does the work ever stop, then? To me, this seems more a way of living than a job."*

*(Field notes, 19-5-21)*

Besides the long work hours, members are also active in human rights issues outside VV. For example, one member organized a demonstration for the rights of Palestine in Utrecht after work hours, and another shared a lot of petitions and fundraising regarding undocumented people in VV’s WhatsApp group late at night. Another volunteer offered his home and currently lives with a visitor who got kicked out of a shelter (*Field notes 19-5-21)*. In addition, some members also participate in other activities after work hours related to helping people:

"*I asked how things were going, and she said she was tired, having a cold, and catching up with some work. (…) She told me that after work hours, she provides math tutoring and is a language buddy for someone in an asylum center. He visits her, cooks for her, and teaches her how to play guitar in exchange for the classes. She was enthusiastic, and it seemed to give her energy, but it made me think that this is someone who gives a lot of herself by doing this after helping undocumented people all day long”*

*Field notes, 3-3-21*

This logic of altruism competes with the logic of bureaucracy, which leads to tension in daily operations. Members mentioned that they have different views than institutionalized collaborating partners on what it means to work with undocumented people, what is important in their field, what attitudes one should have for the job, and when actions are considered successful. Members mainly expressed a different view of ‘quality work’ about officials’ work ethos and having a distinction between personal and professional life. For example, the project coordinator shared her opinion about official authorities’ 9 to 5 mentalities, showing that VV sees things differently because they see people in need and not a "working day". This is also an example of how VV puts personalized relationships over the hierarchical forms of the government bodies, indicating tension between authorities sticking to bureaucratic regulations and rules versus VV operating on a more personalized level with more space for a customized response to each case:

"*All those official authorities, they all have this super institutionalized mentality, you know. 'We are the aid workers, and these are our clients'. And erm, 'No way I will do what I'm not supposed to do. I work from 9 till 5, after 5 or 6 PM my phone is switched off, on the weekends my phone is switched off, and if you pass by without an appointment, you can go home again', you know? A lot of them work like this. It makes me sick, you know… Well, alright, maybe it's also kind of healthy [laughs]. No, but I do think that it's strange. Because we work with very vulnerable people, and they don't come to us asking for help without reason. (…) Yes, you have to set boundaries, but I find it a bit brutal. (…) And we are maybe a bit extreme in this because we really care for the people, I think, but it also results in that we are very close to the people. So, we also noticed that when a night shelter closed (…), everybody [the more institutionalized organizations]" asked us like, hey, do you know this and that person? (…) That they come knocking on our door: 'what kind of person is this?' Or that they ask us for advice. I always say that we are anthropologists among the several authorities or something because we realize more what kind of people we're dealing with. There was this time that someone [from a collaborating organization] was very worried about one boy, and then I thought: you have no idea what a crook this guy is, you know. He tells you he wants to go back to wherever he came from, but he is saving money again to return to Paris. So, these things… I guess we have a lot of value, mainly because we are so informal. Also, because therefore people feel: I can be myself here. Because we [members of VV] give a lot of ourselves… people dare to give a lot of themselves back too, you know? ''*

 *(Interview 2)*

Field notes also show how members perceive tension in different work ethos of collaborating partners:

*"There was a conflict between VV and an emergency shelter because visitors are getting kicked out of these facilities and aren't informed about this by the people who made this decision, but by volunteers. The reason the organization gave was that they couldn't inform the people themselves about this decision because it was last minute at night, after work hours. There was a laugh among VV's members, with the implicit message: 'like your work stops at night'. They thought it was unfair that these people weren't informed by the right people in the right way. They were also unhappy that this message was communicated via an email in Dutch, while some visitors can't read, and most don't speak Dutch (well). One member immediately offered to translate to French and Arabic if needed."*

*(Field notes, 19-5-21)*

Whereas members explicitly reject the work ethos of the institutionalized parties in the examples, they don’t try to change it but rather stick to their own values and ways of working. This way, they seem to accept that they disagree without trying to resolve that, which corresponds with the avoidance strategy.

## 4.3 Resources versus bureaucracy

Members also perceive the resource logic as competing with the logic of bureaucracy. For example, VV's members often repeat that instead of focusing on undocumented people as being a 'burden' on society, these people could be an asset to the market, but that the existing law doesn’t allow them to:

"*The majority of the people who come here? They could be an asset to Dutch society. They could play a role on the shortages at hand in healthcare, industry or wherever.*"

 (*Interview 5)*

In another interview, a volunteer who leads the anti-stress group emphasized seeing visitors as a resource who can be important for the organization rather than needing VV's help. She explained how at all official institutions these people go to, they have to ask for help and can't offer anything in return because of their legal status. Although they're by law not allowed to work, she sees VV's mission to empower people by showing them their work is appreciated, that they have their own unique skills to offer and that by holding them accountable to use them, they increase their level of agency:

"*At this place… This place says: you are needed here, we need you and erm, what are your skills? What can you do? How can you be of importance to us?*"

*(Interview 3)*

This example shows how VV navigates through this tension by, rather than trying to change the fact that people can’t legally work, they use the logic of resource within their own context. This way, visitors can be a resource to VV and do something back for the support they receive in ways that legally are possible. This corresponds with the strategy of avoidance, where members don’t try to solve the tension of competing logics but accept that it exists and stick in their practices to the resource they value most while resisting adapting to the logic of bureaucracy as much as possible.

## 4.4 Politics versus bureaucracy

Members refer to the logic of politics when they feel decisions are made with positive public opinion in mind. For example, in one interview, a member of VV’s board explained how it can be beneficial to the state and municipalities to tolerate VV’s civil disobedience if it removes negative media attention:

*"(...) what else will happen [if we don't disobey]? [In that case] there would be [undocumented people] on the streets, and then there will be media coverage or something. And then… Yeah, they don't want that either, right? So that is also… goodwill, you know, or otherwise, the reputation will be damaged." (...) "A sort of [damage control]. So, stepping out of line is not only bad for their interest, you know, their reputation, I think."*

*(Interview 5)*

Also, to avoid negativity around the policy on undocumented people, VV's daycare coordinator perceives the logic of politics by using abstract language and built-in layers within the system to impersonalize a topic that is essentially about people. This example is in the context of people that had to leave one of the shelters:

 *"[T]hey (authorities) incorporated a lot of layers, and the one that says 'you got to leave' is a subordinate that the councilor doesn't know either because it becomes more euphemistic along the line. Then indeed, they speak about the reduction of the extra shelter, while technically, they kick poor guys on the streets. This is what happens, but this is called the reduction of shelter for non-right holders at their own table. So, they have their own language and abstraction to avoid that emotions are being felt and the smell is being smelled, so to say."*

*(Interview 1)*

To answer the question of how members navigate through these tensions, I refer to the example I used to illustrate the competing logics of humanism and bureaucracy because it is related to the example above – when the coordinator meets with the councilor and brings a visitor without warning. The reaction to the competing logics of politics and bureaucracy, and to these layers of abstraction, was to bring an undocumented person to the meeting to confront the authorities with real life. This corresponds with the strategy of defiance, whereas this time, the coordinator challenges both logics of politics and bureaucracy.

## 4.5 Adhocracy versus bureaucracy

Members of VV also perceive the competing logic of adhocracy and bureaucracy. The data show that coordination is a recurring theme, and members mention that a possible cause of current coordination is legislation and funding. I repeatedly found a phrase in my notes: "We have to look at coordination instead of working in our own little sealed compartments."The good intentions are often mentioned, but also in a way that implicitly indicates 'chaos'. Examples of journal notes: *"Everybody "stumbles" over each other to do the right thing." (Field notes, 26-05-2021)*

Members note the lack of clear objectives due to the targeted subsidies. In one of the interviews, the project coordinator talks about the inefficient way in which a lot of money is spent on offering the same activities due to subsidies going to the same purposes:

*"There is a foundation nearby organizing a lot of activities, I'm trying to see if we can join them with VV. But the community center around the corner also has a broad range of activities. Then I thought: it's ridiculous that we all spend money on the same things. Let's take the community center: they provide fitness for women. I wouldn't even be surprised if other organizations at a certain point would say, ' oh let's organize fitness for women!'. But that already exists, you know. (…) Due to subsidies, everybody does the same thing, but wouldn't we be able to also find a way in which everybody offers the same activities, but on a different day? But of course, that's a big mission."*

*(Interview 1)*

The same problem is noted in my conversation with the project coordinator about COVID awareness:

*"She commented about how she saw this dynamic in her previous working field too (development cooperation); how many organizations are repeatedly trying to reinvent the wheel. The example she gave here was about a COVID explanatory video – explaining what the virus was, how the vaccine worked, and its importance (because many visitors are afraid of the vaccine or don't believe that COVID exists at all). She sighed and said it was all with good intentions but that a lot of organizations (she mentioned three of them in the video example) spend so much time and money on doing the same thing and that it would save a lot of effort from all collaborating parties if these things would be more coordinated."*

*(Field notes, 26-05-2021)*

Members also discussed the LVV program and commented on the difference in policy between the Netherlands and Germany. They spoke about how undocumented people in Germany are allowed to work while in the Netherlands they aren’t. They all share the opinion that being able to work is a human right and getting paid for it too. One member sees this system as a sham construction: with current legislation, there is no way visitors can really develop themselves further or use their learned skills. In the following example, this is explained by an activity focused on fixing computers:

 *"I think it is actually a sham construction. (...) because, someone gets started, very nice, just like [name of visitor] for example, I don't know. He will have done this for six months and learned a lot about computer repairs. And then? There is no follow-up, you see? Because you're not allowed to work, after all, you know. Or it has to be undeclared work, but of course it's not that simple." (Interview 2**)*

Although members explicitly share frustration about how bureaucracy enhances adhocracy, they seem to agree with the idea behind the LVV project that it’s better to participate in activities rather than do nothing at all. This way, they use the strategy of acquiescence, where they adjust to the existing external institutional constituents of the field they’re situated in.

# 5. Discussion & Conclusion

In this research, I attempted to answer how members of a CSO within a CSSP perceive competing logics and navigate through them with various strategies in undocumented migration in the Netherlands, Utrecht. I conducted a case study at VV, a CSO in a national partnership pilot on undocumented migration called LVV. For this study, I used ethnographic methodologies such as participant observations and conducted interviews. Finally, data analysis occurred through thematic analysis.

 The findings show that a CSO like VV collaborating with the state through a funding relationship produces a power imbalance. Furthermore, VV’s members perceive several competing logics, matching the state, market, and community logics mentioned by Hesse et al. (2019). Members navigate through the tension of these competing logics by using the strategy of acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, and defiance, as mentioned by Vogel et al. (2022). In this sense, my findings are in line with the existing literature. I found that VV’s members perceive five types of competing logics, all including the logic of bureaucracy. Members are constantly busy maneuvering through the tension of state logics and the logics they prefer or positioning themselves in an institutional field where two logics are competing while members feel resistant to both. The logic of humanism was by far the most prominent logic for VV, followed by altruism, both heavily competing with bureaucracy.

This research contributes to the existing literature by showing that impact and change can happen in the margins by collaborating with and simultaneously avoiding the powerful partner(s). VV started years ago as a citizen initiative out of civil disobedience and became an official part of a CSSP with the municipality of Utrecht and the Dutch state. My findings suggest that CSO members are aware of the power imbalance in the partnership and still choose to collaborate with the municipality and state despite their many differences and logics. The strategy members decide to use to navigate through the tension these competing logics create depends on the hierarchy within the CSSP and on the context. This means for VV that members act creatively within the margins of their position of power in the partnership – finding a way to use as much of the latitude within the existing power structure of being financially dependent on collaborating partners. It seems like members (un)consciously make a cost-benefit analysis and decide that when it doesn’t threaten their relationship with critical collaborating parties, they challenge or attack the dominant logic of the other party. In other cases, when there’s too much at stake, members decide to compromise or use the strategy of acquiescence and adjust to what’s needed, although they don’t necessarily agree. One of Vogel et al.’s (2022) strategies I didn’t find is the strategy of manipulation. An explanation for this could be the power imbalance, as VV is probably not in a position to exert influence on demands and requirements for the partnership and is more of an operational partner. Vogel et al. expect that power imbalance often occurs at the expense of nonprofit partners who don’t have the regulatory power of governmental partners (2022). The expectation is, therefore, that more powerful actors use the strategy of defiance and take advantage of their position, delegitimizing the logics of the other partner. This research confirms that VV’s members perceive the power imbalance. However, my findings also show that VV often uses the strategy of defiance. This is unexpected because VV is the less powerful actor in the partnership. A possible explanation could be that members realize they have a power basis since they operate at the ground level. Their operational role is essential for the other parties and therefore brings value to the CSSP, giving them more latitude to speak up. More often, though, members seem to use the strategy of avoidance. This corresponds with Vogel et al.’s expectation that this strategy will most likely be used in partnerships where parties with different dominating logics are forced to work together (2022). This way, members of VV don’t challenge nor accept logics that create friction but instead take the fact that there is friction, ignore the tension as much as possible and act according to their own norms and values within the margin they can. The perceived dominance of state logics might indicate a structure where the state built a mechanism to have the final word, leaving the CSO with little power or room for their logics in the CSSP. The question arises then if the strategy of avoidance could be the members’ way to allow them - navigating through power imbalance - to change the dominating logics in the field by avoiding the state logics as much as possible and acting on their own logics instead. This would mean that CSO members can challenge dominating logics in the institutional field in the long term by ignoring the logics they disagree with and using other logics in their practices until these become part of the institutional field. More case studies and tangible examples of the perspective of CSO members in CSSPs with governmental bodies could contribute to further exploring this; it would be interesting to know if the same or different competing logics and strategies are also found.

This research contributes to understanding how on a political meta-level, although the state has regulatory power and is technically the more dominant party in the CSSP, the civic is still needed by the state, which creates a different perspective on the power field. This creates a space for CSO members to negotiate and maneuver so that, in the long run, they can potentially push dominant and long-existing institutions back to open space for re-evaluation with a social justice perspective. This is done by changing the practices at the ground level despite institutional pressures, thereby changing the landscape in the CSSP it finds itself.

The societal contribution of this research is that CSO practices like VV can continue to raise awareness on social justice and might change the collaboration in the long term in their favor by creating a profound understanding of and mapping out where their operational services are needed by more powerful partners in the CSSP. This can be beneficial in multiple ways. First, it can encourage CSO members to – instead of trying to change the power imbalance – use strategies in a creative way by looking for alternative ways of exercising influence and creating change in CSSPs within their position in the hierarchy. It can also help to create a strategy and a more powerful position to negotiate terms, conditions, and underlying values of the partnership. This way, CSO members can get insight and understand better what strategies to use to maneuver through competing logics in different contexts. Finally, if a power imbalance exists in a CSSP, CSO members can think about what strategies work in their position of power to maneuver within that structure of avoiding and collaborating and bringing small changes from that position rather than spending lots of energy in changing a system that is designed for the state to have the final word. For CSSPs, this means that insight into knowing what and when strategies are used might benefit understanding why certain partnerships work well and why some don’t. The perceived competing logics and the strategies used demonstrate how CSSPs can be challenging and give insight into such a collaboration's complexity. They show how, despite the goal to collaborate, a power imbalance exists in CSSPs, putting some parties in a position of power and others in the margins. Understanding this better could give insight into evaluating, improving, and creating new successful collaborations at a time when CSOs and governmental bodies are consistently and increasingly forced to collaborate on social issues.

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# Appendix 1: Interviews: Anonymized Details

I interviewed the project coordinator, who coordinates and creates all kinds of activities for the visitors and also manages *Project aan de slag* (PAS: Project Get To Work), a collaboration of various organizations from Utrecht which aims to broaden development opportunities for undocumented migrants (Initiatiefnemers adSlag, zd). VV is part of PAS, and PAS is part of the LVV-pilot. The double position of internal strategy at VV and external overview of this network of CSOs made interviewing this coordinator extra relevant for my research.

 I also interviewed the daycare coordinator, who oversees the external strategy, participates in meetings with collaborating organizations, and has the final call on important decisions. If VV makes a statement of something, this coordinator participates in most interviews and media appearances and can be seen as ‘the face of VV’. These two coordinators are the only paid members of VV. Whereas the project coordinator has a lot of contact with the network of CSOs, the daycare coordinator also keeps track of collaboration with others, including governing parties.

 My third interviewee I got to know as the person that leads the anti-stress group – an activity where visitors have a safe space to talk about what's bothering them and release some pressure. Quickly I found out that she was involved in founding VV and now works as a pastor and trainer/coach. With the church, she started – together with others – a movement that would later lead to the creation of VV. Whereas the coordinators are the only paid employees, this interviewee is part of the organization on a voluntary basis. She is very involved with all visitors, always offers a listening ear, and knows from many people exactly what's happening in their lives, making a vital bridge towards the coordinators for pressing issues. Also, in the external context of VV she has meetings about opening and creating possibilities for undocumented people in Utrecht. As she is the only one who knows the organization from the start, I wanted to interview her to get her views on VV's position in the field. Also, her insider-outsider position appealed to me to get a different perspective than the coordinators, who are officially ‘running the place’.

My fourth interviewee was a former visitor of VV who recently got a residence permit after years of illegal stay in the Netherlands and started working for VV through another CSO, supporting undocumented people. I found it important to include the voice and view of someone who has been a visitor of VV too before working for the organization, as this might change the perspective of the logics in the field.

My fifth interview was with one of the members of the board of VV, who mainly focuses on the external communication and fundraising. Most of the work for this role can be done remotely from home, so I figured that the perception of competing logics might be different in this position than for example during the hectic daily life of the other volunteers at the location.

# Appendix II: Interview Topic List

* Who are you?
* What is your role in VV?
* Why are you at VV?
* How did you get to work at VV?
* What do you think the goal and strategy are of VV?
* Do you have the idea that VV changes things in the context of undocumented migration in Utrecht?
	+ If so, what things?
* What is your goal with VV?
	+ *If relevant:* How do you hope to change things?
		- What things exactly would you like to change?
* What do you know about the LVV pilot?

*Follow up questions:*

* Do you know why VV decided to take part in PAS & LVV?
* Do you feel there are changes in VV since this collaboration exists? Or if there is a change in strategy?
	+ How do you feel about these changes?
* How do you see the collaboration of VV in PAS & PAS in LVV?
* With what external partners are you in touch?
	+ What does that contact look like?
	+ How do you feel about that?

# Appendix III: Code Tree Template

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| **Theme 1 - Power & Control** |  |
| ***Category*** | ***Evidence*** |
| Financial dependency | "[The fact that we aren't financed independently] has influence too. (…) You get incapsulated (…) erm… [short silence] You keep the cards close to your chest. That's just… I think that's the effect." (Interview 1) |
|  | "Of course, it was also about money and VV had to spend a lot of time, also in fundraising because it was not that well known yet. Now it has a name, so now you get money much easier, but in the first time, it was really difficult. (…) So the problem with funds is always, they only support you for one or two years and then you have to do something, never structurally. And LVV, that seems to be structural. And it was just a fact that activation is a part of the LVV and VV plays a big role in that. So then of course you get one and one is two, can't we get a piece of that? So that's basically how it came about. Who pays determines, well, there were discussions about that, but there were also clear agreements."(Interview 3) |
| Hierarchy | "So the municipality is under constant tension with the State over the implementation of the LVV. And then the municipality is under constant tension with the LVV implementers. And so we want to go the furthest. Well, the municipality trying to limit that shall I say. And then when the municipality talks to the State, they try to limit that even more."(Interview 1) |
|  | "But it's really incredible how many meetings they did have about that to actually make sure that they can just do what they want to do, and then still get that money. And the councilor is responsible, because the councilor is so.... Actually the councilor now is the one in between and has all these tensions. But he can handle it quite well, I feel."(Interview 3) |
|  | "I don't notice anything about it I must say [laughs]. No, from what I understand of it, PAS was actually already there and I think they just got an extra boost, or some extra money because of the LVV. But I know there was a survey done on the LVV pilot once. And then it asked something like, what happens if the LVV stops? And then I did read an answer from someone who said: actually we will continue the same. Because actually we were doing activation before the LVV was there, you know?"(Interview 2) |
| Power imbalance | "Well of course you kind of have the state, which makes the [national] policy, and the municipality that also makes its own [local] policy. And they are actually fighting against the national government. A municipality of course has a rather left-wing policy and they also see much more, they say much more, we want for example the streetscape and for people not to roam the streets. So we do it differently. We do give that funding for a few shelters, regardless of whether the State necessarily wants them to just get bed, bath bread, shall I say. But anyway, so there is always a friction there between the State and the municipality. In that, the municipality cannot take all the reins."(Interview 2) |
|  | "Well, I think short lines of communication with the municipality are good. And of course for the shelter it's very convenient that people get into that view. But the shelter was also there before the LVV was there, VV was there before the LVV pilot was there. And PAS was there to a less intense extent before the LVV was there, so to speak. And I personally think, I personally believe...you can achieve a lot, just with civil disobedience so to speak. But with lines of communication with the municipality, so that they can do.... like okay: this I observe, this, this, this, this: how can we deal with that as a municipality?"(Interview 2) |
|  | "Well, I think short lines of communication with the municipality are good. And of course for the shelter it's very convenient that people get into that view. But the shelter was also there before the LVV was there, VV was there before the LVV pilot was there. And PAS was there to a less intense extent before the LVV was there, so to speak. And I personally think, I personally believe...you can achieve a lot, just with civil disobedience so to speak. But with lines of communication with the municipality, so that they can do.... like okay: this I observe, this, this, this, this: how can we deal with that as a municipality?"(Interview 2) |
|  | "But that's how it works (...) that you just have to stop a beautiful campaign (...) because, otherwise they [funded CSOs] would get into such trouble with the municipality and otherwise their subsidies would just be... Yes, it was just.... It wasn't allowed and and then you also get all this negative publicity, of that illegal yes, then you get this whole negative image that you're actually going to feed then anyway." (Interview 3) |

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| **Theme 2 – Bureaucracy** |  |
| ***Category*** | ***Evidence*** |
| Rights | "In Germany you are allowed to get a degree as undocument person, in the Netherlands you are not. In Germany you are allowed to work, in the Netherlands you are not."(Interview 2) |
|  | "To me it's not even so much about, does someone have a passport, yes or no, but to me it's really mostly about the purely the socioeconomic situation in which people are put. So then ... I think we will never be able to force people to have certain/same rights as the Dutch. That it would become really very difficult to get people to apply for the same social services that we have. I don't think that's going to work."(Interview 1) |
| Law | "They were handing out gift cards to visitors who volunteered at VV because while by law they aren't allowed to pay them, it's allowed to donate gift cards up to a maximum of €1800 euros."(Field notes, 02-06-2021) |
|  | "It concerns me mostly.... No, but I think that they should be able to work and I think that they should therefore have the opportunity to learn and work. Because that's...and I don't think you even have to change legislation to do that."(Interview 1) |
| Institutionalized system | "The frameworks come more from the state of course, and you see in Utrecht that there is really a different sentiment moving. And different opinions opposite. Um, yes, that's nuanced, I think. On the one hand, we live in a democracy and we also have laws and rules to respect and representation of the people. But yes, on the other hand, you see if you look back at history, I think, there are always representatives of the people who do things with good intentions and under all kinds of pressure. But that, despite the good intentions, that it can still have huge effects, say, I think that's going on now as well, so how we deal with these people. Yes. That we look back at that in ten years from now of: what kind of modern slavery was that? I think we just see that now, and laws and regulations are meant to be tools. But yes, if they don't serve as a tool, then maybe you have to step out of line for it I think. But it is really a field of tension because you also have a dependency relationship towards the municipality indeed."(Interview 5) |
|  | "(…) that you meet people and at some point you appeal to personal ethics and say: listen, this can't be what happens here, can it? 'Yes, but yes, I'm stuck with the rules too.' Boy ... break that rule! Be disobedient! And I'll tell you... Sure, people get fired, but people also get medals for it because they stood their ground."(Interview 1) |

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| **Theme 3 – Humanism** |  |
| ***Category*** | ***Evidence*** |
| Human Rights | "For me, the root of the problem is that people are not seen as humans (...) and more as difficult and ... not welcome"(Interview 3) |
|  | "They [undocumented people] have the right to be in the street, at least. But they don't have a house, you know, they don't have a normal life. They fight. They do hard. They think a lot for just getting the normal human right; to get a house or to get food or, you know.. And this is a headache for them, just not for any other person in this earth, I think. Only for refugees headache to be alive, it is a headache to find food, it's headache to find a place to sleep in the night. It's always a headache that people are following you in your [home] country or bodies following you in your [current] country here or want to do it."(Interview 4) |

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| **Theme 4 – Altruism** |  |
| ***Category*** | ***Evidence*** |
| Vision on work ethos | "All those official authorities, they all have this super institutionalized mentality, you know. 'We are the aid workers, and these are our clients'. And erm, 'No way I will do what I'm not supposed to do. I work from 9 till 5, after 5 or 6 PM my phone is switched off, on the weekends my phone is switched off, and if you pass by without an appointment you can go home again', you know? A lot of them work like this. It makes me sick, you know... Well, alright, maybe it's also kind of healthy [laughs]. No, but I do think that it's strange. Because we work with very vulnerable people, and they don't come to us asking for help without reason. (...) Yes, you have to set boundaries, but I find it a bit brutal. (...) And we are maybe a bit extreme in this because we really care for the people, I think, but it also results in that we are very close to the people"(Interview 2) |
| Work-life balance, putting community over self | "I had two phone numbers of the same member and asked which of the two numbers I had to use to contact her. She said that one of the two was actually a personal number but that she checked that phone more frequently; it didn't matter what number I would use. Later she said in a subclause that lately it became a bit exhausting that she was busy with work also on the weekends, and it seemed to me that in one way or another she didn't separate her work life from private life."(Field notes, 03-03-21) |

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| **Theme 5 – Adhocracy** |  |
| ***Category*** | ***Evidence*** |
| Coordination | "Due to subsidies, everybody [organizes] the same thing, but wouldn't we be able to also find a way in which everybody offers the same activities, but on a different day? But of course, that's a big mission."(Interview 2) |
|  | "I think it is actually a sham construction. (...) because, someone gets started, very nice, just like [name of visitor] for example, I don't know. He will have done this for six months and learned a lot about computer repairs. And then? There is no follow-up, you see? Because you're not allowed to work, after all, you know. Or it has to be undeclared work, but of course it's not that simple."(Interview 2) |
|  | "She commented about how she saw this dynamic in her previous working field too (development cooperation); how many organizations are repeatedly trying to reinvent the wheel. The example she gave here was about a COVID explanatory video – explaining what the virus was, how the vaccine worked, and its importance (because many visitors are afraid of the vaccine or don't believe that COVID exists at all). She sighed and said it was all with good intentions but that a lot of organizations (she mentioned three of them in the video example) spend so much time and money on doing the same thing and that it would save a lot of effort from all collaborating parties if these things would be more coordinated."(Field notes, 26-05-2021) |

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| **Theme 6 – Politics** |  |
| ***Category*** | ***Evidence*** |
| Reputation | "(...) what else will happen [if we don't disobey]? [In that case] there would be [undocumented people] on the streets, and then there will be media coverage or something. And then... Yeah, they don't want that either, right? So that is also... goodwill, you know, or otherwise, the reputation will be damaged." (...) "A sort of [damage control]. So stepping out of line is not only bad for their interest, you know, their reputation, I think."(Interview 5) |
| Creating influence | "And yes, look, it is indeed the case, I think it's called then that blood is thicker than water, so to speak, that we take advantage of that. We were activating people anyway, without assignment. But this is a big difference, I personally think, whether you're going to offer an activity because you can get a subsidiy for it or whether you're engaged in an activity, with certain projects. And then all of a sudden it turns out: hey, there's going to be a subsidy scheme for it. And that is also actually influencing policy. Because before, what we were doing, that was not funded."(Interview 1) |
| Making use of system for own benefit | "Because [in the past] every municipality was required to take in the homeless, every municipality could receive subsidies to establish a homeless facility. But [some] small municipalities did not do that (...) with a very simple motivation: because if you don't have a shelter in municipality, the homeless won't stay. (...) And then they go to the big city (...) So it was actually very smart not to organize a homeless shelter, because then you were rid of it."(Interview 1) |

1. People without papers have many names: sans papier, illegal immigrants, or those who have exhausted all legal remedies. In this research, I will use the term undocumentedbecause no person is illegal, and many people have actually not been denied legal action (*Undocumented*, 2022). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)