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Faculty of Political Science and Sociology

Bachelor's Thesis

**Implementing migration objectives of the Agenda 2030: The
Role of Civil Society Organizations and their recent
perspectives**

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Abbreviations

CSO: Civil Society Organizations

SDG: Sustainable Development Goals

SSI: Semi-structured interviews

CIE: Centro de Internamiento de Extranjeros (Foreigner's Internment Center)

1. Introduction

The role of civil society organizations in development and migration policy finally started to gain momentum in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). It gave space for dialogue and cooperation between all levels of government with diasporas and non-governmental organizations. One of the central ideas of the Agenda is its multistakeholder approach that grants civil society a partner role in the design of the SDGs. Its objective number 17 is precisely to strengthen the means of implementation of the Agenda through alliances between governments, the private sector and civil society.

The direction of the work follows the question of whether the 2030 Agenda is efficient in implementing its migration objectives through its multistakeholder application in the level of local non-governmental actors such as civil society organizations.

Thus, this work aims to study the development of these values (universality, inclusiveness, and partnerships) in the implementation process. The first section establishes what is the 2030 Agenda and how exactly migration is understood within it, providing the initial framework and reasons for such a perspective. The following section introduces the role of civil society organizations as how it is envisioned in the Agenda and the academic field. Special attention will be given to local civil society organizations due to their direct contact with the realities of communities that migrants have to integrate.

Through a selection of interviews, direct perspectives from those local organizations are analyzed to answer whether or not the guidance of the SDGs has been effectively applied to them. The argumentation will follow their contributions and limitations as agents of social discourse and action. At the end, the conclusions indicate that there are important gaps between the intent of a holistic approach with civil society organizations and the actual practice, noting especially the acute absence of cooperation in the local level of implementation.

The aim of this work is to contribute academic research with the analysis of the effects of global cooperation agreements on local CSOs. Moreover, of providing with some insight on the inefficiencies of the agenda, it is concluded that these local CSOs perspectives will be crucial for the continued development of global agreements on migration.

1. Conceptual definitions

Before entering into the subject of the relation between the 2030 Agenda and migration, the main conceptual definitions that will enter in our analysis are established. Hence, introducing the main definitions and understanding that is being applied.

The most pressing issue is to define migration or the figure of “migrant”. There is no universal definition on either migration or migrant. But there are several interpretations that are widely accepted and have been developed in different settings.

The International Organization of Migration defines migration as:

“The movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition, and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification” (IOM, 2019, p.132).

It also discusses the term “migrant” as:

“a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons. The term includes a number of well-defined legal categories of people, such as migrant workers; persons whose particular types of movements are legally defined, such as smuggled migrants; as well as those whose status or means of movement are not specifically defined under international law, such as international students.” (IOM, 2019, p.132)

The meaning of “refugee” applied, in this case, uses the universalized legal definition of the Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees:

“A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it” (IOM, 2019, p.171)

Despite these general definitions, there are two relevant perspectives to consider before defining either of these concepts. The inclusivist approach or the residualist view.

The inclusivist view considers that migrants are people who have moved from their usual place of residence, regardless of their legal status and their motivations for moving. Thus, considering refugees as a particular group of migrants. Meanwhile, the residualist one does not see as migrants those who are fleeing war or persecution. (Carling, s.d)

Thus, the inclusivist approach is followed as well as the use of the term “migrants” to refer to actions done towards refugees and other migrants.

Other definitions that will be relevant in the following discussion are “civil society organizations” and “multi-stakeholder initiatives”.

Civil society organizations are understood and defined as Schierup, Likić-Brborić, Delgado Wise & Toksöz do:

“[...] as nonstate or nongovernmental and nonmarket actors. It can be seen as the web of activities and organizations that are not created by the state, or by its articulations, and are not directly controlled by it. At the same time, they are not profit oriented and do not operate in the economic market. In the concept of civil society, we do not only include NGOs but also social movements, religious institutions, and trade unions”. (2018, p.104)

By multi-stakeholder initiatives, the definition of Corella, et al.:

“MSIs are very diverse in nature, ranging from intermittent dialogues to practical long-term collaborations. They can have different objectives and scope and can allow for varying levels of engagement of CSOs, as will be further analyzed. They can also be established at different levels: national, sectoral, local, etc. and can have different names: fora, councils, alliances, coordination committees, platforms, etc. “(2020, p.10)

2. What is the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development?

In the year 2015, the UN General assembly managed to engage 195 nations to agree with an agenda that aimed to change the world for the better, the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. Migration, with a greater role in this Agenda, has experienced notable progress compared to the Millennium Development Goals.

The political declaration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) breaks new ground by recognizing the “positive contribution of migrants to growth” and the “multidimensional reality” (Appave & Sinha, 2017, p.1) of migration. Migration is embedded in several goals and targets, to “facilitate migration and mobility of people in an orderly, safe, regular and responsible manner” within the goal 10.7 on reducing inequalities.

It is even recognized as a matter of great relevance for the objectives of sustainable cities and resilience to climate change. It is no longer possible to see human mobility merely in the context of development, or worse yet, as a symptom of a lack of development. Finally, migration is an important contributor to sustainable development.

The agenda was formulated with the intention to be a platform for participatory and multi-stakeholder processes that could involve states, international organizations, private and civil society actors. It tries to tackle a wide range of development issues at the same time that it places emphasis on “universality, inclusiveness and partnerships” (Appave & Sinha (Eds.), 2017, p.12). Thus, it recognizes that the responsibility for sustainable development must be shared and interconnected. Both vertical and horizontal approaches will be multidisciplinary in nature given the complexity of the issues that we are facing globally. Such is also the case for migration trends.

3.1. How does it relate to Migration?

The approach in the agenda changes from previous normative global propositions in that it goes beyond the simple definitions of migration and includes agency in its understanding of migrants. It sets a precedent on how migration governance must progress in the years to come; a framework towards a more effective international governance based on global partnerships. Promotes the utilization of the principle of universality based on international governance in search for greater policy coherence. "It encourages going beyond governance as usual and under target 17.14 calls to “pursue policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors” (Vidal, 2018, p.14)

Another important aspect will be the SDGs monitoring and reporting processes and how it will “[...] help identify lessons learned and best-practices related to all aspects of migration, as well as improve migration data, strengthening evidence on the links between migration and development” (Appave & Sinha (Eds.), 2017, p.13). Monitoring and reporting must improve “the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts”. (Vidal, 2018, p.21) A key focus of the SDG implementation process will consist of greater disaggregation of data so as to better serve certain vulnerable groups.

As seen up until this point, the agenda directly relates migration to development, leaving no doubt over the necessity to include specific measures over the effects of migration over inequality. It sets precedent for the need of global partnerships that create universal

guidelines for migration policy as well as identifies one of the major issues that plague correct policy, the lack of reliable data. As it proposes a multistakeholder approach, the 2030 Agenda enhances the role of CSOs for the procurement of such data.

In the next section, the role of civil society organizations is further developed in the context of agenda as well as its aspects in global migration governance.

4. The Role of Civil Society Organizations

As Cohen and Arato (1992), cited in Barbulescu & Grugel, (2016, p.257) have stated civil society is a highly diverse space. Often conceptualized as a “dense network of civil associations [that] promote the stability and effectiveness of the democratic polity through (...) the ability to mobilize citizens on behalf of public causes’ (Walzer, 1992, cited in Barbulescu & Grugel (2016, p.257). Thus, it is far from being a harmonious or ethically coherent social structure.

From NGOs, humanitarian organizations, lobbies, unions, churches, etc. some have global reach and funding that enables a “critical independence from states, whilst others survive principally through providing services for states, which can compromise how far they can distance themselves from state policies” (Barbulescu & Grugel (2016), p.257)

Which is then the relationship between global immigration policies and the actions of civil society?

It is very clearly stated in official documents such as the “*Migration and the 2030 Agenda A Guide for Practitioners*” that the implementation process of the agenda must follow a “holistic approach” thus a need to “engage a wide range of actors in all aspects of implementation” (Vidal, 2018, p.12).

There is also this idea of high degree of engagement with local actors needed with the national level of government to be able to understand, reflect or adequately respond the country’s migration realities. It is understood that “strengthening vertical policy coherence also enables local government actors to feed their expertise and knowledge up to national government so that national legislation and policies can be more relevant to

the realities experienced on the ground." (Vidal, 2018, p.56) But where does the role of CSOs take place in all this within the agenda's structure?

CSOs are understood as **awareness-raising actors** with "valuable experience in advocacy around migration and development, as well as important outreach and coordination functions that can be tapped". They are notable for their own **experience and knowledge** as they normally are actors who deal at face-value different aspects of migration management, due to its usual "service delivery role". (Vidal, 2018, p.61) Thus, for purposes such as **migration data recollection as well as building of best good practices**, CSOs "can assist with prioritization and needs analyses, so they can offer their unique view of migrant needs in specific territories". (Vidal, 2018, p.61) At the end of it all, most of the role of CSOs in the Agenda fall into two categories: **consultation and implementation**. As it is stated that "government actors may hold bilateral meetings and group consultations with development cooperation partners and other potential partners [...] who may be involved in implementation." (Vidal, 2018, p.85)

But how is this perspective backed up on the academical sphere? According to Hosseini, Gills and Goodman (2017) CSOs "including various labor and migrant rights movements and activists have managed to mobilize and strategically engage for the promotion of a rights-based migration governance". Hence, "demonstrating genuine transversal cosmopolitanism and tenacious activism, in spite of rather limited access to the migration agenda-setting arenas and the democratic deficit in global governance" (Grugel & Piper, 2011; Schierup, Ålund, & Likić-Brborić, 2015, cited at Likić-Brborić, (2018, p.33). This is based on the steering of initiatives such as the Global Community Dialogue on Migration, Development and Human Rights, which "demanded guarantees for migrant workers' labor rights and advocated for a rights-based approach to migration" (MFA, 2009, cited at Likić-Brborić, 2018, p.39).

The key point lies in the democratization aspect that CSOs bring to global governance. It is understood that the participation of CSOs can hold up to two expectations. First, **create political debate and communicate new issues and interests from local stakeholders to global governance arrangements**. Second, incise on **public scrutiny of policy choices (democratization factor)**. As Nanz and Steffek (2004) put it "civil society actors collect and disseminate information about, and critical evaluations of, international

governance that enable both citizens and the media to engage in informed political debate” (cited in Steffek & Nanz, 2008, p.3). Organized civil society thus has the potential to function as a “transmission belt” between a global citizenry and the institutions of global governance.

This “public use of reason” “depends on civil society as “a network of associations that institutionalizes problem-solving discourses on questions of general interest inside the framework of organized public spheres” (Habermas, 1996, p. 367 cited in Steffek & Nanz, 2008, p.7). The notion of public deliberation has the particularity that there is a warranted presumption that public opinion is formed on the basis of adequate information and that “those whose interests are affected have an equal and effective opportunity to make their own interests (and their reasons for them) known.” (Steffek & Nanz, 2008, p.7). This presumption could block real development by mistaking smaller CSOs as irrelevant. Looking more in detail this issue, later observations over the challenges of CSOs with the media will be explained.

Lastly, some authors have developed indicators regarding cooperation in policy implementation. These would mark the different levels that of CSO assistance (Steffek & Nanz, 2008, p.15):

- Carrying out projects, or delegation entire projects to CSOs.
- Partnerships in which CSOs not only work for IOs or states (and are paid for it), but also commit resources from their own budget to joint projects.
- Partnership that entails only the presence of CSOs in the review and evaluation of projects. Here, CSOs can feed their expertise and experience in the field back into the next cycle of project planning.
- As monitoring mechanisms whose role is to deliver information on state parties’ compliance with their international obligations. Thus, permitting to critically monitor the implementation and to denounce shortcomings, or non-compliance.

It is important though, to notice that there have been identified some shortcomings and potential pitfalls that impede the actuation realization of these indicators. Despite gaining consultative status, CSOs have no guarantee that their interests and values will actually enter intergovernmental deliberation as well as given due consideration in the decision-making process. This case as such will be seen further in the upcoming practical analysis

given then lack of active cooperation. But before that, more concrete challenges must be considered.

To sum up, CSOs have been explained regarding their nature, the characteristics that in the academic field consider they concede them the democratizing aspects as well as some limitations. The indicators introduced will help during the analysis of the interviews as to classify which kind of cooperation is detected in their case.

5. *The challenges for Civil Society Organizations*

To understand the full picture of CSOs realities, there have been some studies (Ambrosini & Van der Leun, 2015; Barbulescu & Grugel, 2016; Singleton, 2015; Steffek & Nanz, 2008, López-Sala & Godenau, 2019) which have introduced some of the main challenges these organizations phase not only in general, but specially in regard to their influence in migration policy.

Even when institutional conditions are particularly favorable, governmental actors are often reluctant to adopt CSO concerns. For example, involving civil society in “internationalized governance has, in some cases, tended to reinforce existing international asymmetries between North and South.” The northern organizations having then major roles in setting the agenda in detriment of their southern counterparts. (Steffek & Nanz, 2008, p.28)

Also, there have been inferences made upon consequences of extensive cooperation between IOs and CSOs which can lead to problems of co-optation. In such cases, CSOs might become entangled in financial and organizational dependencies that compromise their ability to function as independent and potentially critical voices. (Steffek & Nanz, 2008, p.28)

On the level of policy development, it also faces lack of academic and practitioners’ active cooperation. As some researchers point out, "policymakers in the EU, as in many member states, often claim that policymaking is evidence-based. However, the evidence that may inform migration policy is a product of a process of knowledge generation that is shaped by the policy priorities themselves" (Singleton, 2015, p.133)

There is also the question of their efficiency and efficacy. “The success of their activism, or the range of resources they mobilize can be measured by changes in government policy or, more indirectly, by greater public awareness of, or insider support for, issues of concern.” (Barbulescu & Grugel, 2016, p.256) Despite civil society actors being potentially influential actors on immigration issues and the struggles that take place around migrants’ rights, their significance is always tied up to the subjective appreciation of the general public.

Singleton marked that this radiates in a generalized problem in migration studies as well as for CSOs knowledge: information.

"The biggest obstacle faced by civil society in attempting to influence migration and asylum policy has been to discover which measures are being proposed." (Singleton, 2015, p.137)

Information or lack of it, creates the frequent misinterpretation of migration statistics, which in turn shapes public perceptions towards migrants and influences the tone and content of public debate.

Therefore, the role of the media can also influence government policy with anti-immigrant rhetoric, which in turn is framed by government policy priorities. The trend of growing negative coverage towards migration creates a climate of hostility and fear which endangers rational discussion of what might constitute fair and effective migration policies. (Canoy et al. 2006, cited in Singleton, 2015, p.134). For CSOs that concentrate their practice on migration, this leaves little space for their own voice as well as limiting profoundly the scope of their actions.

The following table summarizes these challenges for its later analysis jointly with the SSI:

Table 1:

Challenges for CSOs
Government reluctance over full implication of CSOs in migration policy development
Co-optation and financial dependency limiting agency of CSOs
Political priorities over knowledge-based policy development
Lack of reliable data
Public awareness subjected by politization more than factual information
Media’s role in amplifying negative connotations, serving anti-immigrant rhetoric

Source: Elaborated by the author (of this research).

6. Contextualization of the subjects of study:

Before entering in the methodology and practical analysis of this work, it is necessary to introduce some context to comprehend the scenario of the CSOs that have been interviewed. Due to the geographic and resource limitations of the research, the CSOs that have been studied are from the municipality of Barcelona, Spain. This does not pretend to be a representative sample of the region but provide a first-approach analysis to the reality of the situation for CSOs in the 2030 Agenda framework. It does shed some light on the capacities of CSOs, especially at the local level, to participate in the implementation process of the migration objectives of the agenda.

Under the guidance of the 2030 Agenda, States have to present their own plan of action to establish how they will pursue the SDGs. "Both the European Union and Spain have shown an unequivocal commitment to the Agenda through different declarations and initiatives. A commitment to which not only national governments are called, but also regional and municipal authorities, civil society, and the business sector." (Gobierno de España, 2018) Such plans are subject to examination from the High-Level Political Forum as well as a voluntary review of the plan. Spain agreed to both conditions and presented its own plan in 2018.

To summarize, the most relevant characteristics and objectives of the Spanish plan are explained for its latter comparison in the practical analysis. (Gobierno de España, 2018)

Characteristics:

- Creation of a new ministerial structure
- The “Consejo Asesor para el Desarrollo Sostenible” collaborated with experts and institutions of the organized civil society for the elaboration of the National Plan for SDGs. Also, participation of local and regional governments.
- Creation of “FuturoEnComún”, “an innovative intersectoral platform for dialogue and work in favor of sustainable development, human rights, and the deepening of democratic civic space. It’s supposed to work in collaboration with other civil society actors at different levels in a cooperative and open manner in the so-called “ecosystem SDG” trying to build bridges of change.

Objectives:

- Communication of the Agenda (“Goal: In 2020, 100% of Spanish citizens will be aware of the 2030 Agenda and will be aware of the scope of the transformations that it entails. Commitment: a Pact will be reached for the communication of the 2030 Agenda among all public administrations and with private actors and civil society”) (Gobierno de España, 2018, p.148)
- Monitoring and reporting
- Evaluation

7. Methodology

After this initial basic framework, the main question that this paper wants to address is: Is the 2030 Agenda efficient in implementing its migration objectives through its multistakeholder application in the level of local non-governmental actors such as civil society organizations?

Following this first research question, some others presented themselves thus centering the objectives of this analysis. As part of the theoretical questions, we wanted to understand: What is the 2030 Agenda and how does it envision its objectives of migration? What is the role of civil society organizations as a general standpoint and within the 2030 Agenda? What challenges do CSOs face within their work with migration, especially those CSOs at the local level? A traditional research analysis of previous studies as well as official statements and plans were used to compose the theoretical basis.

Because this paper uses a hypothetical-deductive method of analysis, the methods used work through observations made of a particular case/s and a problem is raised. This leads to a process of induction that refers the problem to a theory to formulate a hypothesis, which through deductive reasoning we attempt to validate it empirically.

The initial observations were made through the research of the plans of implementation made at a state level. In this case due to the location of the researcher, the state studied is Spain. The analysis of the next section concentrated on actors at the local level. This process resulted in the differentiation of a problem of apparent lack of implementation of

the migration objectives of the Agenda. The induction process was conducted through the realization of a qualitative research method: semi-structured interviews.

Semi-structured interviews (SSI) are:

“structured around data that the researcher wants to obtain and may well be reconfigured in accordance with the statements of the interviewee. Far from being a passive recording of what is told or experienced, it takes place as a social interaction between the researcher and the participant. Drawing on the dialogue between these two, SSI recognizes enough space to the interviewee to emphasize the issues that they deem important.” (Kaliber, 2019, p.345)

The starting hypothesis that resulted is that the Agenda’s guidance, at the moment, is not sufficiently applying its purposes in regard to its multistakeholder application. CSOs don’t have enough influence on the design nor the implementation of the objectives.

Continuing the analysis, we identified the main results from the interviews. The questions that guided it were principally: What kind of communication and collaboration does the agenda have with CSOs? What is the reach of this? Does this include the medium to small size CSOs?

These results were compared (in next section) to the academic theories such as the ones who explain the challenges for CSOs, hence identifying if it was enough to prove our hypothesis.

In the conclusions a review will be conducted to ascertain whether the objectives of this paper have been fulfilled:

- Define and present the concepts of study regarding migration
- Analyze them in the context of the 2030 Agenda as well as how does the Agenda propose its migration objectives.
- Analyze the role of CSOs and their principal challenges in participation within migration policy, their design and implementation.
- Determine if the results of the analysis confirm what is established in academic theory and our initial premise.

8. Analytical Results

In order to analyze if our initial hypothesis is correct, the following analysis is divided into themes identified through the coding of the interviews. The objective is to see if there are relations to the themes presented to the academic theories previously expressed.

Three interviews were conducted to three different CSOs with slight variations in size between them. From smaller to larger CSO: Noves Vies, Migra Studium, and Fedelatina. Noves Vies is a small CSO of legal and social action. Its main objective is to influence social justice and offer socio-legal advice to young people at risk of social exclusion, especially Unaccompanied Migrant Minors. Migra Studium was funded by another CSO, the Company of Jesus in Catalonia. Its objectives are reception and accompaniment of migrants, promotion of diversity and solidarity as well as denunciation of abuse of human rights of those in need, especially migrants. Fedelatina is an organization formed by 47 entities, whose purpose is to provide services, assistance and coordination to immigrants, returnees and the associations that represent them. It seeks cohesion for Catalan organizations of Latin American origin, the generation of tools that facilitate organization and better integration processes in Barcelona and Catalonia of migrants, no matter where they come from.

The interviews to Noves Vies and Fedelatina were conducted directly to the presidents of the organizations, and in the case of Migra Studium to a collaborator of the of the program of visitations to the foreigners' internment center (CIE) of Barcelona in addition to being responsible for the sensibilization campaigns in schools.

The first of the themes detected was the **unfamiliarity of the 2030 Agenda**. Though there was some degree of knowledge by personal accounts such was the case with Noves Vies and Migra Studium. With Fedelatina, the president had attended some meetings related to the Agenda made by the City Council of Barcelona though centered mainly on climate and sustainability measures. Despite this, the other CSOs were not convened for any meeting. Fedelatina's President stated that “[...] *It is true that the City Council of Barcelona has introduced it (the 2030 Agenda) in the last calls, but there are many other entities that do not apply for calls. That is to say that if it is not through us, they do not receive the information.*” Smaller organizations do not usually have the opportunity to attend these meetings. But the meetings are normally only of informative nature.

Consequently, we also identify a clear **lack of guidance** on any measures centered on migration from the standpoint of concrete measures to the sharing of information. Even organizations of medium size like Fedelatina don't exactly know how to pass down the information: “[...] *Without knowing, obviously it is very difficult for us to transmit it. [...] indirectly we do it because we are defending the rights of immigrants and the free transit of people and rights. It may be that coincidentally we are doing actions for the 2030 Agenda, but it is not, like such a methodical work.*”.

Thus, we find that there is **implication without knowledge**, meaning direct knowledge of their contribution towards the agenda's goals. Their actions reflect fillings of ad hoc necessities. Their actions center on case-by-case basis and relations with public authorities are mainly projects presented by the local administration searching for external services: “[...] *another city council has contracted us to provide legal advice. They have a project to take in young people who live on the street, for example. [...] So that when a legal issue arises, then we can advise them and take them there.*” (President of Noves Vies).

There is governmental and CSO cooperation but without establishing the “holistic approach” preponderated in the agenda. There are **no institutionalized feedback relations between public authorities and these CSOs**, thus not creating a link of shared information for the creation of a knowledge-based migration policy or implementation process: “*The truth is that they are quite unidirectional in the sense that they download a lot of information, and it is difficult for them to receive inputs from us, but we do it anyway. [...] The administered and the administration. The one that is strong, the one that commands, the one that says how things are, no more.*” (Fedelatina)

When asked if they knew about Futuro en Común they confirmed this lack of cooperation: “*No, it's a pity, because the truth is that we are in several platforms such as the Council of Organizations of Barcelona, which theoretically are umbrellas where one should reach these mechanisms or processes, right?*”. (Fedelatina)

Even some expressed that the system itself seems to be counterproductive, exposing the **flaws of administration**. Perpetuating practices that go against the very values of the agenda. “*The State is the main promoter of hostility against immigration. The current immigration law is the first obstacle of the regulation and functioning of the institutions and all the problems they have in the management of the permits. For example, we help*

the interns of CIE of the Zona Franca who are in the process of expulsion. This is our perception as an organization.” (Migra Studium)

The context presents **limitations such as the problems of co-optation and financial dependency** as well as lack of monitoring that can lead to possible cases of abuse. As described by the president of Noves Vies, entities can either be restricted by the lack of finance or on the contrary, some seem to abuse labor regulations to make a profit “[...] *the administration has to guarantee how this service runs. Because it's one thing to give money. [...] Regulate the entity that has won the public tender and that is carrying out this service. Because we often find that there are companies that earn x money and go... And they want a profit to the detriment of the labor rights of the people who are hired. So ultimately what I'm saying, is that the public administration should be much more in control when outsourcing a service and how it is running.*” (Noves Vies)

Regarding monitoring, we encounter that CSOs, help diminish the consequences of **lack of reliable data**. For example, like Migra Studium with their yearly report including their activity in the CIE. Better channels of information between government and CSOs could help increase **knowledge-based migration policies** hence limiting other problems that the context poses like the **politization of migration**. This is also one of the main obstacles to CSOs to promote their values, even those of the agenda. In Migra Studium they identify that the far-right uses the fears born out of prejudice and ignorance to incorporate a certain social framework that conditions not only policy, but ultimately limits their scope of action as representatives of society.

Media is both the catalyst of limitations as well as of opportunities. As it helps shape public discourse it can either promote the expansion of values such as the promoted by the 2030 Agenda or contribute to politization or even securitization of migration. Its power has been proven in the ongoing Ukrainian refugee crisis. CSOs have been able to observe how double standards apply: *“No, not only Ukraine but also sub-Saharan Africa? Right? Why does Morocco open the border so much over the last two years?”*. In all the interviews one phrase kept appearing “if there’s a will, there’s a way” (“si es vol, es pot”) Precisely signaling the double-standard that, in one way, complicates their job but also proves their point: that migration policy can indeed follow the values they promote, and basically the SDGs of migration.

The voice CSOs raised upon this scenario also proves us their importance for the future implementation of the agenda. Their **democratizing factor** when they call out the deficiencies of the system: *“Sadly, there are first class refugees and third-class refugees. There is institutional racism but after that, there’s also the possibility and capacity, if one wants, to take a positive lesson out of this”* (Migra Studium)

Considering this and their **capacity to pioneer changes** to improve the chances to comply with the SDGs, the role of CSOs - even small to medium ones like the referenced here - will be vital. Examples are found in the three cases: Noves Vies having a case get to the Supreme Court over the practices of determination of age in non-accompanied migrant minors and winning it: *“Since then, all the judgments that were lost so far, now all are won. Because now to the courts of first instance, you say to them what the Supreme Court said.”* (Noves Vies); Fedelatina made 64 proposals to the Council of Migration to modify the “Ley de Estrangería” and won a case over police abuse of a Chilean migrant: *“Nowadays he (the cop) has been expelled from the police today and is being convicted. We try with the small tools that the system gives us, to vindicate the individual and collective rights of the people.”* (Fedelatina). And Migra Studium will be presenting this July of 2022 a report of the CIE to the Senate: *“Our relationship with the authorities is a relationship of political influence. That’s our dynamic, right? That of demanding changes in the regulations. We must denounce the malfunctioning of the immigration law and the inconsistency that the lack of safe routes represents.*

As a final recapitulation of the results, here it is compared to the challenges identified in the theoretical framework:

Table 2

Challenges for CSOs	Results comparison
Government reluctance over full implication of CSOs in migration policy development	There is indeed a clear lack of active cooperation. Presumed reluctance upon results.
Co-optation and financial dependency limiting agency of CSOs	Less instances of co-optation but clear financial dependency limiting agency CSOs
Political priorities over knowledge-based policy development	Politization on the rise and context prioritization ensuing double standards over knowledge-based policy
Lack of reliable data	CSOs capable of providing data but lack of retroactive channels with public administration.
Public awareness subjected by politicization more than factual information	Actors with anti-immigrant narrative on the rise
Media's role in amplifying negative connotations, serving anti-immigrant rhetoric	Extension of double standards and prejudices as seen in the case of Ukrainian refugees (2022)

Source: Elaborated by the author (of this research).

9. Conclusions

This work has answered the questions of what the 2030 Agenda is about and how it envisions migration as well as cooperation between different actors, concretely CSOs. The review of academic literature has permitted to identify the role of CSOs and their challenges, thus exemplifying possible problems of the implementation process of the SDGs.

Against the narrative presented in the 2030 Agenda, which emphasizes the role of CSOs to achieve success on the migration aspects of the SDGs, the reality shows a gap in cooperation with those who work at the local level.

The results of the interviews seem to confirm academic explanations regarding the challenges CSOs encounter both in the context of global and domestic cooperation. Despite this, our initial hypothesis is yet to be fully proved due to the limitations of the research. The initial design included a fourth subject of study, one which had much more resources and political dimensions. Due to unforeseen circumstances that interview to that subject could not be conducted. Thus, our results show only the perspective of medium to small size CSOs.

Therefore, the hypothesis would have to be redirected towards smaller CSOs in local communities. In such case our work does indeed indicate an apparent inefficiency when applying the multistakeholder approach of the agenda. The main problems towards implementation locally have been identified as well as the limitations and qualifications of such CSOs. Indicators of the types of cooperation between CSOs and international organizations/agreements developed by Steffek & Nanz (2008), in the end could only be applied on their indicator of monitoring CSO but in a superficial way due to the very lack of feedback relations identified in this work.

Upon results, the obvious main flaw, which impedes the correct implementation, is the unfamiliarity about the 2030 Agenda by these local actors. This has created a situation of implication without direct knowledge of it on the side of CSOs. The creation of this situation was deemed to be great deficits in communication, not only of awareness, but also of feedback relations between public authorities and local CSOs.

The agenda seems to be limited by flaws of administration and limitations such as the problems of co-optation and financial dependency which in turn limits the agency of CSOs. Deficiencies in communication also back up the lack of reliable data that characterizes migration studies as we have seen in the theoretical framework. Hence, perpetuating the lack of knowledge-based migration policies against tendencies of politization.

The gap between global agreements and state policy over actual implementation practices is also part of the initial problematic that has been seen too in the practical analysis. The agenda will have to impose much stricter monitoring tools to ascertain that the vertical policy coherence also reaches the local level.

The role of the media also signals the structural problems that faces migration policy. Though leaving unclear the exact effects to the 2030 Agenda, the analysis has confirmed what the theory says about anti-immigrant rhetoric. The example given in most of the interviewees was the cases of migrants from the Mediterranean which usually the media portrays with vocabulary full of negative connotations, contrary to the narrative seen in the case of the Ukrainian refugees. The context is different in some respects but, at the root of it, all of the refugees are people in need. What this has revealed is, as all the experts that we have interviewed declare, that the system itself is yet to have enough self-

awareness for projects like the 2030 Agenda to make real and effective transformations to the context of migration.

As observed, what the literature argues over the democratizing factor and capacity to pioneer changes of CSOs, seems to apply even in the case of small local ones. This is only a first approximation to this issue, the argument here is that any kind of progress for the migration goals, as well as regarding the efficiency of the 2030 Agenda, will depend on the higher implication of even the smallest CSOs. This work seeks to open the discussion for future academic research to investigate the implications of better cooperation between local CSOs and supranational plans of cooperation for migration. Agreeing with the theory expressed by the 2030 Agenda, only a complete holistic approach will be able to realize the observable consequences in the social reality that we seek to achieve.

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11. Annexes

Annex 1: Guide for interviews

(originally made in Spanish, though the interviews were both done in Catalan and Spanish)

MODELO DE ENTREVISTA

Tema: Agenda 2030

¿Conoce la agenda 2030?

¿Tratan de seguir sus objetivos? ¿Cómo?

En su opinión, ¿cómo han influido en su trabajo las perspectivas y los planes de la agenda?

¿Conocen el proceso de implementación?

¿Creen que se está siguiendo correctamente?

¿La agenda ha hecho cambios reales en su perspectiva?

¿Cómo es la colaboración entre los actores? ¿Hay suficiente consistencia?

¿Comparte información con otras organizaciones o instituciones para la creación de mejores datos de migración?

¿Son parte de algún mecanismo de rendición de cuentas o conocen que exista alguno ya?

¿La nueva estructura ministerial está ayudando a la implementación de políticas que tienen orientación sobre los ODS?

¿Les da la Agenda suficiente (o más) poder político?

¿Es efectivo el método y la implementación de la Agenda? ¿Les dan instrucciones directas de cuáles son las practicas que se deben hacer para conseguir los objetivos del plan?

¿Hay algo más que considere importante que no se haya reflejado suficientemente en la política o la agenda?

¿Conocen la plataforma de “Futuro en Común”? (Observatorio de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS), como plataforma intersectorial de dialogo y trabajo)

¿Son parte de este?

A nivel de Catalunya, han participado en algún ciclo de debates y/o procesos participativos (con otros expertos internacionales y representantes de la sociedad civil)? Si es que sí, ¿son estos estables?

¿Han visto si desde la presentación de los planes, estos estén realmente teniendo algún impacto significativo a nivel práctico?

Tema: Gobernanza nacional y autonómica

¿Creen que el gobierno de España y la Generalitat de Cataluña han prestado suficiente atención al objetivo número 10,7?

¿Están más conectados a qué nivel de mando, nacional, regional o local?

¿Cuáles creen que son los principales aspectos positivos de la actual administración? ¿Y los negativos?

¿Cómo entienden su papel/posición en el sistema migratorio de España? ¿Cómo encajan su trabajo dentro de este?

¿Su papel complementa el sistema o más bien llena los vacíos? ¿Creen que se pueden permitir tener un rol menos subsidiario de las responsabilidades estatales y ser más complementarios?

¿Cómo está funcionando la legislación en la política migratoria española (o la legislación autonómica aplicable) en base a lo que se está promoviendo a nivel político?

¿Es el sistema español una buena base para la consecución de los ODS? ¿O tiene grandes impedimentos para ello?

¿Cuáles son los obstáculos a nivel local?

Una de las medidas transformadoras expuestas en la propuesta española es “informar y dar a conocer, sensibilizar para hacer, comunicar para transformar” mediante un Pacto para la Comunicación de la Agenda 2030. En tal pacto, ¿se les ha contactado en algún momento para ser catalizadores de tal difusión de información? Si no es así, ¿han considerado hacerlo por cuenta propia?

Tema: el papel de las organizaciones civiles sociales

¿Cree que se tiene suficientemente en cuenta el papel de las OSC en la implementación de los ODS relacionados con la migración?

¿Tiene algo que decir en el proceso de implementación? ¿Tiene algún margen de seguimiento y presentación de informes?

¿Su experiencia de primera línea y su valioso trabajo en la defensa de la migración y el desarrollo, así como las funciones de coordinación, son conocimientos que comparte con los profesionales institucionales? ¿Tiene consultas activas con ellos?

Respecto a su activismo político, ¿encuentran que tiene grandes obstáculos con las instituciones gubernamentales?

Con la crisis migratoria que vivimos en el 2015 vimos un resurgimiento del tema de la migración en la narrativa política, ¿usted cree que ahora con la actual crisis humanitaria que estamos teniendo por la guerra en Ucrania podríamos ver avances reales en la persecución? de las metas de los ODS? ¿O solo acciones ad hoc?

¿Cambiará esto las cosas para las OSC? ¿Cómo, en su opinión?

¿Cree que, en lugar de forjar estructuras de institucionalización e implementación de rendición de cuentas para la realización de los derechos humanos y laborales, estos derechos y normas se han transferido a modos voluntarios de gobierno corporativo, aunque vestidos con el discurso de los derechos humanos y la migración justa?

Annex 2: Form of quotation consent interviews

Formulario de consentimiento de entrevista

Proyecto de investigación: Trabajo de Final de Grado:

“Implementing migration objectives of the Agenda 2030: The role of Civil Society Organizations. Perspective from Catalonia.” (Provisional title)

“Implementación de los objetivos migratorios de la Agenda 2030: El rol de las organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil. Perspectiva desde Cataluña”. (Título provisional)

Investigadora: Camila Cowley Méndez

Nombre participante de la investigación: Albert Parés i Casanova

Este formulario de consentimiento es necesario para asegurarnos de que comprende el propósito de su participación y que acepta las condiciones de su participación. Por lo tanto, ¿leerá la hoja de información adjunta y luego firmará este formulario para certificar que aprueba lo siguiente:

- se grabará la entrevista y se producirá una transcripción
- la transcripción de la entrevista será analizada por Camila Cowley Méndez como investigadora
- el acceso a la transcripción de la entrevista estará limitado a Camila Cowley Méndez y supervisores académicos e investigadores con los que podría colaborar como parte del proceso de investigación
- la grabación real será guardada hasta la finalización del trabajo (08/06/2022) para luego ser destruida.
- cualquier variación de las condiciones anteriores solo ocurrirá con su aprobación explícita adicional

Acuerdo de citación

Entiendo que mis palabras pueden citarse directamente. Con respecto a ser citado, escriba sus iniciales junto a cualquiera de las declaraciones con las que está de acuerdo:

Deseo revisar las notas, transcripciones u otros datos recopilados durante la investigación relacionada con mi participación.	
Acepto ser citado directamente.	
Acepto ser citado directamente si mi nombre no se publica y se utiliza un nombre inventado (pseudónimo).	
Acepto que los investigadores puedan publicar documentos que contengan citas mías. Se puede utilizar todo o parte del contenido de su entrevista;	

Se puede utilizar todo o parte del contenido de su entrevista;

- En documentos académicos
- En otros medios que podamos producir, como presentaciones orales.

Al firmar este formulario, acepto que;

1. Participo voluntariamente en este proyecto. Entiendo que no estoy obligado a participar y puedo detener la entrevista en cualquier momento;
2. La entrevista transcrita o extractos de la misma pueden utilizarse como se describe anteriormente;
3. Puedo solicitar una copia de la transcripción de mi entrevista y puedo hacer las modificaciones que considere necesarias para garantizar la efectividad de cualquier acuerdo hecho sobre confidencialidad;
4. He podido hacer cualquier pregunta que pueda tener, y entiendo que soy libre de contactar al investigador con cualquier pregunta que pueda tener en el futuro.

Firma Participante

Fecha

Firma Entrevistador/a

Fecha