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*Defying Boundaries:
The Problem of Demarcation in Norwegian Refugee Services*

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Abstract

This article discusses how professionals' efforts to reach policy goals engender boundary work. Analyses of interviews with service professionals in three welfare services in Norway which collaborate to implement the introduction program for refugees show how conflicting logics in services pose *dilemmas* for service professionals, and that political ideals of collaborative governance and integrated services are hard to put into practice. Service professionals resolve these dilemmas by engaging in various forms of boundary work, and the scope for boundary work is conditioned by the different service logics they operate under.

Welfare service professionals collaborate to reach three policy goals—qualification of refugees, empowerment of users, and providing equity in services. The analysis shows that conflicting service logics result in boundary work practices that make coordination of, and collaboration between, services difficult, as services do not agree on how to interpret, and share responsibility for enacting, policy goals. The outcome of boundary work practices is a reshuffling of responsibilities—and a redelegation of tasks—which in principle should be shared, onto specific services. Different interpretations of policy goals *instigate* boundary work amongst welfare service professionals, which not only involves struggles over jurisdictional boundaries, but also negotiations over whom owns a policy problem, and over how to define and represent the problem. The findings from this study encourage researchers to further explore how policy goals are used as *boundary objects* in professionals' negotiations over jurisdictional boundaries, in order to further understand what triggers and shapes boundary work among professionals.

Keywords:

boundary work, boundary objects, policy goals, governance, collaboration, refugee services

Introduction

Newly arrived refugees require assistance from a range of welfare services. Municipalities in Norway are responsible for finding housing, offering language and educational training, and providing refugees with skills and competence relevant for the labor market. Municipal refugee services are responsible for the Introduction Program—a program which spans over a period of two to three years providing refugees with a range of educational and practical skills. Refugee services also introduce refugees to other welfare services and the welfare apparatus. Successful integration entails that all parts of the welfare apparatus work to adapt their services to fit the needs of refugees, and service delivery for refugees in municipalities thus depends on a collaborative and integrative effort from a range of welfare services.

In this article, I discuss how professionals' efforts to reach policy goals engender boundary work. More specifically, I explore how welfare service professionals engage in boundary work to challenge governance principles and collaborative policy ideals. Collaboration between welfare services is both expected—it is a normative aspiration for services—and necessary for enactment of policy goals that require coordinated action. Working in collaboration to implement policy goals does, however, present several dilemmas for service professionals as they operate with different service logics. In this article, I demonstrate how the enactment of policy goals introduces dilemmas which result in various forms of boundary work among welfare service professionals, and show how different service logics provide different scope conditions for doing boundary work in services.

Conflicting service logics stem from contradictory governance principles and collaborative ideals. Municipal governance arrangements in Norway focus on collaboration between welfare service professionals (Røiseland and Vabo 2008, 2012). Normative and political demands urge services to collaborate, which has resulted in efforts to implement a *user-oriented logic* in welfare services—the idea that each service adapts their level and scale

of delivery to the needs of their users, and that services have to act in unison and collaborate to deliver services to users with complex and multifaceted needs. Even so, many welfare services are still organized according to a *unit-oriented logic*—based on the principle of sectorial responsibility—for delivery of services.¹ The principle of sectorial responsibility implies that individual services are responsible for designing, developing, and customizing their services, that they each have a responsibility to develop services to fit user groups with comprehensive needs—such as refugees—and that no single service should shoulder this responsibility alone. According to the principle of sectorial responsibility, however, individual services are given the autonomy to manage service delivery, and the responsibility for financial planning within their service area.

Service logics provide justifications for jurisdictional boundaries, and define scope conditions for boundary work. This implies that service professionals that operate with different logics interpret policy goals, define their role in collaborations, and resolve dilemmas differently, due to their own understandings of jurisdictional boundaries. Service logics stem from institutional arrangements, and services will differ with respect to the ability they have to engage in boundary work, due to institutional arrangements and services' place in the municipal governance structure. This article poses the following question: When collaborating to reach policy goals, how do different service professionals cope with dilemmas resulting from conflicting service logics? I find that different service logics *produce* dilemmas when services collaborate to enact shared policy goals. In this article I demonstrate how welfare service professionals cope to resolve these dilemmas by engaging in various forms of boundary work. I describe the various forms of boundary work practices

¹ All welfare agencies in Norway have a responsibility for ensuring that immigrants receive services *within* the bounds of their services, and for adapting their services to users' needs. Additionally, the goal of the government's policy is to provide *equitable* public services, and there is a need for knowledge about what this implies in practice in service offerings *within different welfare areas*. (White paper, Meld.St.. 6 2012-2013, s. 7, author's emphasis)

professionals engage in, and show how the scope for boundary work among service professionals is conditioned by the different service logics they operate under, which allow for different degrees of discretion in boundary negotiations.

The study is based on analysis of interviews with service professionals and leaders within three welfare services which all collaborate to deliver components of the Introduction Program for refugees in Norway (municipal refugee services, adult education services, and the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV)). The findings from the study reveal three challenges that welfare service professionals face when collaborating to design services for refugees—qualification of refugees (ensuring that refugees acquire necessary educational and professional skills), empowerment of users, and providing equity in services (equity vs. equality in services for refugees). These challenges reflect stated policy goals which require collaboration between, and coordination of, services. In this article I show how these policy goals, in practice, constitute *dilemmas* that welfare service professionals have to collaborate to resolve in their everyday work. The focus of the analysis is on the practices of boundary workers—more so than on the outcome of boundary work—and on the scope conditions for doing boundary work. However, the analysis reveals that conflicting service logics result in boundary work practices that make coordination of, and collaboration between, services difficult, as services do not agree on how to interpret and share responsibility for collaborative policy goals. The analysis also shows that the outcome of boundary work practices is a reshuffling of responsibilities—and a redelegation of tasks—which in principle should be shared, onto specific services.

The article first discusses previous research on service logics in welfare services, focusing on how conflicting service logics create challenges for collaboration. Second, it explores research on boundary work and discusses how professionals engage in boundary work practices to challenge governance principles, and collaborative ideals. I discuss why and

how service professionals rely on boundary work to cope with dilemmas when enacting policy goals, and previous research on how professionals' responses are triggered by a wish to expand, retain monopoly over, or protect their jurisdictional boundaries and areas of expertise. I also discuss previous research on which concrete boundary work practices professionals choose to engage in, and how they conceptualize and describe the practices they engage in. After presenting the methodology of the study, the article presents and discusses findings which highlight the concrete challenges service professionals in refugee services face when collaborating with other welfare services. Findings show how conflicting service logics produce different scope conditions for doing boundary work in collaborating services.

Although the empirical context of this study is Norwegian municipal refugee services, and the collaborating services which are responsible for delivering services to refugees, the analysis reveals insights which are useful for understanding boundary work practices in other services and organizational settings. The analysis shows that boundary work does not simply result from collaboration. Boundary work is often triggered by several constellations, such as the emergence of a new topic—or in this context, concrete policy challenges that need to be resolved—or a wish to challenge an existing professional hierarchy, governance arrangements, or governance principles in an organization. But more importantly, the analysis reveals that different interpretations of policy challenges or policy goals *instigate* boundary making and boundary negotiations amongst welfare service professionals. These negotiations not only involve struggles over jurisdictional boundaries, but also negotiations over whom owns a policy problem, and over how to define and represent the problem (Bacchi 2009). The analysis suggests that it is useful to examine not only the various triggers for boundary work, and forms of boundary work practices that professionals engage in, but also how jurisdictional disputes relate to professionals' negotiations over policy goals. The findings from this study encourage researchers to further explore how policy goals are effectively used as boundary

objects in professionals' negotiations over jurisdictional boundaries (Bowker and Star 1999; Star and Griesemer 1989), in order to further understand what triggers and shapes boundary work among professionals.

Service Logics and the Political Ideal of Integrated Services

Studies in Norway have shown that service agencies focus on their own goals rather than on tasks which depend on agencies collaborating, and that sectorial organization contributes to 'silo thinking' (Fimreite et.al 2011). Sectorial organization, and the principle of sectorial responsibility, can further lead to struggles between services over interpretations of policy goals, over division of tasks and responsibilities, and over how to balance expectations of holistic and user-oriented service delivery with demands for efficiency.

The principle of sectorial responsibility establishes a division of responsibility, and a way of governing, which encourages the development of distinct *service logics*. Service logics impact a service's understanding of their area of jurisdiction, and their relationship with their users, where some services focus on oversight and control of users, while others on user-participation and on empowerment of users in development and delivery of services (Evers and Guillemard 2013, Freidson 1994). The principle of sectorial responsibility defines a service's responsibility, and service professionals' autonomy and discretion, *inside* a bounded service area or agency, and thus encourages different services to develop their own understandings of policy goals and of how to best develop and deliver services for users with comprehensive and complex needs. The principle of sectorial responsibility thus often leads to a *unit-oriented*, rather than a *user-oriented service logic* (Fimreite m.fl. 2011), which can present challenges for collaborations between services operating with conflicting service logics. Conflicting logics can thus result in instances of "simmering conflict over jurisdiction" (Timmermans 2002, p. 557) , and negotiations over a policy ideal or a problem

can come to act as ‘crystallization points’ in jurisdictional struggles, “rendering a submerged conflict explicit and requiring a reshuffling of jurisdictional parameters to solve it”

(Timmermans 2002, p. 559). Reshuffling of jurisdictional parameters often requires a substantial amount of boundary work.

Vabø (2015:243) describes welfare institutions as conflicted arenas where different professional values and service logics come into conflict. Welfare services should simultaneously be: 1) frugal and effective, 2) flexible, adaptable, and solution oriented, 3) and predictable, dependable, and transparent focusing on users’ rights and needs (Vabø 2014). Service professionals thus have to uphold several ideals simultaneously, ideals which often are incompatible and contradictory (Vabø 2014, Gummer 1990). Research has shown that emphasis on efficiency can lead to bureaucratic disobedience amongst service professionals whom see it as their primary task to deliver holistic and customized services for their users (Fylling, Henriksen and Vannebo 2020). Focusing on efficiency, flexibility and coordination, at the same time as you are expected to empower users presents key challenges for service professionals. Similarly, providing equity in services, at the same time as ensuring that services are efficient represents yet another challenge for service professionals. Solving incompatible and contradictory challenges thus constitute *dilemmas* that service professionals have to resolve in their everyday work.

Boundary Work in Service Delivery

Cultures of collaboration develop in organizations, and professional collaborative relationships require shared obligations and trust. Conflicts over power, control, and resources, and a lack of trust, provide challenges to collaboration by threatening professionals’ domains, and making visible conflicting logics in various services.

Collaboration can engender boundary work, as professionals bring to collaborations their own

values, expertise, and maps of jurisdictional boundaries. Exploring how collaboration engenders boundary work is key to understanding cultures of collaboration, how professionals challenge collaborative governance arrangements, as well as ideals of collaboration (Gieryn 1983).

Gieryn (1983, p. 781) refers to boundary work as a problem of *demarcation*.

Demarcation is a process which involves challenging the governance arrangements, values, and legitimacy of other professionals' domains, status and claims.

Demarcation is as much a *practical* problem for scientists...Descriptions of science as distinctively truthful, useful, objective or rational may best be analyzed as *ideologies*: incomplete and ambiguous images of science nevertheless useful for scientists' pursuit of authority and material resources. (Gieryn, 1983, p. 792-793, author's emphasis)

Demarcation, and the construction of boundaries are processes that drive the development of distinct 'logics' among professionals, and are important in the pursuit of professional identity and goals. Professional groups employ various strategies for demarcation, with the purpose of making claims to authority and resources, which are often referred to as boundary work or boundary practices. 'Doing boundary work' implies drawing and redrawing boundaries, and attributing selected characteristics to one's profession or institution, recognizing that this is sometimes done in ambiguous ways (Gieryn (1983, p. 781). Demarcation is both an analytical and practical process, and boundary work is a practice aimed at defending professional autonomy. As a result, boundary disputes arise between professionals struggling over power, control, resources, domain, *and* problem definitions (Gieryn 1983).

Gieryn (1983) introduced the concept of boundary work to show how professional groups distinguish valid from non-valid knowledge claims through the *construction* of boundaries. Boundary work thus concerns the practice of claims-making, and is useful for describing the contested nature of professional knowledge. Boundary work is practiced in

three particular settings: when the goal is *expansion* of authority or expertise into domains claimed by other professions or occupations, when the goal is *monopolization* of professional authority and resources, and when the goal is *protection* of autonomy over professional activities (Gieryn 1983, p. 791-792). Boundary work thus becomes salient in collaborations among professionals, where collaborating professionals often represent distinct cultures with competing definitions of goals, roles and responsibilities.

Lamont and Molnar (2002) highlight how boundaries—and *boundary objects* (Bowker and Star 1999; Star and Griesemer 1989)— can be a means of communication among professionals by which knowledge and information circulate (Lamont and Molnar 2001, p. 177). Boundary objects refer to objects which transgress boundaries by referring to interrelated sets of categories or systems of classification (Bowker and Star 1999), enabling communication across communities (Star and Griesemer 1989). “Boundary objects can be material objects, organizational forms, conceptual spaces or procedures” (Lamont and Molnar 2002, p. 180). Boundary objects thus do not only become markers of separation important to demarcation, but also help build knowledge by bridging, and transgressing, professional boundaries and various domains of knowledge. Boundary objects allow for collaboration and coordination (Star and Griesemer 1989, Bechky 2003), and are key in negotiations over professional commitments, identities, and values. Thus, they often come to constitute “shared strategies” or what Blok et. al (2019) refer to as “hinge objects” (Meilvang 2019, Blok et. al. 2019, pp. 595-596). It seems useful to think of policy goals as boundary objects, as both political ambitions and as representations of problems that can be interpreted differently by various professional groups. It then becomes interesting to ask how struggles over policy goals engender various forms of boundary work among professionals, which is a question I explore in this article.

Boundary work does not simply result from collaboration, it is often triggered by other constellations, such as the emergence of a new topic or problem that needs to be resolved, a new funding situation and lack of resources, or changing institutional or organizational arrangements which instigate a wish to challenge an existing professional hierarchy, institutional governance arrangements, or governance principles in organizations. Jurisdictional boundaries support and uphold negotiated orders (Abbott 1988), which are often contested by subordinate groups engaged in practices of boundary work. Subordinate groups develop strategies to expand their jurisdictional domain and role, which can involve tactical maneuvering, role taking and role realignment (Mesler 1989, 1991; Emerson and Pollner 1976, Allen 2000). Allen (2000) describes the rhetorical devices professionals employ, referring to these as part of boundary work. Rhetorical devices are key to doing boundary work where professionals can take control over initiatives, such as education or training, and through this process assert professional autonomy and realign jurisdictional boundaries (Allen, 2000: 341). Rhetorical devices, such as textual representations of professional knowledge and expertise, can also be employed as ‘boundary markers’ in jurisdictional disputes (Allen 2000: 342). Similarly, we can think of policy goals as boundary markers—or boundary objects—which professionals negotiate over, and challenge, in struggles over jurisdictional domain.

Policy goals can be seen as negotiated representations of problems (Bacchi 2009). According to Bacchi (2009, 2012), we should study policies, and look for how ‘problems’ are constructed in policies through *negotiations* between actors—resulting in *problem representations* which guide both the framing of policies and policy initiatives. Policies are not solely designed for solving problems, but also with the purpose of *constructing* particular interpretations of problems (Bacchi 2009, 2012). Policy problems are often represented in the form of policy goals—challenges which service professionals in the public sector often are

charged with solving. Policy problems, or policy goals, which require collaboration can thus *instigate* boundary making and boundary work as they involve negotiations over whom owns the 'problem', and negotiations over how to 'define' and 'represent' the problem (Bacchi 2009, 2012). In this sense, policy goals function as primary boundary objects (Bowker and Star 1999; Star and Griesemer 1989) among service professionals in the public sector. Policy goals also often introduce new problems—or topics—which require negotiation between professional groups over whom has the responsibility for ensuring that tasks are taken care of and that services are delivered, and over how to delegate tasks to professionals according to their area of expertise. Two examples of policy goals which require negotiation and collaborative problem solving between professionals include initiatives to prevent drug use and crime among youth, and sustainable city planning. In the former, police, social workers and municipal services responsible for cultural and educational after-school activities for youth have to negotiate how to interpret the problem of drug use and crime among youth in their community. They also have to negotiate the terms and boundaries of their collaboration and find solutions that are both designed to prevent and combat the problem of drug use and crime among youth. In the latter example, city planners, municipal transport and infrastructure services, municipal parks and recreational services, private and corporate developers, and local politicians responsible for approving building permits in cities, engage in negotiations over what the policy goal of creating sustainable cities entails, and over the sustainability of proposed changes and new developments. The policy goal of creating sustainable cities thus involves a range of professional actors engaged in solving the policy problem, representing various interests and layers of administration. Local businesses and volunteer organizations are also invested in both of these policy goals—preventing drug use and crime among youth and sustainable city planning—and are involved in collaborations to interpret and solve the policy problems. Often the professional actors involved in negotiating these policy problems

do not agree on whom owns the problem, nor on how to define and solve these problems, and they engage in intense negotiations over territory. Negotiations over how to enact policy goals that require collaboration between professionals are thus infused with politics, and we can look at policy goals as important boundary objects that professionals utilize in negotiations over existing professional hierarchies, governance arrangements, and governance principles.

Boundary work exemplify processes of domination and subordination. A hierarchy of tasks often exists in a professional domain, and some professional groups consider some tasks beneath them, and as a result, reshuffle these to other professional groups (Blok et, al 2019). Blok et. al (2019, p. 590) demonstrate “a situated account of workplace level boundary interaction” aiming to display “the *means* and *tactics* of boundary work” (p. 591). Blok et.al (2019, p. 588) show how professionals negotiate task responsibilities in emerging task areas, or what they refer to as *proto jurisdictions*, and identify three different kinds of boundary work involved with (proto-)jurisdictional coordination; *pragmatic reshuffling*, *tactical renegotiation*, and *cross ecological alliance seeking*. The strategy of *pragmatic boundary reshuffling* involves professionals shifting or shuffling between the practice of “blurring and enforcing occupational boundaries”, and this particular strategy is characteristic of boundary work in areas where new tasks and expertise emerges and where boundaries are elastic and ambiguous as a result (Block et.al. 2019, p. 602, Liu 2015). This reshuffling can also involve rhetorical strategies (Allen 2000). Allen (2000: 343) shows that subordinate staff groups—in his case nurses—often hold to a ‘rhetoric of holism’, which upholds their overall responsibility to exercise good care, whereas dominant staff groups (doctors) constitute concrete task areas and identify particularly high status tasks with their profession. Struggles over authority and domain thus embody both practice-based and rhetorical strategies for occupational identity work, which we can consider “a variant of boundary-work.” (Allen 2000: 344-345)

Professions compete in organizational fields marked by social boundaries, where boundaries help establish practices which delineate legitimacy and stability (Zietsma and Lawrence 2010, Liu 2015, 2018). Some have argued that high-status professionals defend existing boundaries by emphasizing the exclusiveness of their knowledge, and by framing the knowledge of others as less valuable (Abbott 1988; Gieryn 1983; Allen 2000; Lefsrud and Meyer 2012). Others have argued that high status actors are not always defending existing boundaries, but that a lack of discussion about boundaries indicates that there is a hierarchy of knowledge in place (Sanders and Harrison 2008). Others have pointed to how newcomers attempt to expand existing boundaries, or create new boundaries which incorporate their activity (Lamont and Molnar 2002), and that they do this by for example creating new forums for planning and discussing issues that they see as important, or by ‘bridging’—aiming to show that their practice is similar to that of other professions in the field, and thus deserves valuation and legitimacy. Liu (2015, pp. 48-49) has described three key *strategies* of boundary work among professionals operating in organizational or professional fields, distinguishing between the processes of *boundary making*, where professionals distinguish themselves from other professions or non-professionals with aim to “carve out a jurisdictional area for itself in the social space of work”, *boundary blurring* and *boundary maintenance*. *Boundary blurring*, refers to the efforts of professionals to make boundary areas between them and other professionals “ambiguous and porous”, while *boundary maintenance* “is not an action performed by professionals directly involved in a boundary dispute”, but are made by “a third actor who has interests and capacity in mediating the jurisdictional conflict between the two professional groups”.

Zietsma and Lawrence (2010) argue that the linkages between boundary work and what they refer to as practice work has not been sufficiently explored. By practice work, Zietsma and Lawrence (2010) mean the everyday practices that fall under the jurisdiction of

professionals, and the concrete practices embedded in professional work. In this sense, Zietsma and Lawrence (2010) advocate for more work depicting ‘what professionals do’, and for a focus on how development of professional practices relate to boundary work, thus arguing for more research with a focus on ‘the profession of boundaries’ rather than solely on the boundaries of professions (Liu 2015, p. 46) .

Practices enact and support boundaries, while boundaries delimit the legitimate scope of practices. Practices can motivate both *practice work* and boundary work: if actors are dissatisfied with existing practices, they may engage in practice work to affect the practices directly, but if boundaries prevent such action, they might first engage in boundary work to create the conditions under which they can influence practice. Similarly, boundaries can motivate both boundary work and practice work: an actor disadvantaged by existing boundaries may be motivated to disrupt that boundary but, if unable, might work to disrupt the boundary indirectly by delegitimizing the practices associated with it. (Zietsma and Lawrence, 2010, pp.195-196)

Bucher et.al (2016, p. 498) point to how professions negotiate and position themselves in a field through rhetorical and discursive strategies, and that a professions’ status in a field affects their ability to negotiate and contest boundaries (Bucher et. al 2016, p. 499). Bucher et al.(2016, p. 497) identify four *framing strategies* professionals use to develop boundary claims when collaborating with others: framing the issue, framing the justification for preferred solutions, framing the profession’s own identity (self-casting), and framing other professions’ identities. The notion of ‘framing’ implies strategically aiming to justify, control and define key understandings of ‘problems’ in a field. A good way to study how boundaries are negotiated is thus through studies looking at the *scope conditions* for doing boundary work—examining the conditions that impact how, and to what extent, various professions can make claims to jurisdiction, resources, knowledge domains, and problem definitions.

Bucher et. al (2016, p. 501) argues that we need a more nuanced understanding of how different field positions translate into different kinds of framing strategies. In order to understand the complex nature of boundary work we need to study ‘how’ and ‘over what’ professionals negotiate boundaries. A particularly interesting area of study are cases of

temporal boundary work—looking at how the creation of bounded, and temporal spaces allows for collaboration, in cases where rigid boundaries between parties exist (Langley et. al. 2019). Collaborations that are initiated to enact policy goals could represent such temporal spaces, which bring professionals from various services together with the aim of resolving shared goals.

Research also calls for more micro-oriented—in situ—research on how boundaries play out in the everyday routines of professionals (Liu 2015, 2018, Blok et. al 2019), as well as on the role of boundary work in professional collaborative initiatives (Langley et. al, 2019), both of which I focus on in this article. Many have also argued for more research on the scope conditions for doing boundary work—the different conditions and contingencies that impact on professionals’ discretion and ability to engage in various forms of boundary work practices. In this article, I look at how different service logics create different scope conditions for doing various forms of boundary work, by analyzing how different service logics among professionals working in welfare services affect how they resolve dilemmas they face when interpreting and enacting policy goals.

Methodology and Data

This study is based on interviews with service professionals and leaders in municipal refugee services, adult education services, and NAV (the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration) in two Norwegian municipalities. Norwegian municipalities are interesting cases to look at as there has been a political goal to integrate municipal and national welfare services, and to institutionalize collaborations between municipal welfare services and NAV (IMDI 2021). These three services have been chosen as they are charged with the task of working collaboratively to reach policy goals, and thus they represent a good case for studying how collaboration engenders boundary work. The specific focus on refugee services

is due to the fact that service professionals that work in these services depend on collaboration with other services to serve their users. The municipalities were chosen for the study because they have extensive experience with settlement of refugees, are of different sizes, and are localized in different parts of Norway. The municipalities can be described as small and middle sized. In addition to interviewing employees in the refugee services, employees in collaborating services who offer services for refugees were interviewed.

In all, the data consists of 12 semi-structured qualitative interviews with 13 employees. All the informants were women. Most of the informants work in refugee services, while some work in NAV, adult education services, and health services—all with a responsibility for providing assistance to refugees. Refugee services are in charge of the Introduction program for refugees, which involves providing refugees with educational and labor-market skills, as well as access to the social arenas that will facilitate integration of refugees into neighborhoods. They are also responsible for the settlement of refugees and for introducing refugees to adjacent welfare services, and to the welfare apparatus. Staff in these services generally have varied experience and educational backgrounds, but many have previous experience working in social- or health services. NAV is responsible for providing labor market related training (apprenticeships) and matching users with employers, focusing on career building and finding permanent employment for refugees. Staff in NAV also have varied backgrounds, often from social services or in many cases administration and business. Adult education services are primarily responsible for providing language training, but also courses in Norwegian culture, for refugees. They often do this with the goal of securing higher education placement, or employment, for refugees, and the language training incorporates learning about the Norwegian educational and bureaucratic system. Staff in these services are often educated as teachers, or have some credentials which qualify them to work as language mentors.

The interview data were transcribed and coded, using an abductive approach (Blaikie 2010). Themes in the interview guide were open and included organization of services, description of concrete working tasks, expectations regarding services, and ideals for the various service areas. The analysis focused on the creation of inductive (in-vivo) codes, as well as identifying categories across themes represented in the interview guide. Interviews reveal the organizational governance arrangements within services, and thus the conditions and contingencies that impact services' ability to do boundary work. The interviews with service professionals also reveal the logics various services operate with. Interviews with the leadership in the municipality—agency leaders and political leaders—also give insight into governance arrangements, and the goals and strategic priorities of municipalities.

In the analysis, I lay out two arguments. First, I discuss how different governance arrangements and service logics in the various services lead to different scope conditions for doing boundary work in services. Governance arrangements make refugee services *invisible* in the municipal organization, and this is partly due to the fact that the jurisdictional domain of refugee services is not clearly defined, and their services are ambiguously assessed and measured, by the municipal leadership. As a result, the refugee service is seen as *boundless* by administrators and adjacent services. Second, I demonstrate how collaboration to enact policy goals engenders boundary work by showing how different service logics in the three services imply that service professionals interpret policy goals differently, and define their role in collaborations differently due to different understandings of jurisdictional boundaries. A lack of clarity of the organizational placement, and jurisdictional domain, of the refugee services forces welfare service professionals to mark their territory and challenge existing boundaries. They do this by engaging in practices of *boundary blurring* (Liu 2015, 2018) and *defying boundaries*. The outcome of this boundary work is that the perception of the refugee service as boundless is reinforced, and that service professionals themselves come to see their

responsibility and service as boundless. Collaborating services, on the other hand, have a clear placement in the municipal organization, have clear goals and bounded areas of jurisdiction, and engage more in practices of *boundary making* (Liu 2015, 2018).

Municipal Governance and The Boundlessness of Refugee Services

The analysis is divided into two parts. First I focus on the structural arrangements that instigate boundary work, and examine how they influence the scope conditions for doing boundary work in services. I examine how governance arrangements in municipalities create the boundlessness of refugee services, and instigate boundary work amongst collaborating services. In the second part I look at how welfare service professionals resolve the dilemmas they face as a result of conflicting service logics. I show the different kinds of boundary work practices that welfare service professionals engage in when they are resolving dilemmas related to enacting policy goals, and show how policy goals are utilized as boundary objects in negotiations over jurisdiction and boundaries.

Analyses of interview data show that despite the fact that other services have a responsibility to develop and deliver services to refugees—and they receive funding for doing this—in practice, it is the refugee services that take on most of these tasks. The data shows that refugee services in both municipalities are responsible for a wide range of activities helping newly arrived refugees. These tasks include administration related to finding a place to live, getting employed, as well as introducing refugees to other welfare services, including interpretation-, kindergarten-, health-, and culture- and youth services. The responsibility for ensuring that refugees receive these services falls on the refugee services, and the service's area of responsibility in principle becomes *boundless* in the sense that the responsibility they take on crosses sectors and overlaps with responsibilities of other services.

Analyses show that the refugee services do not have the financing nor the time to conduct all the tasks they take on the responsibility for, and that the service's boundlessness is reinforced by organizational boundaries and the service's placement in the municipal organization. Service professionals in the refugee services express that despite the large amount of tasks that they take on, the service is made *invisible* in the municipal organization—its role in relation to other services is not recognized, nor emphasized, by the leadership in the municipality. This is manifested in the way the service is organized—they often find themselves located in cramped facilities, they are repeatedly moved around to new facilities or into new organizational units in the municipality—and in the financing models inside the municipality. One leader of a refugee service explains that the service is often left with a feeling of being 'forgotten' or 'left out'. An administrative leader in the same municipality recognizes that the refugee service is not visible, and explains that this is related to the fact that the service spans across sectors, which makes it difficult to place in the municipality organization.

It is so important that this area (integration of refugees) is made more visible. Because we end up being an organization on the side (of the municipal organization)...we need to make visible the value of the work the service does, and find some areas we can make visible and signal that 'this is what *we* do'. This way we can also emphasize the collaboration (with other services) that is there, and confirm that refugee services play an important role in the organization.

(Leader, Refugee Services)

As the leader of refugee services expresses in the statement above, service professionals in refugee services see it as their task to mark the service's jurisdiction and claim legitimacy. As a result, they have to challenge existing boundaries to make visible 'what they do' and how they contribute to collaborations. As the data will show, the service professionals in refugee services explicitly blur and defy existing boundaries, in their efforts to make visible their work.

The Underlying Logics of Service Work and Scope Conditions for Boundary Work

The underlying logics of services' work stem from political and administrative arrangements. The discretion that is necessary for doing boundary work thus originates in the bureaucratic system which, on the one hand, urges services to collaborate, and thus span across boundaries (engage in boundary blurring)—yet enforce a logic of unit-oriented thinking and performance measurement which discourages collaboration and enforces boundaries that clearly place responsibility for services to units, not to collaborative efforts. Thus, service professionals in refugee service find that they have to defy—that is, deliberately challenge and oppose—existing boundaries, not simply blur boundaries, to make their work and contributions visible when they engage in collaborations.

The service professionals in the refugee services in both municipalities work hard to implement the ideal of integrated and user-oriented services. They do this despite the fact that they do not have the resources, nor in many cases, the authority to take on these tasks within their allocated budgets. Division of responsibility for tasks related to refugee assistance is divided up differently in municipalities. In one municipality the refugee service was first co-located with social services (NAV), and partly functioned as an extension of social services in the municipality. At a later point, the refugee service was moved and co-located with adult education services. As a result of this organizational restructuring, the employees experience that the service's tasks, and its role in the municipal organization, are repeatedly being reevaluated and redefined. In the other municipality the refugee service has been co-located with the municipal health services, and is thus seen as an extension of the health services. The fact that the service is often 'moved around' in the municipal organization illustrates how refugee services lack a clear place in the municipal organization, and that municipalities organize collaborations across agencies in different ways. The variation we see in the organization of the refugee services across municipalities illustrate the boundlessness of the

service, where the service crosses different organizational and professional boundaries in different municipalities.

Analyses also show that financing of the refugee services is different in different municipalities. The municipalities receive various funds from IMDI (The Directorate of Integration and Diversity) which are intended to cover their costs related to settling and integrating refugees.² Some municipalities have chosen to give the allocated funding directly to the refugee services, this way the refugee service is free to decide themselves how to best use the funding. Other municipalities have chosen to give the refugee service a set amount of funding, banking the rest elsewhere in the municipal budget. Which model of financing the municipality has chosen influences how much discretion and room for maneuvering the refugee service has in their collaborations with other services whom have their own models of financing. For example, in the mid-sized municipality the refugee service receives a limited, and set, amount of funding from the municipality, yet the adult education service in the same municipality receives all of their allocated funding from IMDI for providing educational services to refugees. Different models of financing imply that the services have different resources and discretion available in collaborations, as well as different motivations for engaging in collaboration with other services. Different financing models reinforce service-specific goals and logics, and provide services with different amounts of discretion when entering negotiations over jurisdiction and status.

In addition to organizational structure and financial arrangements, reforms and laws enforce jurisdictional areas of services, and impact conditions for various services to do boundary work. The Introduction Law (2003) and The Coordination Reform (2012) are particularly important for defining the jurisdictional domain of services. Refugees often

² The funding is given from the state directorate to the municipality and the amount depends on how many refugees the municipalities receive. In principle, the municipalities themselves can choose how they wish to distribute the funds. Municipalities receive funding with the specific purpose of working for integration of refugees, including additional funding for assisting elderly people and kindergarten-age children. This funding should cover the costs of settling and integrating refugees for up to four years.

require the assistance from a range of welfare services, and regulations establish that refugees are entitled to coordinated services and customized plans which include plans for an individual's education, steps to acquire practical experience and job training, as well as other activities which can help an individual to successfully enter the labor market or higher education. Working on these individual plans require that agencies collaborate—in the case of refugees, this specifically requires a collaboration between refugee services, adult education services and NAV—which all have a judicially imposed responsibility to follow up on the individual plans for refugees. The regulations also state that users have the right to a personal coordinator whom will have responsibility to follow up individuals and their plan (Thommesen et. al 2008). In practice, individual plans become tools for collaboration, and are subjected to negotiations between professionals. In many municipalities, however, the refugee service provides the personal coordinator for refugees, and as an extension, the refugee service becomes responsible for following refugees through the system, and across services.

Analyses show that the refugee services are organized in such a way that their mandate defies the principle of sectorial responsibility in municipalities, and that the service's area of responsibility in practice becomes cross-sectorial and boundless. Additionally, governance arrangements in municipalities lead to different service logics in the three services (refugee services, adult educational services, and NAV). The refugee services' cross-sectorial role leads to the service professionals operating with a cross-sectorial and *user-oriented logic* which defies other services' boundaries—they follow the user through the welfare apparatus, across sectors and services. Interviews with informants from other services whom also have a responsibility to follow up refugees whom are in need of their services (adult education services and NAV) show that although they also take on a responsibility for individual users, they demarcate the jurisdictional boundaries of their service, and operate with a sectorial and *unit-oriented logic* which establishes clear, and bounded, parameters and measures for what

services they are responsible for, and for how they deliver their services and relate to their users.

Overall, the data show that governance arrangements in municipalities give different amounts of discretion, and thus provide different conditions for doing boundary work, to different services. Governance arrangements engender different service ‘logics’ in services. Interviews with service professionals reveal how different service logics (user-oriented vs. unit-oriented) not only impact the scope conditions for boundary work, and but also engender various forms of boundary work practices in services as welfare service professionals work to resolve dilemmas related to how to enact shared policy goals.

Resolving Policy Dilemmas: Service Logics and Practices of Demarcation Among Service Professionals

How do service professionals resolve the dilemmas they face as a result of conflicting service logics? They respond by engaging in boundary work. Analyses show that the refugee service’s boundlessness is also an outcome of service professionals’ boundary work, primarily that of *defying boundaries*. Service professionals are engaged in boundary work when working to resolve policy challenges—or dilemmas—that require that they collaborate. Defying boundaries implies engaging in *boundary blurring practices* (Liu 2015, 2018)—by absorbing other services responsibilities. At the same time, practices of *defying boundaries* are motivated by the fact that service professionals see the need for providing services to refugees where no other service takes on this responsibility. By choosing to be defiant of boundaries service professionals in the refugee services make efforts to expand both their jurisdiction, and their role in collaborations (Allen 2000, Mesler 1989, 1991).

Analyses show how different welfare service professionals engage in different kinds of boundary work practices, which is partly due to the fact that different service logics in

services leads welfare service professionals to interpret policy goals differently. In other words, different service logics give rise to different interpretations of policy goals, and conflicting logics become visible, and activated, when they have to be communicated and justified in discussions over policy goals. In the analysis I show how welfare service professionals use policy goals as boundary objects in negotiations over jurisdiction, and that negotiations over definitions and interpretations of policy goals involve practices of *boundary making*, *boundary blurring* (Liu 2015, 2018) and *defying boundaries*.

Policy Goals as Boundary Objects: Services' Negotiations Over Boundaries

I first present the three policy goals that the welfare service professionals have to collaborate to enact, and show how welfare service professionals employ these policy goals as *boundary objects* in their negotiations over jurisdiction and responsibility. Additionally I show how welfare service professionals in different services engage in different kinds of boundary work practices, and that their boundary work is a response to resolve the dilemmas stemming from different service logics in services, as well as the welfare service professionals' different interpretations of the policy goals and policy problems.

Cross-sectorial collaborations are often initiated from the bottom up, rather than stemming from governmental initiatives (Fylling, Henriksen & Vannebo, 2020). In many cases, however, collaborations are urged by political and administrative leadership, and stem from policy initiatives which require collaboration between services. The services I am studying collaborate to enact three policy goals. *Qualification*—qualifying refugees for higher education or the labor market—requires collaboration between the refugee services, adult education services, and NAV, where one service's capacity for developing solutions is not sufficient to solve the challenge. Another policy goal is *user empowerment*. A third policy goal is providing *equitable* services. Enacting these policy goals brings to the forefront struggles over jurisdiction among services— at the same time, the policy goals represent three

dilemmas that service professionals have to resolve in collaboration. The analysis reveals that the service logics in services affect how services interpret these policy goals, and that conflicting service logics contribute to produce the dilemmas that service professionals have to solve. Welfare service professionals define their role in collaborations differently due to different service logics, and welfare service professionals engage in various, and often contradictory, kinds of boundary work practices to resolve the dilemmas they face when interpreting and enacting shared policy goals .

Some policy goals can more easily be measured using absolute and result-oriented measures, such as number of refugees whom are employed or enrolled in a program. Other goals are less clearly defined and thus make it harder to assess if one has reached the goal. *Qualification* implies providing the training and skills necessary for refugees to gain access to the labor market or higher education. In both municipalities the three services collaborate to reach this goal of qualification—and in one of the municipalities they have even established special cross-sectorial teams which are to work to find and coordinate apprenticeships for refugees. Cross-sectorial collaborations have developed over time, and are, in some form, in place in both municipalities. Interview data show, however, that service professionals that take part in these collaborations have different perceptions of what qualification entails, and of how one can assess if one has reached the goal of qualification.

The policy goal of qualifying refugees can be measured in hard numbers, but can simultaneously be elusive and hard to measure. The various services have not only different perceptions of what qualification entails, they have defined their own service-specific measures which are used to assess whether their service has reached the goal of qualifying refugees. These measures derive from service-specific logics, and look very different in different services. A leader of NAV explains how their service uses clear, quantitative, and operationalized measures to assess qualification. She explains that they have defined, and

insist on using, their own measures of qualification, which allows them to maintain clear boundaries around their work when collaborating with adjacent services.

We (the collaborating services) have such different perspectives on the work we do, and different understandings of this user group, it is fascinating. I hear when we are in meetings how different we think. It makes it really challenging to succeed (with the collaboration)... The refugee services get very close to the users (refugees). They know their family and get close to them, so they find it really difficult to put down and observe boundaries. Meanwhile, the adult education services mostly are concerned with language training. We (NAV) are also concerned with language training, but in a very different way. We are concerned with language in terms of occupational training and entering the labor market, while they (the adult education services) are concerned with the language itself... We (NAV) are focused on the importance of not advising them (refugees) to get higher education if they can do something else, get onto the occupational track instead. This is why, in our collaboration agreement, we have insisted that we include result-oriented goals and assessment of whether the user can support themselves (self-sufficiency).

(Leader, NAV)

We see that service professionals in NAV demarcate and uphold boundaries around their jurisdiction in these collaborations, partly by defining a bounded and specific definition of the policy goal of qualification. By insisting on a clear interpretation of the policy goal they 'bound' their area of responsibility, and simultaneously enforce boundaries that mark a clear and limited area of responsibility. The refugee services, on the other hand, operate with an elusive definition of qualification, and they oppose using numerical and standardized measures when assessing the goal of qualification. One leader of a refugee service explains how she and her colleagues actively defy jurisdictional boundaries by redefining what qualification implies, and by drawing attention to how reaching this policy goal requires more services, and an expansion of the refugee services' jurisdictional and occupational domain:

Our vision, it is to qualify to a meaningful life in Norway... That is our overarching purpose, to qualify people. We are not quite successful at this. I think we are at 64-65 % when we look at numbers, in terms of reaching our goals to qualify refugees in our program. And that is pretty good. But at the same time.... I know that many of those who are recorded as having acquired a job, they do not have permanent jobs, they have jobs which do not require a lot of skills, and that these are insecure jobs. So I do not rest assured that this person is actually qualified, and that they now have a job... We also know that many that start high school do not graduate, it is too hard for them. I write the reports saying that 'he finished the introduction program and

started high school’—this way I have goal accomplishment for this person. [But at the same time] I know that a lot of them (refugees) who started high school this Fall will struggle immensely to graduate...

(Leader, Refugee Services)

The principle of sectorial responsibility has encouraged a unit-oriented logic when assessing policy goals—it has established clear boundaries between services by enforcing service-specific goals, and segmenting different understandings of how to approach the task of qualifying refugees. Interviews reveal that in collaborations NAV and adult education services operate with a unit-oriented logic. Refugee services, on the other hand, operate with a holistic and user-oriented logic, which has given rise to an all-encompassing and ambiguous interpretation of the policy goal of qualification among the service professionals in refugee services (see Allen 2000).

Services also experience that their service’s operative goals often depend on which sector they are placed under in the municipality. Which sector a service ‘belongs to’ affects how the service is evaluated, and service professionals’ discretion to do boundary work, both in relation to other services and to the administrative leadership in the municipality. Financial models and budgetary restrictions also restrict services ability to do boundary work, as services are measured according to service-specific methods and goals, rather than according to assessment measures and goals suited for cross-sectorial problem-solving (Almqvist and Lassinantti, 2018). Threats of budget cuts, or units closing down, often lead to fights over resources and bring forth incommensurate interests, rather than encourage cross-sectorial collaboration (Timmermans 2002). As interview data show, conflicts over jurisdiction and boundaries are particularly visible in discussions between welfare service professionals on how to put into practice, and how to measure whether one has reached, the policy goal of qualification.

Welfare service professionals also experience that they are not evaluated on the services they are actually providing. One leader of the adult education services explains her frustration with the fact that various levels in the municipality operate with different definitions of whether the service has reached the goal of qualifying refugees:

I miss that they (municipality leadership) ask for, and follow up on, the quality of what we deliver on and the results we deliver, beyond whether or not they (the refugees) end up as a cost on social service budget. I am actually measured, or we (the service) is measured, on whether the municipal social service budget increases or decreases. (The municipality) wants to have overview and control, because their goal is to decrease the social services budget, [and] I believe this leads to us (the adult education service) losing some of our discretion and power (to be assessed on what we actually do to qualify refugees).

(Leader, Adult Education Services)

Lack of clarity of organizational goals presents opportunities for boundary work. However, as the goals are less clearly defined, and welfare service professionals find that they are measured by criteria they don't control, welfare service professionals have difficulty erecting boundaries to clearly define areas that they can control. The leader of adult education services expresses this frustration, but later on in the interview she shares that she has been able to argue with the leadership in the municipality that adult education services have a clear jurisdictional area—providing education—and that they should therefore be measured accordingly. Welfare service professionals in refugee services, however, often find it hard to make similar claims, as their area of jurisdiction and responsibility is unclear and seen as all-encompassing.

The refugee service's understanding of the problem of qualification as an elusive and all-encompassing task is clearly a result of the service's boundlessness. Whereas NAV and adult education services rely on standardized and operationalized measures—such as number of refugees whom have acquired a job or a place of study—refugee services define qualification as providing 'a meaningful life', and argue that we need to look beyond numbers to really assess if refugees have secured a job or can get through an educational program. The

refugee services clearly engage in practices of *defying boundaries*, by refusing to demarcate boundaries and define the problem using measures developed and used by other services. This leads to distrust between services when collaborating on the task of qualifying refugees.

Service professionals in adult education and NAV operate with clear boundaries, they engage in practices of *boundary making* (Liu 2015, 2018), and often use rules and regulations to uphold boundaries between their area and other services' areas of responsibility. Leaders of NAV and adult education services explain:

We need to look at the regulations, the school (adult education services) is run in accordance with two laws/regulations. The introduction law, which also the refugee services are obliged to follow, and the education and training law. And we (the adult education services) are a school. We qualify refugees for higher education, or for the labor market. The refugee services have a different mandate. They take care of people 24 hours a day, this include helping with money issues, finding a place to live, ensuring they get the right welfare services they are entitled to, all these kinds of things. So (we have defined our missions as) very different things...

(Leader, Adult Education Services)

All off a sudden there were 20 users (refugees) there. Where did they come from? They should have finished the introduction program four or five years ago. But they (the refugee service) had kept on supporting them and giving them money... without there being any form of qualification going on. They (refugee service professionals) meant well, I believe they had the best intentions, but the challenge is that the refugee service gets very close to the users. And that is natural, and also good, I think. But sitting on the money at the same time as you are that close to the users.... Can you make the right evaluations then?

(Leader, NAV)

Collaborating on refugees individual plans, involves a complicated division of responsibility between the three services. The data show that because of different service logics, services also evaluate and assess individual plans in different ways. Adult education services mainly focus on attainment of service-specific tasks such as language training—rather than on occupational training—when they assess qualification and users' individual plans. NAV, on the other hand, is mainly concerned with result-oriented goals such as securing employment and refugees ability to support themselves financially (self-sufficiency). As data show, the refugee service, on the other hand, is described by collaborating services as

boundless, also in their approach to working with individual plans— as their definition of qualification entails social, as well as economic and educational goals, and they uphold the goal that refugees need to establish networks and get integrated into a range of social arenas in order to reach the goal of qualification. The refugee services thus often take on the responsibility for ensuring that all of these aspects of qualification are taken into account when making, and assessing, individual plans.

The data indicate that the various kinds of boundary work that is done in services is a result of differences in service logics. Unit-focused logics and organizational and financial models in collaborating services (NAV and adult education services), and an aspiration to reach the goals they are evaluated on, encourages ‘silo thinking’, the erection of clear boundaries of jurisdiction and responsibility, and a focus on measurable results that can be documented. User-oriented logics in refugee services encourages boundary work practices that defy and oppose those of collaborating services—and in effect leads to the service taking on an all-encompassing and boundless responsibility for enacting policy goals. Several organizational barriers for collaboration thus exist, and these are deeply grounded in different service logics in services, which also give rise to different interpretations of policy goals, and different practices of boundary work within services.

Interviews with service professionals in the refugee services show that they tend to take on the main responsibility for *negotiating* with adjacent services in order to develop integrated services. This includes not only working with the policy goal of qualification, but also working with the policy goals of *empowering* users, and providing *equitable* services. Ensuring that services are equitable involves making sure that collaborating services are aware of the additional and customized needs that refugees have, and that they are committed to providing refugees with the same *quality* of service as other users. Making sure that refugees are involved and partake in their own training—empowerment of users—and that

services are equitable are also policy goals which service professionals in refugee services argue require a holistic and user-oriented approach. Empowerment implies giving refugees the opportunity to partake in, and influence, the design of their own individual plans, as well as instilling a sense of responsibility in refugees for reaching the goals they have set for themselves. The goal of empowerment thus implies an all-encompassing focus on refugees' rights and obligations, ensuring that refugees become self-sufficient and independent, and that they are themselves able to navigate through the welfare apparatus. This is not an easy task, as many refugees need help with setting individual goals, and with understanding how to make use of, and engage with, public institutions and other welfare services. Employees in the refugee services explain that their role in collaborations is mainly that of defying boundaries, due to the responsibility they take on to empower users, which requires them to defy, and blur, existing jurisdictional boundaries in order to build bridges between users and other welfare services.

When you collaborate with other services such as NAV, and you help your participant (refugee) to fill out an application for financial help, you send it, and the participant does not hear back... They still depend on getting money to pay their rent and buy food etc. So we become the bridge, by asking them (the other services) to get back with an answer, finding out why they (the refugees) have not heard back, and finding out what case worker they have been assigned to (in the other service's system)... We also collaborate with doctors' offices, because we are the ones ensuring they (the refugees) are assigned a doctor, and we deal with setting up medical appointments... Because a lot of them (the refugees) come here with a lot of health challenges, I think it is difficult to get them (the refugees) to be appropriately evaluated. We need this (a proper medical evaluation and assessment) to relate to NAV among others, (to see) if there is any point in getting them (the refugees) an apprenticeship, if they cannot really hold a job (because of health issues). I have a lady (I am helping out) now, I had to (myself) take her to the doctor in the end in order to get her a thorough evaluation... I don't know if it is the case, but I have a sense that this group (the refugees) are not taken as seriously as ethnic Norwegians are, if you know what I mean.

(Employee, Refugee Services)

The ideal of *equity* in services entails the right to equitable treatment, and the right to equal quality of service. Each service is responsible for ensuring that refugees get equitable services, and to adjust their services in such a way that refugees get the same level of

attention, and quality of service, as other users. The interview data show, however, that the refugee services also take on the main responsibility for ensuring that refugees receive equity of service across welfare services, and that they do this by blurring boundaries between services. For example, employees at the refugee services will often accompany users to appointments with other services, act on behalf of users in negotiations with other services, or translate refugees' needs to other services. Employees in the refugee services also describe the work that is needed to ensure equity in services as the task of 'seeing and thinking about the 24-hour person/user', implying that enacting this policy goal requires a user-oriented—and boundless—approach. One employee in the refugee service explains that it is important that their service challenges other services' definitions of policy goals and takes on a role of brokering between services, as other services do not deliver on this ideal of providing equity in services for refugees:

I believe that the municipality can be better at providing equity in public services... to provide the same service for all its citizens, which implies not providing exactly the same service for all users, but providing equity in service, dependent on the needs they (refugees) have. Say for example, renovation services, they might have to use some more time on those (for the refugees), give some more information, in other languages than Norwegian. This is necessary, in order to be able to function in Norwegian society, for those who do not know the Norwegian language. And if you have a doctor's appointment... an appointment is 20 minutes, (and) you depend on an interpreter, then the appointment takes twice as long. Should that patient (the refugee) pay twice as much, or should this not be a part of the service offered by the health services?

(Employee, Refugee Services)

Interviews with service professionals show that enacting the policy goals of empowering refugees, and ensuring that services are equitable are especially difficult and time-consuming. Employees in refugee services stress that reaching the overarching goal of integration of refugees requires that all services take on a responsibility for tasks such as these, that lay at the intersection of services. They use the term 'everyday integration' to describe tasks that lay at the intersection of services, and emphasize that these tasks are

essential to implementing policy goals. The perception of refugee services as boundless, however, leads to other services and agencies diverting tasks relating to everyday integration to the refugee service. One leader of a refugee service explains:

We can experience getting requests from sports associations or from neighbors who call us and say, ‘Now you, the refugee service, have to straighten this situation out, or you need to talk to them (the refugees)’. In these cases I have to ask (the people who call the refugee service with this request): ‘Where would you turn to if you were my (me being a non-refugee) neighbor, whom would you call then?’ Because there is no office to call then, unless he wants to turn me in, or report me to the police. Daring to speak to them (the refugees)—and engaging in everyday integration—I think this is where we have the most work to do when it comes to succeeding with integration of refugees.

(Leader, Refugee Services)

When employees in the refugee services say that ‘they are working with the 24 hour person’, this is in essence a metaphor they are using for describing their responsibility as all-encompassing and boundless. Leaders at NAV, in contrast, describe their task as clear and one-dimensional—their job is to qualify refugees for the labor market or higher education. Adult education services also describe their tasks as bounded in time and mainly focused on competence—when students graduate from their courses their responsibility ends. Service professionals in the refugee services report that they experience that other services—adult education and NAV—often ‘think in silos’, and that as a result they not only see their occupational tasks as bounded— as limited in time and scope—but that this logic also removes responsibility from them for tasks that lay at the intersection of services. As the interview data show, this removal of responsibility often takes the form of adjacent services *shuffling* tasks onto the refugee service, particularly tasks that are not clearly defined under a service’s jurisdiction (Allen 2000; Blok et.al 2019).

The policy goals of qualification, empowerment of users and providing equity of service are all tasks that lay at the intersection of services. Although services collaborate on the first goal, qualification of refugees, service professionals in the refugee services have a broader definition of the goal and resist operating with clear boundaries to demarcate ‘the

policy challenge' of qualifying refugees. The analysis also shows that service professionals in the refugee services take on the main responsibility for brokering with other services to ensure that the latter two of these goals are given attention. In this sense, the welfare service professionals in refugee services *defy existing boundaries* between the refugee services and other welfare services. By extension, the refugee services also become responsible for pointing out insufficiencies in adjacent services which stand in the way of ensuring that policy goals are met. In essence, the refugee service professionals themselves, through the kinds of boundary work they engage in, take responsibility for developing solutions that span across services and for tasks that lay at the intersection of services. These tasks, however, are often not clearly defined in scope, nor are they limited in time. As a result, the refugee services' area of responsibility becomes boundless both in terms of scope and time.

Conclusion

The actors in this analysis are the professionals in the three different services, and the analysis shows that it is the professional actors themselves whom are *making, blurring* and *defying boundaries*. In addition, municipal and sectorial arrangements help *maintain* existing boundaries between services (Liu 2015, 2018). As municipal refugee services take on an overall responsibility for providing services for refugees by 1) filling the gaps where other services fail to follow the user, or by 2) taking responsibility for negotiating with other services over how to best accommodate refugees—they are simultaneously undermining the principle of sectorial responsibility which states that all services have a responsibility to develop services for refugees. The analysis shows that collaboration engenders boundary work, and that welfare service professionals in refugee services *defiance of boundaries* affects collaborative efforts by removing responsibility from other services.

In Norwegian municipalities, refugee services, adult education services and NAV collaborate to develop individual plans for refugees, which implies that the content, form and follow-up of individual plans—and the policy goals of qualifying refugees, empowering users, and providing equitable services—become subject to *negotiations* between the three services. The three policy goals are thus at the center of negotiations over areas of professional responsibility and jurisdiction. In other words, policy goals are employed as boundary objects in individual services' boundary work, where welfare service professionals dispute and redefine policy goals to mark and challenge jurisdictional boundaries around their work. Service professionals have, however, different amounts of discretion when entering these negotiations (Alve et. al, 2012; Breimo, 2014). Service professionals negotiate on the basis of different service logics, and as a result, experience different scope conditions for doing boundary work. In negotiations over individual plans the user-oriented logic dominates—both in terms of the content, form and follow-up of individual users. At the same time, different understandings of users' responsibility exist in services, which mirror different forms of institutional dependencies between users and services. The findings from this study indicate, as previous studies have also shown, that various forms of disclaimers of responsibility exist within services (Breimo, 2014), and that this contributes to reinforce different forms of institutional dependencies between users and the three different services (NAV, adult education services, and the refugee services).

Boundaries are created and maintained through the efforts—or cultural work (Abbott 1988)—of professionals. Abbott (1988) argues that this work entails strategies professionals can employ to “appropriate various problems as falling under their jurisdiction” (Fournier 1999, p. 74). In collaborations where the users' needs are comprehensive and complex, the role as coordinator becomes key to *translating* the users' needs to other services, and the service that takes on this role often becomes responsible for *initiating* and *pursuing* cross-

sectorial and cross-agency collaborations. Findings from this study show that the refugee services see it as their role to act as agents that defy, challenge and blur boundaries and thus instigate and facilitate collaborations by translating refugees' needs to adjacent services.

Abbott (1988) also suggests that “the outcome of struggles for jurisdictional control rests upon the contending professions' relative intellectual strengths” (Abbott 1988, Halpern 1992, p. 1004). This implies that struggles arise over problems; how to define them, how to solve them, and over whom owns them. Timmermans (2002, p. 567) argues that subordination (a hierarchy of tasks, and status struggles between professionals) and standardization (introduction of measurement and control) can generate conflicts in collaborations, where one “actor may actively engage in boundary making, while the other actor seeks to make the boundary ambiguous.” (Liu, 2018, p. 3) It seems from the analysis that refugee services are perceived of as subordinate to the other professional groups, and thus, they are less successful at making and maintaining clear boundaries around their work (Allen 2000, Timmermans 2002, Meilvang 2019). As a result, they resort to using strategies of redefining policy goals, and defying and renegotiating existing jurisdictional and occupational boundaries (Halpern 1992).

Liu (2015, p. 53) describes how collaborations can over time develop into *symbiotic exchanges* “in which both actors become highly interdependent and mutually structuring in the continuous process of exchange” (Liu 2011, 2015, p. 53). Through these kinds of reciprocal relationships boundaries become elastic, and exchange is a boundary process which “helps maintain the elasticity of professional boundaries by enabling the adjacent professional and non-professional actors to cooperate with one another, which makes the boundary between them not a sharp line of demarcation but an elastic area in which conflict and cooperation coexist” (Liu 2015, p. 53). As my analysis shows, in collaborations, some actors may resist treating boundaries as elastic, and rather they enforce clear and rigid

boundaries. Also, as actors engage in various, and often conflicting, forms of boundary work (boundary making vs. boundary blurring and defying boundaries) it can make collaborations difficult.

The findings in this study suggest that the principle of sectorial responsibility challenges political ideals of delivering holistic and integrated services—it complicates cross-sectorial collaborations, and can lead to services resigning from their responsibility to provide customized services—resulting in tensions between policy ideals and different services logics (Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002). The principle of sectorial responsibility makes collaborations difficult, despite the fact that the intention behind it was to facilitate collaboration across sectors. The analysis also shows that the refugee service’s role in collaborative efforts to reach policy goals is an ambivalent one. The boundlessness of the service, the service professionals’ user-oriented logic, and their clear defiance of boundaries help facilitate collaborations across services. At the same time, however, the refugee services’ boundlessness, and the role they take on to broker—or act as an intermediary—between services, contribute to erode the overall policy goal of creating integrated services, and the very principle of sectorial responsibility, by undermining collaborating services’ responsibility to adapt their services to the needs of refugees.

The analysis also shows that policy goals—of qualification of refugees, empowerment of users, and providing equity of services to users—are effectively utilized as boundary objects in negotiations between welfare service professionals. The policy goals are shared, in the sense that they have been developed by politicians and the government with an intent that services should collaborate to solve the policy issues of integration and inclusion of refugees. Simultaneously, the policy goals are elastic and give room for interpretation of goals and negotiation of boundaries. Analysis show that when welfare service professionals collaborate to enact these goals they experience certain dilemmas, and that the reason why they

experience these dilemmas in collaborations is because of conflicting service logics in the different services. This begs the question of how different welfare service professionals cope with the dilemmas resulting from different service logics?

Analyses show that when service professionals experience these dilemmas they respond to them by doing various kinds of boundary work, and that negotiations over policy goals are key to understanding the various kinds boundary work practices they engage in. Service professionals in NAV and adult education services respond by making boundaries. We can see in service professionals' negotiations over shared policy goals—and in their interpretations of what the policy goals and problems entail—that they make efforts to erect or make boundaries to make clear what they see as the responsibility of their service. The boundaries they make and uphold are shaped by the distinct service logics—the unit-oriented logic—that dominate within these services. The resulting boundary work practices—of boundary making and boundary maintenance (Liu 2015, 2018)—can be seen as *a protective strategy*. Service professionals in refugee services resort to a different strategy, they engage in practices which blur boundaries—they make claims to expertise in areas that the other services (NAV and adult education services) have jurisdiction and mandate. They do this to facilitate collaborations, but also to expand their territory and exert their expertise, which they often feel is undervalued. At the same time, because of their experience with collaborations with other services assisting refugees as users of welfare services, they see that there is a gap between the need of refugees and what the welfare apparatus provides. In response to this gap they have identified, they resort to overstepping and defying the boundaries of other services. They take on responsibility for tasks that no one takes responsibility for, they provide necessary compensatory services for refugees, and they ignore and defy boundaries in order to provide help to refugees. Service workers in refugee services have thus adapted *a combined strategy of blurring and defying boundaries* when they collaborate—which we could describe

as *an expansive, and radical, strategy*. The clearest examples of this is that they often express that the boundaries that other services uphold, or erect, do not work to solve the policy issues at hand. Service professionals in refugee services often express frustration with how other services interpret policy goals, they argue that other services' interpretations of policy goals are limited and that the responsibility of services go beyond their restrictive and bounded interpretations. You cannot simply look at whether or not refugees are employed or have an internship, as service professionals in NAV do, or have a place in an educational institution, or have completed the standard educational training programs offered by the adult education service, as having fulfilled the promise of the policy goals of qualification. As a result, service professionals in refugee services defy existing boundaries, and overstep into the territories of other services. By resorting to this combined strategy, the service effectively becomes *boundless*. We can argue that no service has no boundaries, but if we take seriously the way that the service professionals in refugee services talk about their own work—they are serving the 24 hour person, they have to step in and assist refugees in their dealings with other welfare services to ensure that refugees are empowered and receive equitable services—we have to recognize that the service's area of jurisdiction in essence becomes boundless as service professionals themselves do not put boundaries around their own work. In other words, service professionals themselves make deliberate choices to engage in boundary practices which effectively make the scope of their work and responsibility boundless.

Others have talked about different kinds of boundary work practices (Allen 2000; Block et.al. 2019; Liu 2015, 2018). I rely on Liu's concepts of boundary making, boundary blurring, and boundary maintenance (Liu 2015) in my analysis, but in addition to that I add the practice of defying boundaries, which is what I see that service professionals in refugee services are clearly engaged in. Defying boundaries is a form of boundary work that they have to engage in order to serve the needs of refugees, but also a form of boundary work that they

are doing to expand their area of jurisdiction and make visible their expertise, which they feel is often undervalued, and even made invisible, in the municipal organization. The invisibility of the service is partly due to the way the service is viewed in the municipal organization—as boundless—they are expected to take on a wide range of tasks and are not recognized as subject specific experts in the same way that collaborating services are. The invisibility of the service is also due to the fact that the service is often given a place in the municipal organizational structure that does not establish clearly where they contribute or what their expertise is, the service is often moved around in the organization and their place in the organization repeatedly reshuffled, their tasks are even reshuffled, all which contribute to the boundlessness of the service. In sum, the organizational structure, the governance arrangements, and the service professionals own needs to demonstrate their expertise and to serve their clients, lead to the boundlessness of the service.

Analyses show that service professionals are not solely blurring boundaries, and that the actual defiance of boundaries is a practice that is different from that of blurring boundaries. When you blur boundaries you move degrees of responsibility between services, or you recognize that tasks overlap and agree to share responsibilities for corresponding tasks with other services. As a result, boundaries blur into one another, and it is hard to see where one service's responsibility starts and another's end. By defying boundaries, however, service professionals are basically arguing that the existing boundaries should not be in place, as all services share the responsibility for certain tasks and all services should take on a responsibilities to serve users—with respect to refugees the responsibilities of qualifying them for higher education or the labor market, making sure that services empower refugees to take responsibility and ownership of their own lives, and securing equity for refugees in service delivery. Welfare service professionals in refugee services argue— on the basis of the holistic and user-oriented logic they operate with— that all services share the responsibilities for

enacting these shared policy goals, and that the boundaries that are in place are making it difficult to serve users and provide the integrated and holistic services which are required in order to enact policy goals. In other words, service professionals in refugee services also engage in practices of defying boundaries as a way to promote, and justify, their own interpretations of policy goals and policy problems as requiring a boundless and collaborative approach.

I am not arguing that service professionals in the refugee services are the heroes in this story, and that they are doing what is more just or right by the users. I am simply making clear that the dynamics of conflicting service logics in public service collaborations can result in substantial amounts of boundary work. The reason that the refugee services end up defying boundaries is because they follow the user through services and focus on the users' needs to guide their services. In effect, their boundlessness derives from the distinct user-oriented and holistic service logic they operate with. The user-oriented service logic also makes them see users' needs differently—as something directed by the user, not by a services' bounded area of expertise or jurisdiction. By employing a user-oriented logic, the refugee services become boundless. Additionally, by relating to policy goals in a way where they refuse to measure outcomes, rather they describe policy goals as elusive and all-encompassing and argue that we need to defy boundaries in order to solve policy problems and enact policy goals, they are abiding by 'a rhetoric of holism' (Allen 2000) which is often found among service workers which find themselves subordinate to other groups. Additionally, by taking over the responsibility for tasks that other services have responsibility for, they contribute to undermine the premise that collaborating services should be equally responsible for serving refugees and they reinforce their role as subordinate to that of other services.

By pointing to the practice of defying boundaries, I am adding to our understanding of the various forms boundary work can take (Liu 2015, 2018; Block et.al. 2016), and to our

understanding of what triggers boundary disputes among professionals in public services. The overall argument in this article also shows that policy goals are effectively utilized as boundary objects. Policies or policy goals often represent a particular representation of a policy issue (Bacchi 2009, 2012)—one in which one has constructed *how to represent* a problem, and corresponding policy initiatives on *how to solve* this problem. A policy goal is thus a result of a deliberate decision to frame a problem in a certain way (Butcher et. al 2016). In this sense, we can look at policy goals as *representations* of policy problems. In my analysis I highlight how service professionals in the public sector are using policy goals as boundary objects to negotiate where the boundaries of their responsibility fall, whom has jurisdiction over an area, and whom has the expertise in the area, under which a problem falls. In other words, policy goals are used by public service professionals to negotiate how to *define and interpret* policy problems. For example, the policy problems of qualifying refugees, integrating refugees, empowering users whom receive assistance from welfare services, or providing equitable serves for all welfare users, have all been restated as policy goals in public documents, policies and reforms. My interviews with service professionals show that different service professionals interpret policy problems and policy goals differently, and that as a result, they engage in different forms of boundary work practices. My empirical context is limited, looking at welfare services for refugees in Norway, but by pointing to the dynamics of how conflicting service logics instigate boundary work, and to how policy goals are important boundary objects that are used in negotiations over boundaries, I believe that my analysis can be of use to those interested in exploring boundary work amongst public service workers, in other countries and institutional contexts.

In this article I have presented two *mechanisms* that instigate and drive boundary work amongst service professionals in municipal welfare services in Norway, both of which are derived from my analysis. One is the *conflicting service logics* in the respective services,

which I have focused on in this article, where different service logics reveal different scope conditions for doing boundary work in services, and lead to dilemmas that service professionals have to resolve when collaborating to enact shared policy goals. In their efforts to cope with these dilemmas service professionals resort to distinct forms of boundary work. Service professionals face these dilemmas head on in their negotiations over policy goals. The other mechanism that instigates boundary work is the *different interpretations of policy goals or policy problems* that exist in services, where we see that service professionals engage in substantial amounts of negotiations over how policy problems should be represented, whom owns these problems, and what appropriate solutions should look like. Policy goals thus work as boundary objects which instigate boundary disputes and boundary work amongst service professionals. Conflicts over boundary objects—the different interpretations of policy goals which exist amongst service professionals—instigate boundary work and professional disputes over expertise and territory. Policy goals are simultaneously boundary objects which are shared and thus enable, and allow for, negotiations between different services. In this sense the mechanisms that instigate boundary work stem from both organizational and institutional arrangements (Zietsma and Lawrence 2010, Liu 2015, 2018), and from professional disputes over rhetorical devices and problem understandings (Allen 2000; Bachhi 2009)

My analysis show that conflicting service logics is the key mechanism instigating boundary work amongst public service professionals, but that the logics are often not visible until disputes or negotiations over policy goals bring them to the forefront. Different service logics give rise to different interpretations of policy goals, and thus conflicting logics become visible, and activated, when they have to be communicated and justified in discussions over policy goals and boundary disputes. Negotiations over a policy ideal or a problem thus become events—or crystallization points (Timmerman 2002) —which necessitate and

instigate boundary disputes, boundary negotiations, and boundary work amongst service professionals.

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