Protect

The Right to International Protection

An analysis of the role of contextual factors on civil society organisations on matters of refugee and migration policy

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement No 870761.

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DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.7664510

An analysis of the role of contextual factors on civil society organisations on matters of refugee and migration policy

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1. Introduction:

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are key actors in the conceptualisation, practice and debate on international protection. Their work with refugees and migrants is extensive and varied, at local, national and international levels. In this report, we consider the extent to which we can understand these various actions through reference to contextual factors, most notably the cleavage model of protection (Sicakkan 2021). This model places dispositions towards international protection within a broader set of political and social attitudes, turning principally on the extent to which individuals and groups view national communities as open, inclusive and connected to international society. Building on an extensive data set created by the PROTECT project, the report argues that to a very marked extent this model does predict when, why and how CSOs engage with issues of international protection.

The report starts with a short presentation of the cleavage model of international protection and the theoretical application to CSO activity. The rest of the document provides an analysis of the data set previously presented (Usherwood *et al* 2022), with regard to a number of key areas where the cleavage model shapes CSOs: group mobilisation; the extent of their focus on international protection issues; engagement with, and attitudes towards, the Global Compacts on Refugees and on Migration (GCR and GCM), and; the relative weight of cleavages compared to two other major factors for CSOs, namely resourcing and opportunity structures. After the conclusion, a number of policy implications for public bodies are set out. Key findings:

- Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are usefully understood as expressions of wider social interests, attitudes and priorities. In the case of international protection, the cleavage model provides an insightful way of making sense of what groups exist and what they do;
- CSOs that work solely or mainly with refugees are very likely to hold broadly positive views of those individuals, grounding it in a wider understanding of the centrality of providing effective international protection;
- CSOs working on refugee-related issues are not a full encapsulation of a society's views on refugees;
- The Global Compacts on Refugees and on Migration need the involvement of international protection CSOs to produce more effective implementation, but only in partnership with state actors;
- Access to resourcing, especially finance, is as important to maintaining a vibrant CSO community as any other policy initiative that states can provide.

2. The cleavage model of international protection and its application to CSOs:

When trying to make sense of international protection of refugees in practice, the notion of cleavages offers much theoretical potential. Grounded as it is in attitudes towards refugees, it is to be expected that actions will follow such predispositions, as the PROTECT project has explored with reference to legal frameworks (Castecker & Ecker 2022), government policy (Longo & Fontana 2022) and public opinion (Sicakkan & Heiberger 2022). In the case of CSOs, we might anticipate such connections between attitudes and actions to be relatively strong, given the nature of these organisations, spontaneously emerging from civil society as relatively pure and unconstrained expressions of collective interests (cf. Rainey *et al* 2017). This report examines the extent to which this is supported in fact.

To conceptualise cleavages around attitudes towards international protection Sicakkan suggests that it is necessary to work from the basis of the existence of a wider set of "structural, resilient, and mutually reinforcing conflicts, contestations, and collaborations between political actors over a web of global political issues" (2021: p5). Such high-level cleavages mark out the dimensions of political and policy debate and argument through their articulation of profoundly different world views, so connecting their varying understandings of the relative position of the nation-state with the lived experience of individuals' social and political life (see also Hooghe & Marks 2018). Cleavages structure attitudes towards all areas of political life, from policy domains to more constitutive questions of the nature of the national and international environment (Franklin 2010).

Such cleavages operate both in general, national terms, but also within more specific areas of policy: moreover, it is at such lower levels that cleavages gain material substance and more direct connection with policy and with effects on the ground, so truly embedding them within the political sphere. International migration provides a key site for this as a result of its intrinsic questioning of the basic notions of the geographical boundedness of states and the status of those who cross their borders. The relationship between states and individuals speaks both to the nature of national community and identity and to the extent to which states hold obligations to an international order or norms even as they seek to manage their borders.

More precisely, Sicakkan maps out four main groups that are separated out by the highest order of cleavages (Sicakkan 2021, Sicakkan & Atak 2021). *Nativists* focus exclusively on the protection of existing members of their national community and see no role – or even need – for international protection, since obligations stop at the metaphorical water's edge. *Nation-statists* are potentially more open to notions of universal human rights and/or the protection of refugees, but still place primacy on their own state's freedom to operationalise those as they see best: international protection is at most an idea, rather than a set of obligatory requirements.

A third group, *regionalists*, are willing to work beyond national borders to create local systems of governance, often reflecting an understanding of the limits of what any one state can achieve: in part this is about sincere concern for human rights but is also a vehicle of *realpolitik*. Even the final group – *globalists* – with their desire for an internationalised and globalised system of protection are not always driven by a reification of human rights as an inescapable and fundamental duty for all (although that view is also present): it can also be a function of a failure of alternative policies to manage particular situations, such as massive inflows of refugees.

These cleavages can be understood best in this context as how refugees (and migrants more generally) are understood and positioned relative to whatever *status quo* applies and the imperatives that it creates for action. It is argued here that cleavages apply as much to individuals and organisations as much as they do to states, and so we might expect there to be a differentiation in the salience of international protection between the four groups. Whereas globalists might be expected to treat this as a core issue and manifestation of their understanding of the world, and so to see action as a moral duty, the more pragmatic approach of regionalists and nation-statists would not create the same imperatives to action. By contrast, nativists might only consider action necessary to the extent that it defends the integrity of the domestic community.

Such understandings logically follow through into the objectives of action. The duty of globalists will produce an incentive to work with and support refugees, wherever they might be located, as well as working to adjust local, national and international structures of governance to embed the imperatives that they consider so central. Likewise, the othering of refugees by nativists suggests that those holding such views will seek to concentrate their defensive work on those social and political structures that might be affected by refugees, rather than the refugees themselves. Nation-statists and regionalists sit between these two positions, respectively looking to shape national and regional responses and the support of refugees within them, albeit with less moral obligation than found in globalists.

Taken overall, this cleavage-based approach points towards a diverse set of incentives to action for individuals and organisations, underpinned by deeply contrasting understandings of the nature of refugees and the obligations of others towards them. Moreover, it produces a set of expectations of what we might expect to find in the existence, organisation and activities of CSOs that engage with international protection and with refugees.

Firstly, with regard to the mobilisation and location of CSOs, the cleavage model suggests that nativist and nation-statist groups would be strongly disposed to working solely within their home state, given their framing of the location of operationalising international protection. Similarly, regionalist groups would focus their efforts within their home region. However, globalist CSOs would have a less clear-cut profile, since they would perceive that the universal nature of protection demands action that is both international and local: the transient and border-crossing nature of refugees requires activity to manifest at all levels, all the time, so any chosen domain will be consistent with globalist attitudes.

Secondly, if cleavage theory is matched up with the notion of political opportunity structures, then it should be expected that CSO activity will also reflect the extent to which perceived demand for international protection is matched by state activity. We already know from other studies that CSOs have filled gaps produced by state retrenchment on welfare (e.g. Dagdeviren *et al* 2019; Deverteuil 2017; Featherstone *et al* 2012) and this notion logically also applies to international protection, where state provision is more uneven still. Those states with vibrant civil society in general will be more likely to accommodate CSOs working on international protection (especially those working within the state itself), given the necessary requirements of limited government, well-articulated civil and human rights and the general willingness of individuals to engage in such activity. Where civil society is more limited, international protection CSOs would be likely fewer in number and more likely to be directed

to activity outside the state, possibly as arm's-length extensions of the state as part of efforts to project 'soft power' (Melissen 2005; also see Atalay 2013).

Moving to the focus of CSOs, a **third** expectation would be that only globalist or regionalist groups would have a sole focus on refugees and international protection, since only such positions within the cleavage model place protection in a position of primacy in the ordering of social norms and values. By contrast, nativist and (especially) nation-statist groups would treat protection as a function some other (national) values, which in turn would mean that any focus on refugees would typically also be a function of other activity and therefore relatively minor in importance.

Fourth and by extension, it would be anticipated that most CSOs that have a significant interest in refugees would be globalist or regionalist in their cleavage positioning, for much the same reasons are just outlined.

Fifth, with regard to the Global Compacts, it is also likely that globalist groups will be the ones most engaged and active with their formulation, implementation and critique. Partly this would result from the previous points, which place globalists in the kinds of positions within the general international landscape of CSO activity that would be most likely to encounter the Compacts (being relatively high-order and abstracted instruments), but also it reflects the logic of globalism and its emphasis on embodying protection wherever possible and through concrete action.

Finally, we draw on other analysis of this data to suggest that there are limits to the cleavage model's traction (Usherwood *et al* 2022). In particular, the nature of CSOs as organic, bottom-up social bodies means that opportunity structures are as important in understanding these groups as cleavages are. Our previous survey of the CSO landscape has suggested that access to resourcing (in all its forms) is very important in group mobilisation and activity, so while cleavage theory can only provide a partial explanation of what occurs.

3. Data Sets

This report draws on two novel data sets created for the PROTECT project: these can be accessed upon application from the data repository at the University of Stuttgart and will be made publicly available at the conclusion of the project in Spring 2023.[1] The data sets contain the results of a pair of surveys of CSOs conducting during 2021: one sent directly to CSOs; the other a desk-based exercise looking at publicly available materials online.

A survey was sent to CSOs with four main sections. Section A deals with the basics of the CSO's organisation and operation, including connections with other bodies and use of (social) media. Section B replicates the questions of WP6.2 to establish a baseline of the CSO's attitudes relative to the WP1.1 theoretical framework. Section C asks for details of work by the CSO relating to refugees and migrants, both in the field and on an advocacy basis. Finally, Section D handles the CSO's engagement with the two Global Compacts.

The survey was sent out to a list of CSOs in 16 states, based on preliminary research from WP7, which identified organisations mentioned in media and social media coverage of refugee

[1] CSO Survey available at: https://darus.uni-stuttgart.de/privateurl.xhtml?token=c3371e7b-0ef1-4db2-ae3e-83e05058eb30. Desk-based survey available at: https://darus.uni-stuttgart.de/privateurl.xhtml?token=c3371e7b-0ef1-4db2-ae3e-83e05058eb30.

and migration issues in those states. The authors added to this with country-specific knowledge to capture as wide as possible a number of CSOs: these represent a wide range of interests and ties. Aware of the diversity of civil society associations (for example, community-based organisations, trade unions or voluntary, faith-based organisations, and other non-governmental organisations, to name a few. See Anheier 2005 and Garkisch *et al* 2017) we share the concern of other researchers that the lack of uniformity across disciplines has resulted in incongruities. In this case, the boundaries for inclusion were solely that there was an evident organisational structure, that it was not a public body or treaty-based international organisation and that it was not a political party, in line with the Anglo-Saxon scholarly debate (Salamon & Sokolwski 2016). The CSO survey returned 43 responses.

The desk-based survey complemented this with another 120 CSOs – drawn from the same initial list – and an abbreviated version of the same content. The main difference was the removal of Section B. Researchers used online searches to compile as much information as possible on structures, operations and stated policy, covering the large majority of CSOs that had been identified outside of the USA, allowing for this report to provide a well-grounded evidence base with which to map out the landscape of activity across Europe and at the international level.

The resultant data sets are not exhaustive, nor are intended to be. This is primarily a function of the research design, which is explicitly intended to allow us to capture the full range of attitudes within the cleavage model (negative and indifferent as well as positive towards international protection), rather than just those groups that provide services towards refugees. Results from the two surveys have been aggregated for this report.

4. Mobilisation and location of CSOs:

As already discussed above, it is expected that the mobilisation of CSOs will reflect the situation of cleavages within and across national territories. In order to explore this, CSOs surveyed re divided here into a typology discussed elsewhere, to consider differences as they relate to cleavage factors.

In our previous report (Usherwood *et al* 2022), we noted that there are several distinct types of CSO, in regard to their (inter)national profile and activity, which in turn is a function of their mobilisation pathway. Most simply, there are groups which are solely operating within a single state territory. A second category are those groups which have very limited international profiles, typically across a particular border area. Thirdly, there are CSOs with a broad international mission, by being based or homed clearly in one particular state. Finally, more fundamentally international CSOs will have a location for their main headquarters, but with no particular links to the state that this is in. It is possible to use this typology to test whether the expectations on cleavages with respect to location and to state activity stand up.

Of the CSOs surveyed, 53% were classified as national-only organisations, i.e. they did not operate in other countries. There are however some considerable variations. There is a particularly high proportion of single state CSOs in Greece (75%), the United Kingdom (70%) and Italy (50%). The second most common type of CSO in the data are those retaining a home base, but with operations in multiple other countries. There is a prevalence of CSOs in specific countries that fall into this category, representing at least half of French, Swiss, Dutch, German and Norwegian CSOs. That only 2.5% of organisations were fully international indicates the

importance of having a home base. It also indicates that delineating the cleavage positioning of CSOs is more complex than simply identifying the countries in which they operate.

Many CSOs operate beyond national boundaries with actual offices and staff beyond the country where their headquarters are based. This is evident from the distribution of states where CSOs are headquartered (Figure 1). Those states outside the industrialised West that host international CSOs in our sample appear to have a model whereby the CSO focuses on work on refugees outside of that state, almost as an arm of foreign policy (as in Qatar, Saudi Arabia and India). By contrast, it is only in states that have been historically more open to civil society activity (e.g. Western Europe, USA) that we find a mixture of both CSOs that work internationally and significant numbers of CSOs working domestically on refugee issues. This suggests that there is something of a tension between where CSOs are sited and where they operate, reflecting the problematic interplay between cleavages and opportunity structures (see Kriesi *et al* 2006).

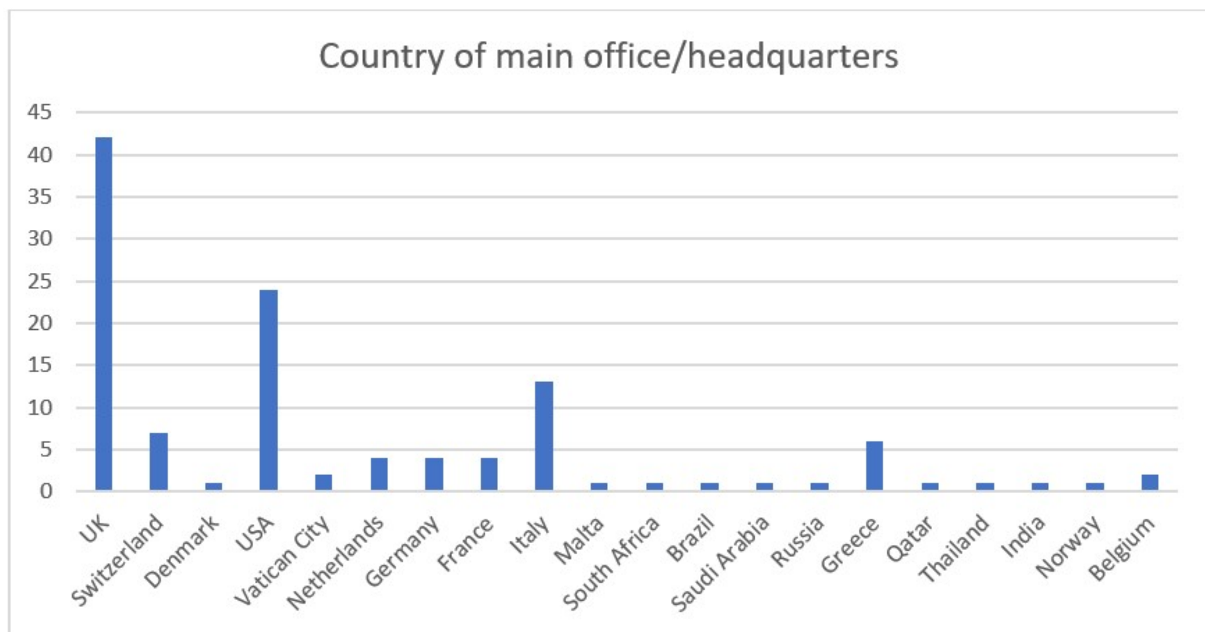

Figure 1: Location of Surveyed CSOs Headquarters (n)

To explore this further, of those organisations with globalist perspectives, the highest proportion are internationally focused with a home base, representing 46% of CSOs in this category. This is only marginally higher than the proportion of globalist CSOs operating from a single country (44%). The majority (59%) of nativist CSOs operate in a single country, which is perhaps unsurprising, but once the proportion of globalist and nativist single-state CSOs is compared, it is actually globalist CSOs who represent the majority (67%) of those operating in single states. This reinforces the complexity of CSO geography and cleavage positioning; whether a CSO operates in a single state or multiple is no simple proxy for whether they hold globalist or nativist positions.

The behavioural patterns of different classifications of CSOs reveal that in the main, staff of international organisations with a home base are more frequently involved in search and rescue, medical care and the provision of shelter than other types of organisations. However,

national only and international organisations with a home base display very similar patterns in legal case work, humanitarian work and resettlement activities. By contrast, single-state organisations work more frequently in supporting migrants with their mental health. Although the data is limited in capturing the activities of fully international organisations, they assist refugees with financial support and undertake general humanitarian work. More revealing is the cleavage positioning of CSOs and their associated activities. While globalist CSOs undertake an array of different activities in their engagements with refugees; search and rescue, resettlement support, legal aid, training/education, etc., there is no evidence from the data collected that nativist CSOs are involved in any refugee-supporting activities in the field, which would fit with the expectations regarding the cleavage positions.

The data also enables the examination of migration related advocacy, exploring whether CSOs are involved in activities including lobbying, briefing, campaigning and engaging in a dialogue with the media, with data available for 128 CSOs from both sides of cleavage positioning. 76% of globalist CSOs are involved in forms of advocacy, with 69% of these engaging in lobbying activities, 51% in producing briefings, and 49% mounting campaigns. By contrast, few nativist CSOs are involved in advocacy work – just 31% of such CSOs for which we have data. Those nativist CSOs that are involved in advocacy work associated with migrants display similar patterns with globalist CSOs: 56% are involved with lobbying and briefing, and 33% mount campaigns. Although these patterns appear similar, the data does not afford an insight into the relative content and positioning of CSOs according to their positioning on the cleavage; in reality, while the patterns are similar, the content is unlikely to be.

5. The focus of CSOs:

To explore the nuances between migration positioning and the globalist/nativist cleavage, CSOs were categorised as having sole, major and minor focuses on migration. The data also enabled the comparative examination of perceptions towards refugees and migrants. The majority of globalist CSOs perceive *refugees* to either be a major or sole focus of interest for their organisation (77% overall). Conversely, 19 of the 22 nativist CSOs (86%) that we have data for see refugees as a minor part of their focus. For *migrants*, the patterns are almost identical. However, a lower proportion (74%) of globalist CSOs perceive them to be either the major or sole focus for them. As such, there appears to be some promising support for the cleavage positioning emerging from the CSO data, but additional indications that there is some difference in approach according to whether individuals are classified as refugees or migrants. Those organisations whose focus is solely on migrants and refuges represent the highest proportion of CSOs active in search and rescue, humanitarian assistance, legal casework, education and mental health support (see Figure 2). For CSOs with a sole focus on refugees rather than migrants, there is a high proportion of CSOs involved with resettlement activities. There are some interesting nuances in activities between the different conceptualisations of refugees and migrants amongst CSOs who consider them to be of minor interest. Those organisations who consider refugees to be a minor focus do not tend to be involved in child protection or shelter provision for refugees, whereas organisations who consider refugees more of a priority do. Organisations who consider migrants to be a minor focus do not engage with resettlement, legal casework or search and rescue.

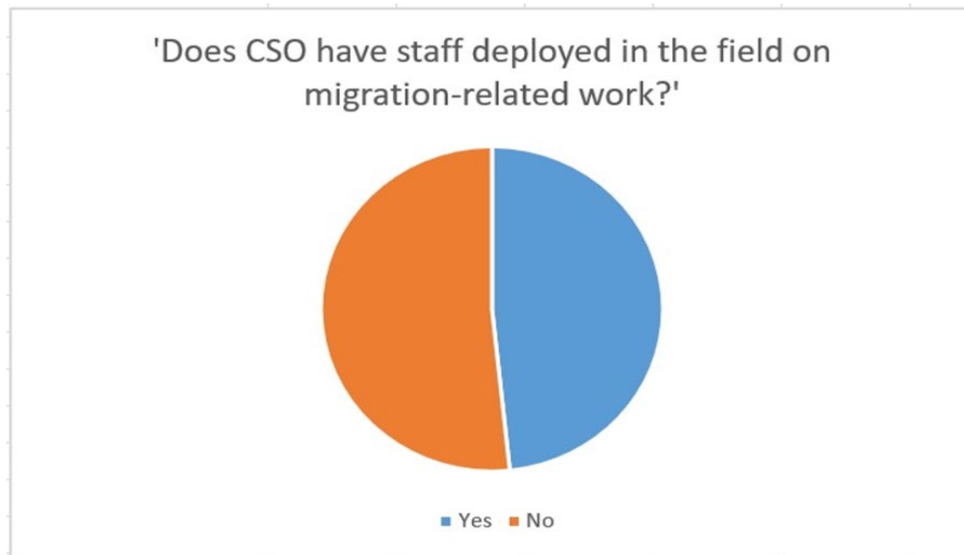

Figure 2: The prevalence of deployed CSO staff working on migration-related activity (%)

Of the 35 CSOs that consider refugees to be their sole focus, 34 are globalist/regionalist, in line with the expectations set out above. Likewise, 33 of the 34 CSOs that consider migrants to be their sole focus are globalist/regionalist. By contrast 86% of nativist CSOs surveyed consider refugees to be a minor focus. Thus, the extent of a group's focus on refugees or migrants is a strong predictor of their cleavage position, even if not all globalist or regionalist CSOs work with refugees.

The majority of the CSOs surveyed carry out migration-related advocacy work. In other words, migration and asylum are either an essential focus or it may be an ancillary theme connected with the services provided to their user group(s). In particular, Figure 3 below shows the percentage and level of involvement of the respondents in migration issues.

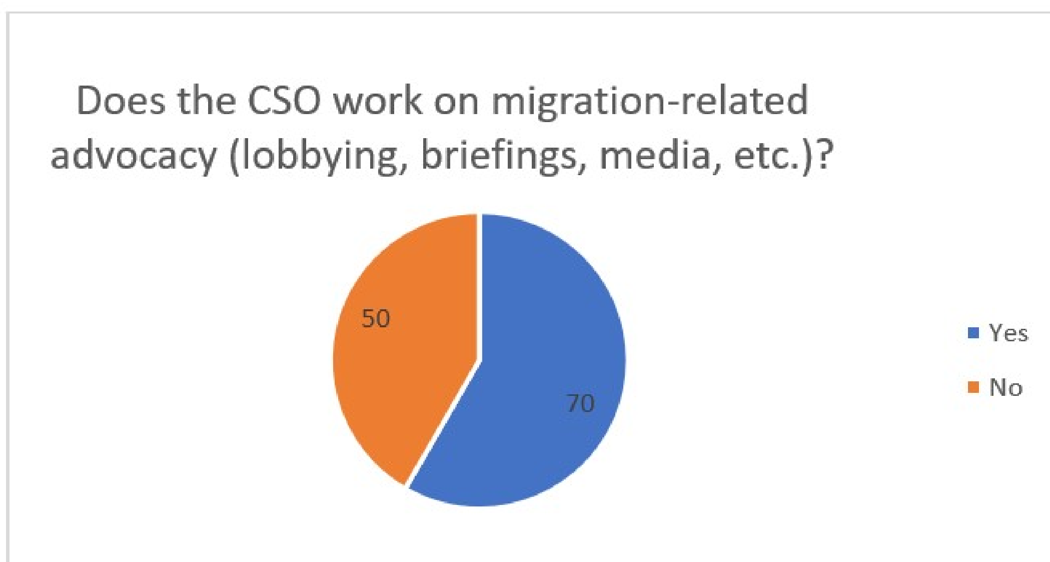

Figure 3: The Prevalence of Indirect Work Supporting Migrants (%)

When it comes to finer details, a higher number of CSOs are involved in a specific demographic segment of *movers*[2], that is, 63% of CSOs responded that *refugees* are essential or a quite important focus of their work as opposed to 52% of CSOs which responded positively with regard to *asylum seekers* being essential or quite important to the scope of their work (see Figures 4 & 5). More specifically, those who manifest a clear distinction between these two groups appear to be operating under a confessional/faith-based overarching setting. We could advance the hypothesis that the organizations may privilege members of a specific ethnic diaspora, provided that they have a recognized legal status (i.e. refugee status) in order to provide support within the parameters of national legal arrangements. However, this would need to be evaluated as a result of further examination, which at present is beyond the remit of this work.

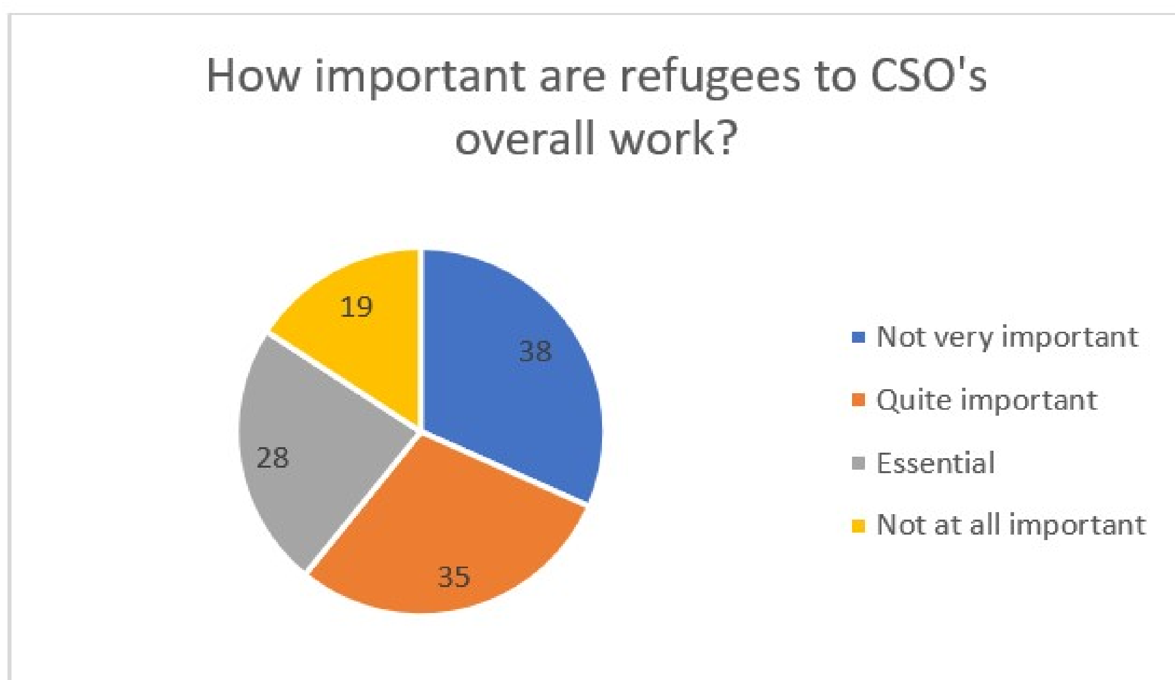

Figure 4: Refugees' Importance to CSOs (%)

Overall, the evidence with regard to focus highlights more clearly some of the ways in which the particular nature of CSOs conditions the role of cleavages. As voluntary associations of individuals, motivated primarily by a shared interest, these groups come into being and act on the basis of their particular shared understanding of the world and the problems that must be addressed. These understandings do not necessarily have to embody the cleavages on international protection, but instead stand on their own worldviews and assumptions. As a result, we find the refracting of protection cleavages into a multiplicity of CSO forms and actions.

[2] It is widely held among critical migration scholarship that the distinction between movements of population that are voluntary or involuntary, forced or free, can be misleading since all human behaviour is somehow constrained and autonomy is always situationally determined. For a discussion on the terminology of *movers* and *non-movers*, see Cohen and Sirkeci, 2011; also, De Genova 2013, Anderson 2019, Caruso *et al*. 2022.

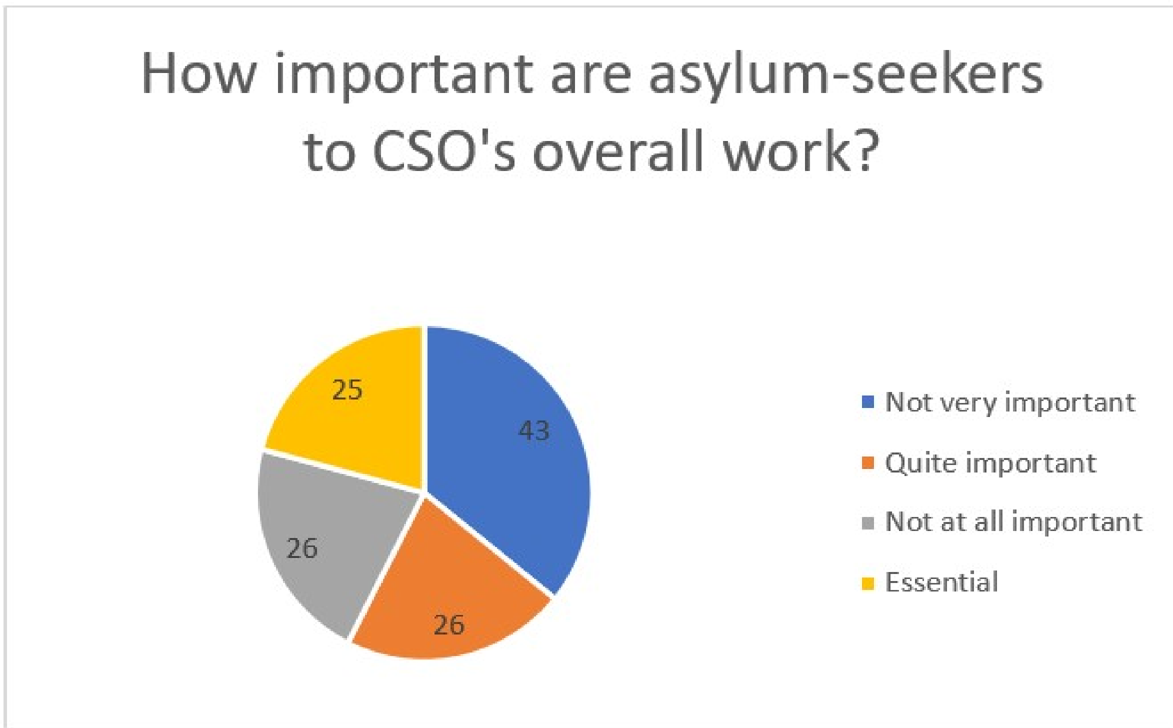

Figure 5: Asylum-seekers' Importance to CSOs (%)

6. The role of the Global Compacts:

Although data on how CSOs perceive the Global Compacts on Refugees and on Migration is missing in approximately 15% of cases, the results for those for whom we have data indicates consistent attitudes towards the two Compacts amongst CSOs – namely that for over 60% of groups, there is no overt attitude towards the Global Compacts: some 18% have a positive attitude. In terms of frequency, Italian organisations comprise the largest proportion of the negative responses (33%), followed by the UK (22%).

For both globalist/regionalist organisations and nativist organisations, the majority express no overt position in relation to the Global Compacts. Indeed, for nativist CSOs, only one organisation expresses negative perception of the GCR, and while nine globalist/regionalist CSOs express negativity towards the GCM, no nativist organisations do.

At the most basic level, this may indicate a simple lack of awareness of the Compacts amongst the surveyed CSOs. However, it also indicates the risks of oversimplification; negativity is likely to be operationalised differently between globalist/regionalist and nativist organisations, but also within globalist/regionalist organisations. Telling also is the cleavage positioning in relation to whether the Compacts should be reformed. No nativist CSO expressed a desire to reform the Compacts. For globalist/regionalist CSOs, the majority expressed a desire to reform the Global Compact on Migrations (83%) and the Global Compact on Refugees (74%),

A minority of CSOs surveyed – all globalist/regionalist - were involved in the development of the GCM, with only 9% stating that they had had any involvement; the figures for involvement in the GCR are fractionally higher at 15%, including one nativist CSO. Where CSOs stated that they had been involved in either GCM or GCR, the dominant activity was implementation based. Of those CSOs involved in the GCM, all except one expressed a positive

view and 4 CSOs of the whole sample are critical of the GCM. As such, the CSOs appear to be limited in their engagement with the development of the Compacts themselves, instead working in actioning it in their activities. Reservations expressed by CSOs in relation to the GCM revolve around “better implementation” (Caritas 2018), whether in terms of more involvement on the ground via CSOs or migrant-led initiatives, or “more connection to other frameworks” (British Red Cross 2019). For the GCR, CSO opinions are divided between overt positivity and scepticism. These range from general critiques of government failings (The Elders 2021) to a more detailed explanation of concerns, such as more effective responsibility-sharing, improved funding and better implementation (Danish Refugee Council *et al* 2021) or assorted policy options to make for more meaningful implementation (Oxfam 2019). Some also express caution with regards to actual funding, responsibility-sharing and practical implementation.

With regard to dissatisfaction, another element may chime with it. The data register a notable percentage of CSOs which effectively did not make available their opinion (or suggestions) to improve either the GCM or GCR. With caution, we would like to advance a hypothesis borrowing from Hirschman’s model of “exit”, “voice” and “loyalty” (Hirschman 1970). Albert Hirschman’s famous framework related to consumer strategies in market situations and posits that when a consumer encounters poor performance they have three basic options: exit, voicing concerns (voice) in ways that could improve performance or “loyalty”, which manifests itself in some form of attachment to a specific provider/supplier and moderates the tendency to exit. *Mutatis mutandis*, this can be applied to individuals and other organizations, be they political parties or other institutions. As Hirschman (1970, 432) put it:

> […] individuals decide how to apportion their activities between all private pursuits, on the one hand, and such contributions as they choose to make to the "public happiness" on the other. Decisions to make such contributions appear to be subject to a number of characteristic properties […] instability of the taste for participation in public affairs lies in the peculiar dual character of this activity. On the one hand, such participation is equivalent to expressing a demand for certain public policies, and since such public policies, once established, can be enjoyed or "consumed" by everyone in the community, the demand for public policies has the earmarks of the demand for public goods. It follows that actual participation on the part of those who favor a given policy is undermined by the well-known tendency to lie low and to hide or understate the true intensity of one's demand for a public good in the hope of getting a "free ride" through the exertion of others. This is a major reason for the much lamented "apathy" in relation to public issues. What looks like apathy is often not absence of interest in a public policy, but considerable interest combined with the expectation that someone else will exert himself on one's own behalf.”

While we note that it is important not to overinterpret our data, as lack of engagement cannot be understood one way or another unless specifically indicated by the respondents, a more holistic view of the attitudes and the responses overall seems to hint not at apathy, as the majority of the CSOs are proactively involved in migration and asylum issues. We would be inclined to think that there is instead a reluctance to engage fully. Given the perplexities

expressed by those which did respond in terms of overt or covert scepticism, perhaps the tendency to "lie low and hide, or understate the true intensity of one's demand" as Hirschman posited in the excerpt above, appears to be an avenue to explore.

7. The dominance of cleavages:

As noted in the opening section of this report, there is an anticipation that CSO mobilisation and activity would be conditioned as much by opportunity structures and resourcing issues as by the effects of positioning within the cleavage model. This was a result of previous research on the same data sets, which highlighted the importance of such factors in the wider CSO landscape (Usherwood *et al* 2022). This manifests most clearly with regard to financing.

Almost without exception, all the groups within our survey indicated that they undertake fund-raising work. This ranges from being able to make direct donations via websites, to public campaigns for both specific support (e.g. for particular refugee crises), commercial operations (e.g. charity shops) and engagement with state and international bodies for grants and contract work. Both the UNHCR and national government provide significant funds to large CSOs in many states as local operating and implementation arms of policy, reflecting the access to specialised knowledge and experts in relevant fields.

However, none of these income streams is considered particularly reliable, a fact highlighted during data collection by the numerous references made by CSOs in annual reports and in fund-raising materials to disruptions in funding caused by the Covid pandemic and associated lockdowns and shifts in public financing. As much as CSO activity is typically scalable – with more resource allowing for more activity – this also cuts the other way and shortfalls in funding cannot be sustainably endured, especially at the smaller end of organisations: the frequent use of charitable status by groups usually benefits them in terms of reducing tax liabilities, but also means that developing deep financial reserves to weather such problems is also limited, given the priority of delivering on core missions.

This central position of finance also feeds through to other activities. The desk survey for this report was only viable because of the well-developed online presence of CSOs of all kinds: websites have become a vital means of raising and maintaining public profile and accessing sources of income (see Schulpen 2016, Aldashev & Verdier 2010). Likewise, almost all groups in the survey employ staff in communications and/or fundraising, even at the very small end of the spectrum, suggesting that this is effectively a pre-condition of CSO activity. As much as groups form through the association of like-minded individuals, unless those individuals have access to very significant resources of their own then there is a requirement to make part of their work about convincing others to contribute, in order to produce outcomes. Without that leveraging of social resources, CSOs simply lose the capacity to deliver on their missions. By extension, CSOs will adapt themselves to improve the chances of accessing durable resourcing, either through their internal operation or their portfolio of activity. What is less clear is the balance between resourcing and cleavages.

The former evidently is consequential for groups' continued operation, but the latter provides a necessary logic for mobilisation in the first place. Put simply, access to resources does not, by itself, logically produce CSO activity, in international protection or any other domain: surplus resource might just as easily be directed towards business activity.

As a result, cleavages and resourcing might best be understood as symbiotically linked: each needs the other to manifest and sustain the panoply of CSOs that we find. To remove one is to render the other effectively inoperative. Cleavages can tell us why individuals decide to mobilise themselves in and around international protection, and opportunity structures can tell us how they are likely to turn that into specific organisational forms and how durable their work can be.

8. Conclusions and Policy Implications:

This report has applied the cleavage model to CSO activity in the field of international protection, in order to test its utility and explanatory value. As the substantive sections have demonstrated, the expected implications of the model have all stood up well in light of the available evidence and suggest that a cleavage-based approach is as viable in this domain as it is in public opinion, public policy and legal regulation. In addition, the report has also drawn addition to the need to keep in mind the particularities of civil society as a space of (relatively) free public association, outside of many organisational constraints, yet carrying implications that are not of concern to the individual citizen: an opinion does not need to be resourced in the way that a shared programme of action does.

This headline conclusion is supported by findings with regard to each of the expectations set out in Section 2.

Firstly, on mobilisation and locus of operation, we do indeed find that almost all the nativist and nation-statist groups within our survey operate within single states, while globalist CSOs present the mixture of single- and multiple-state operation that would be consistent with their universalised understanding of international protection. As we remarked in our previous report (Usherwood *et al* 2022), many globalist CSOs frame refugees and migrants in terms of humanitarian needs, which are by definition independent of territorial level and so encourage action to follow need rather than political organisational units.

Secondly, there is some evidence to support the expectation that CSO activity will fill gaps left by public bodies. States with more open civil societies in our sample contain a richer selection of CSOs working on international protection issues, while less permissive states appear more inclined to only allow groups that focus their attentions outside of those states: in many cases, these CSOs act as emissaries of the state in projecting soft power to third countries.

Thirdly, those groups that focus solely on refugees and related issues are indeed all globalist in their position on the cleavage model. This globalism appears to be a precondition for such a strong focus, since it requires an ideational primary of international protection in some way in order to produce an organisational form that sees such work as the driving force. Of course, not all globalist CSOs are focused solely on refugees, but given the prevalence of more general humanitarian concerns among this group it is not surprising that our **fourth** expectation is also upheld: most CSOs with significant interests in refugees are drawn from this group.

With regard to the Global Compacts, globalist groups are the most interested, as per the **fifth** expectation. However, the theoretical ambivalence about whether this is a function of the previous factors or of the globalist imperative to secure concrete action at any level is not possible to answer from the data available. Indeed, more striking is the rather conditional engagement that CSOs display towards the Compacts, often holding back from any active

positioning and then being critical friends on the few occasions that they do make pronouncements. This ties in with previous findings (e.g. Kinchin 2021, Symonides 2018) on CSOs' concern about the overall health of the international protection system, especially the Convention, which make it hard to invest significant resource into an additional instrument that lacks the legal force of the Convention or any clear sign of state buy-in.

Finally, the evidence of the data is that the cleavage model can indeed only be understood as part of its interplay with opportunity structures. Positions within cleavages can provide a strong and directed stimulus towards mobilisation, but the openness of civil society, the nature of public policy and (especially) the resource base available to a group will all play significant roles in shaping how that mobilisation is translated into material action. This reflects the particular nature of CSOs: as bottom-up organisations, they lack the institutionalised support that public bodies can access, while also having to respond to the often-fine-grained conceptualisation of what is appropriate that members and supporters might hold.

As already outlined in the introduction, there are a number of key findings that should be stressed here once more:

- Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are usefully understood as expressions of wider social interests, attitudes and priorities. In the case of international protection, the cleavage model provides an insightful way of making sense of what groups exist and what they do;
- CSOs that work solely or mainly with refugees are very likely to hold broadly positive views of those individuals, grounding it in a wider understanding of the centrality of providing effective international protection;
- CSOs working on refugee-related issues are not a full encapsulation of a society's views on refugees;
- The Global Compacts on Refugees and on Migration need the involvement of international protection CSOs to produce more effective implementation, but only in partnership with state actors;
- Access to resourcing, especially finance, is as important to maintaining a vibrant CSO community as any other policy initiative that states can provide.

These findings come with a number of policy implications for public bodies:

- **CSOs working in international protection are key partners for accessing both refugees themselves and wider social groups**. CSOs are expressions of collective social interests and priorities: individuals have decided that something is worth their time and effort to mobilise themselves and to act. This produces groups with high levels of motivation and with specialist knowledge and resource, which public bodies are likely to find of particular use when trying to enact public policy in the field. But these groups are also gateways back into the societies from which they emerge and so offer opportunities for public bodies to engage with CSOs as representatives of broader constituencies on the nature and purpose of that public policy;

- **CSOs do not reproduce the full diversity of society**. This report has highlighted once again how there is a differential in CSOs mobilise around the issue of international protection: only those sections of society with globalist or regionalist views on the matter are likely to organise themselves into groups that place it centrally in their work. When public bodies are trying to engage with civil society in the round on how to understand and enact international protection, they need to be aware that other views will be present in CSOs that do not make it a central concern;
- **CSOs might be the harshest critics of the Global Compacts, but also are their strongest supporters**. Non-engagement with the Compacts' development and implementation by most CSOs cannot simply be attributed to indifference or apathy. Where groups have been involved, they have shown a thoughtful and well-reasoned view of the challenges involved. In particular, there is evidence that these groups are more than willing to make more of the Compacts, should states make material efforts to uphold their side of the arrangements, and this in turn would give cause to more CSOs to become active in their implementation and enforcement. CSOs thus represent a critical resource, but one that can only be unlocked by states;
- **Resourcing is essential**. A clear message from our data is that CSOs live and die by their resource base: finance is the lifeblood of any organisation that wants to deliver effective action on the ground. There is no sense that public funding is a solution to the intrinsically uncertain flow of income from the various sources that are used, but if public bodies wish to continue to make use of the expertise and access that CSOs can provide in the field, then they need to be cognisant of the precarity of individual groups and to be willing to consider stepping in to cover particular shortfalls (although note Bloodgood & Tremblay-Boire's 2017 findings). Good levels of understanding, trust and dialogue between public bodies and CSOs is essential in this.

Funding declaration
This article is part of *PROTECT The Right to International Protection: A Pendulum between Globalization and Nativization?* (www.protect-project.eu), a research and innovation project which is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Framework Programme and coordinated by the University of Bergen (Grant Agreement No 870761).

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