

# Exploring the Integration of Post-2014 Migrants in Small and Medium-Sized Towns and Rural Areas from a Whole of Community Perspective (Whole-COMM)

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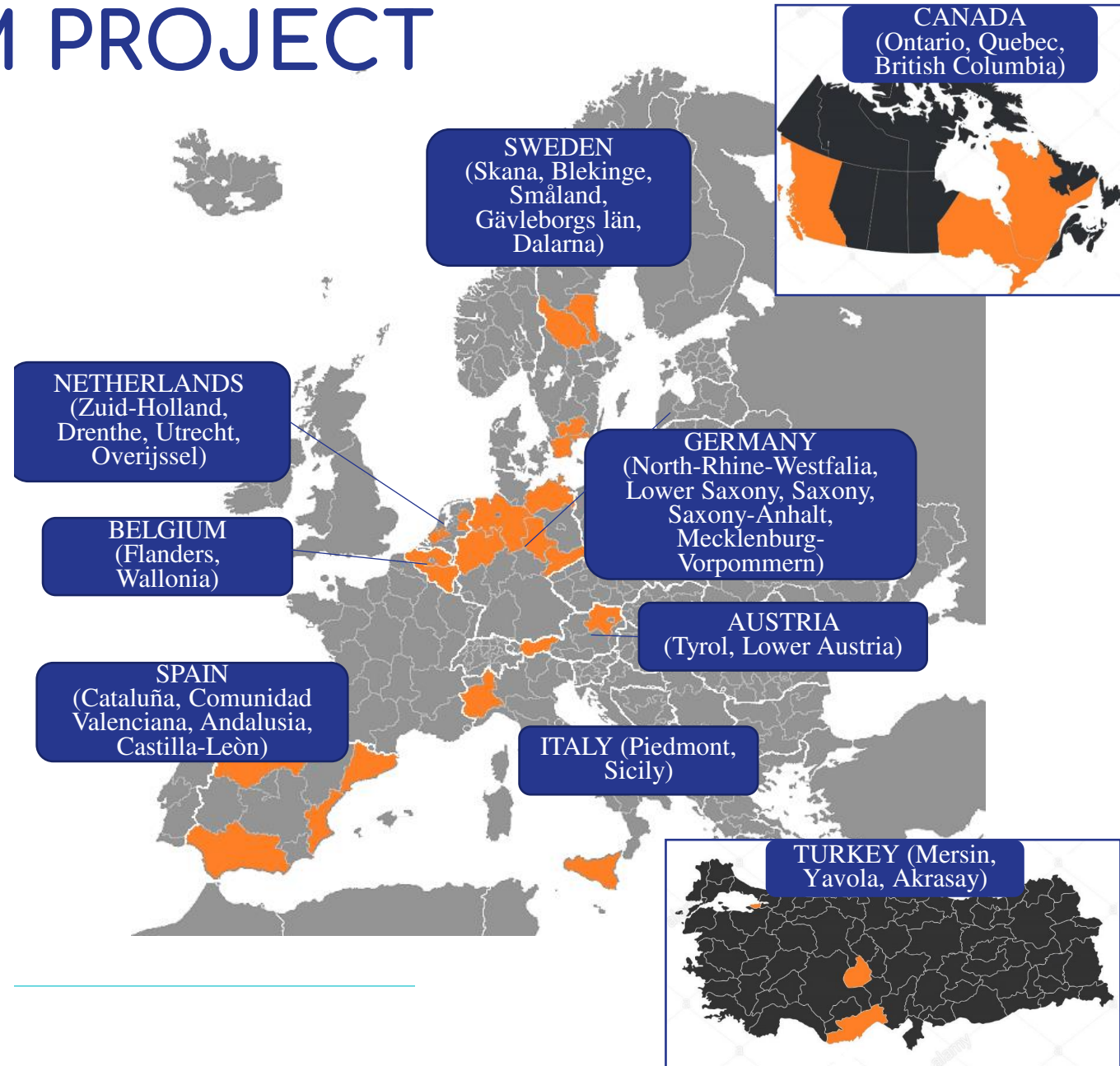
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# THE WHOLE-COMM PROJECT

The Whole-COMM project is analysing:

1. **local integration policies** (targeting post-2014 humanitarian migrants) **and (multi-level) governance**  
*[research conducted in early 2022]*
2. **Some key outcomes of the integration process** (i.e. social interactions between locals and migrants, migrants' integration experiences and locals' attitudes towards migrants)  
*[research conducted in 2023]*

in 45 small localities (7,000-150,000 inhabitants) across 7 EU countries + Turkey and Canada



# Key project outputs so far

Have a look at  
our website!

[https://whole  
-comm.eu/](https://whole-comm.eu/)

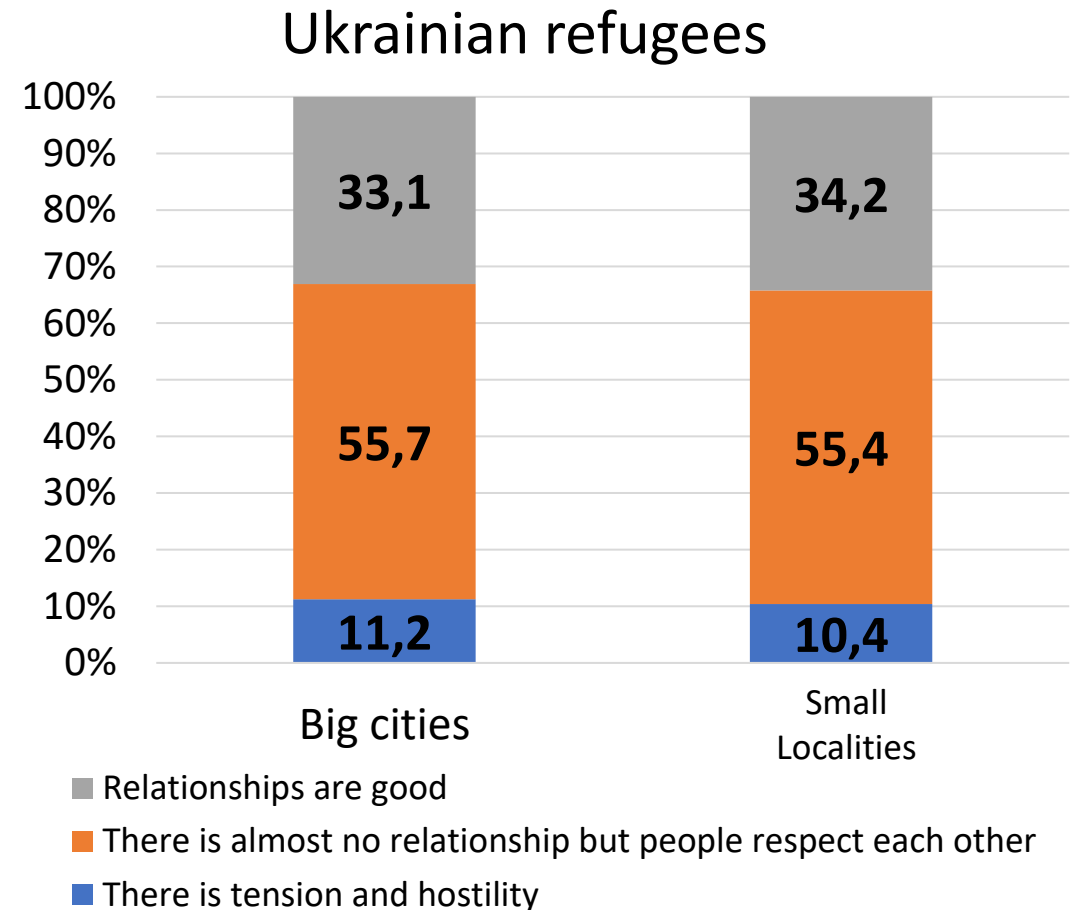
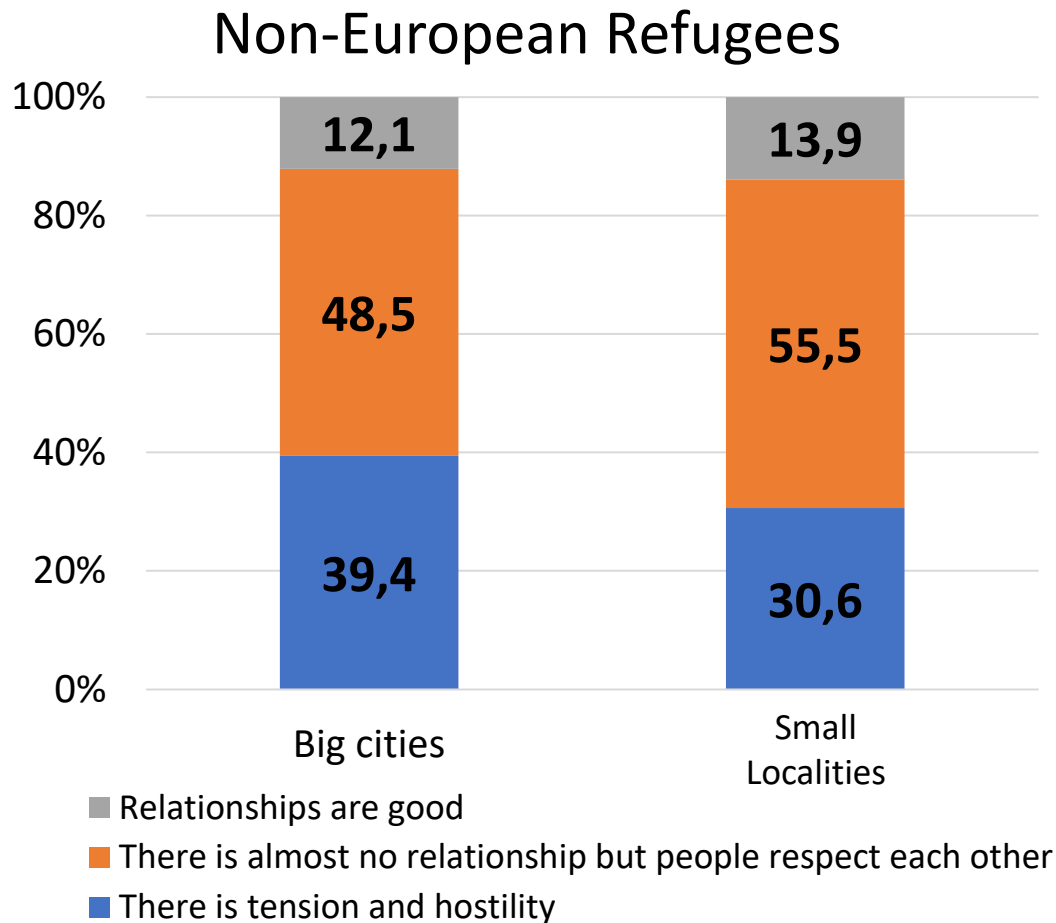
- 1 contextual and methodological paper
- 10 country reports and 1 comparative report on **integration policies and multilevel governance**
- 10 country reports and 1 comparative report on **integration policies and migrants' access to services**
- 10 country reports and 1 comparative report on **social interactions** between migrants and locals and **migrants' experiences of integration** in small localities
- 3 **policy briefs**
- An **inventory** on available statistical data related to immigrant integration in small localities
- Several **blogs** published in our website
- Several **papers** and **articles** under review in scientific journals
- A **large survey** on public attitudes to migrant integration
- A "**policy toolbox**" on how to develop innovative actions inspired by the whole-of-community approach in small localities (forthcoming)



# Our research on integration outcomes: what is happening on the ground?

1. A **general housing crisis** also in small European localities (already in early 2022!) – and a sort of trade-off between access to housing and access to employment across local contexts (in localities where access to employment is easier, access to housing is more challenging due to the unavailability of houses).

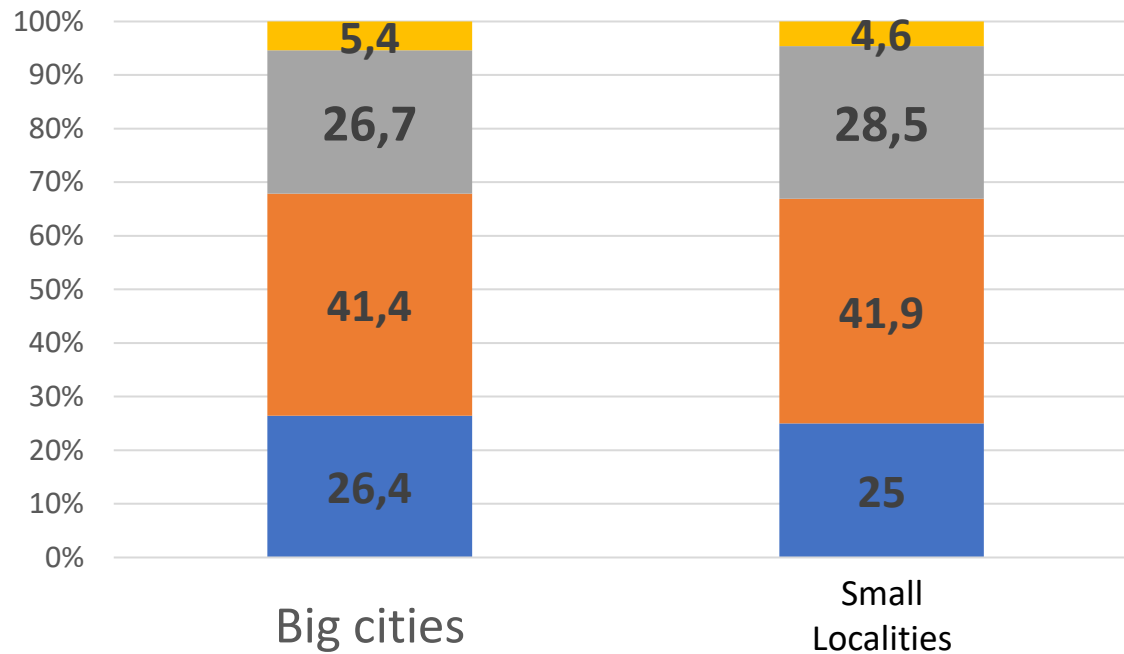
## 2. Recent migrants tend to have few meaningful social interactions with long-term residents



*How would you evaluate the relationships between refugees and long-term residents in your municipality?*

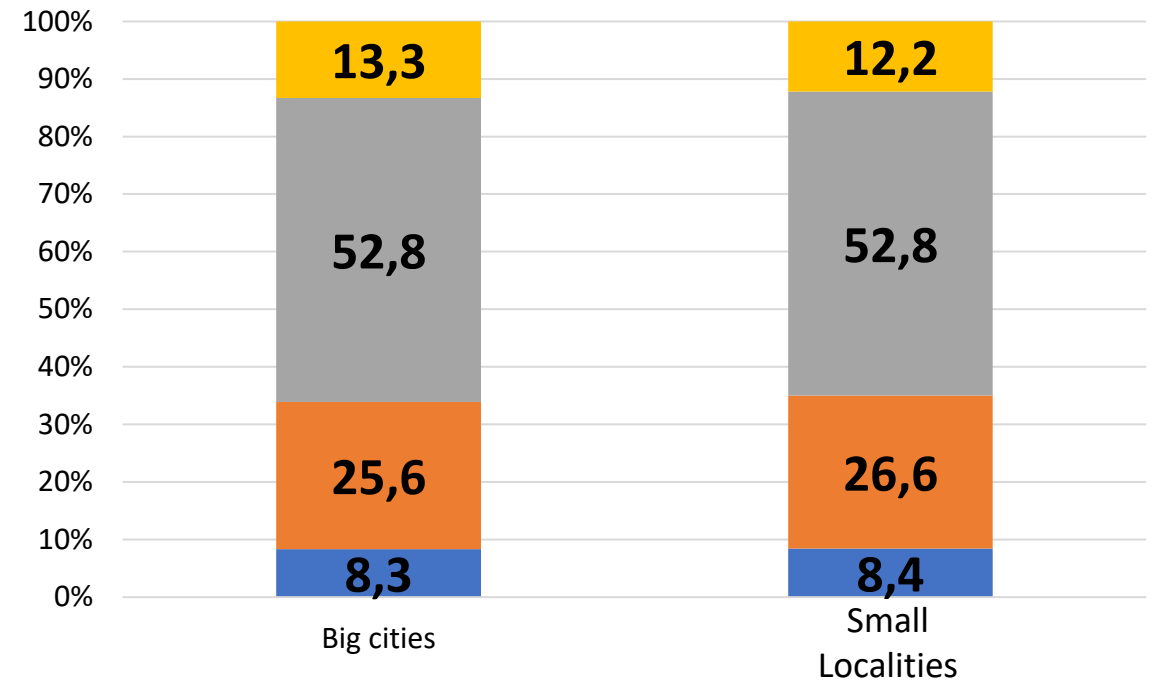
### 3. Public attitudes to immigrant integration → our survey results challenge the idea that attitudes are more negative in small localities

#### Non-European Refugees



■ Completely disagree ■ Somewhat disagree  
■ Somewhat agree ■ Completely agree

#### UKRAINIAN Refugees

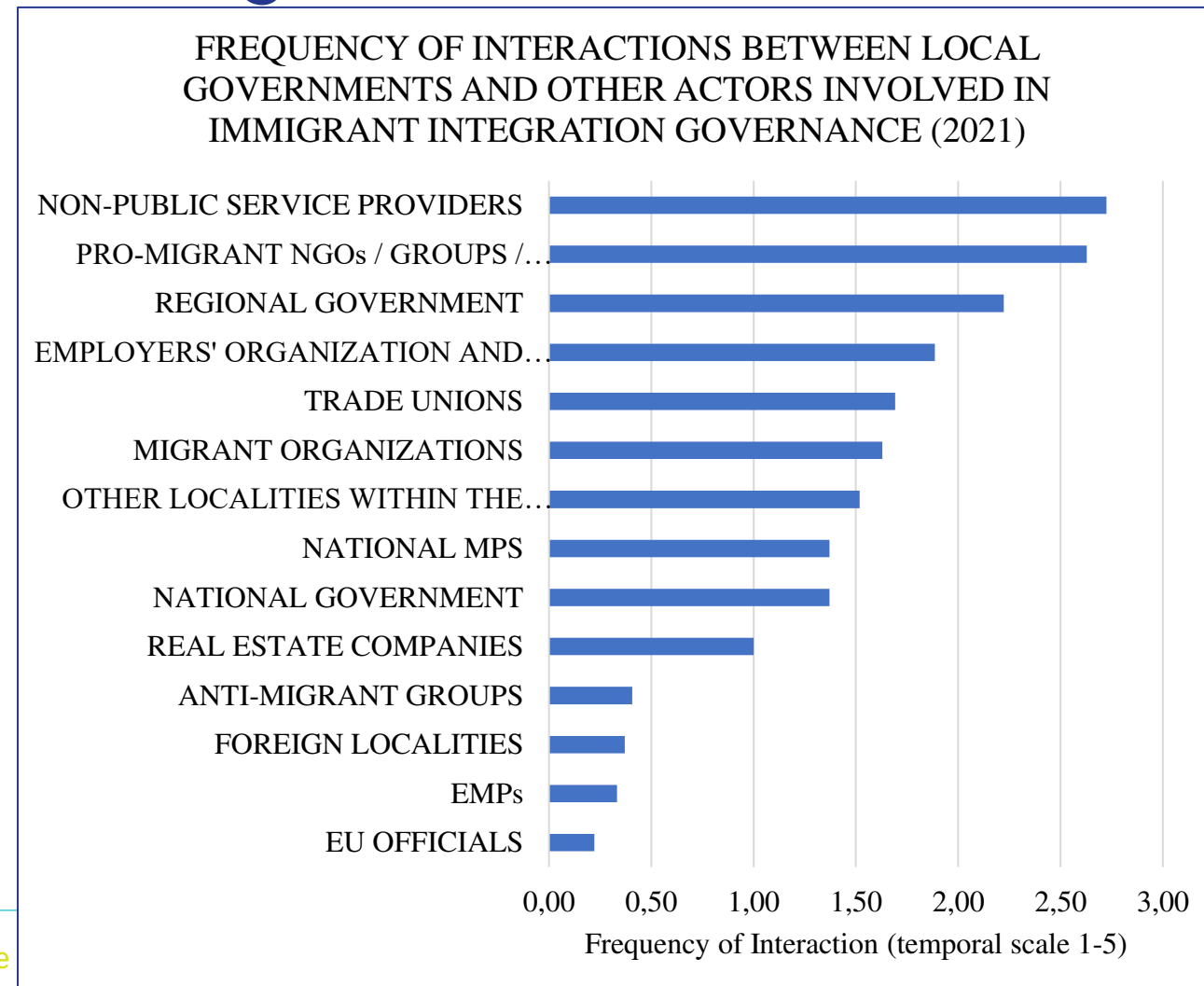


■ Completely disagree ■ Somewhat disagree  
■ Somewhat agree ■ Completely agree

*In your municipality non-European refugees/Ukrainian refugees are **well integrated***

# Our research on integration policies/governance: how are small localities responding? → 3 key challenges

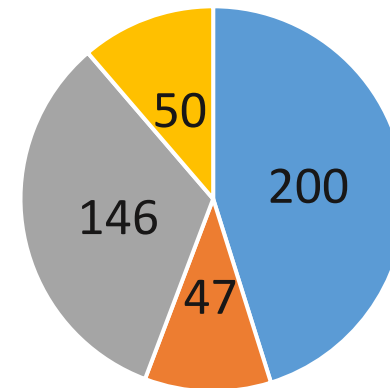
## 1. The isolation of local governments of small localities from multi-level governance structures and venues



# Our research on integration policies/governance: how are small localities responding? → 3 key challenges

2) Local governance actors hold **very different understandings of what is 'integration' and who is responsible for it.** These understandings seem to be related to actors' political affiliations (for elected public officials), the political tradition and current political affiliation of the LG

"RESPONSIBILITY FRAMES" - Who is (or should be) responsible for Immigrant Integration?  
(Source: interviews with 450 local governance actors in small European localities)



- MIGRANTS ONLY
- INSTITUTIONS - OR MIGRANTS AND INSTITUTIONS
- LOCALS AND MIGRANTS
- THE WHOLE OF THE COMMUNITY (MIGRANTS, LOCALS, INSTITUTIONS)

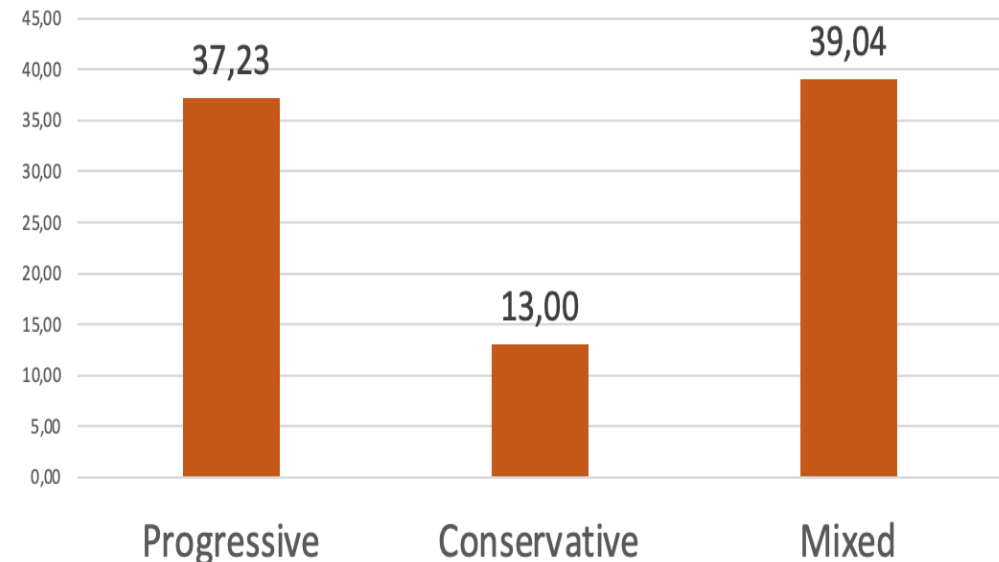


# Our research on integration policies/governance: how are small localities responding? → 3 key challenges

3. The increasing **politicisation** of integration policymaking → political factors are affecting:

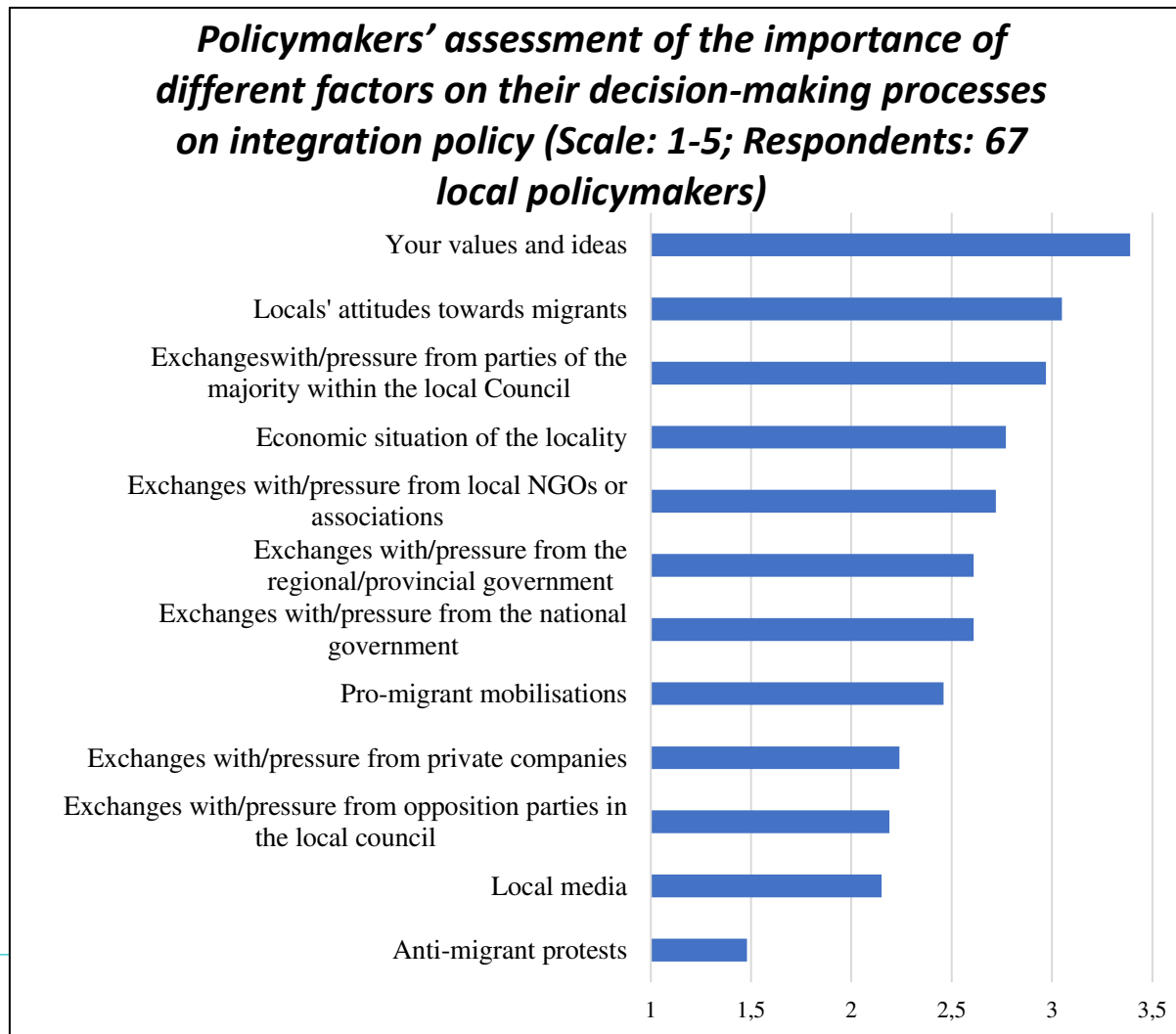
- integration policies
- and policymaking relations (on both the vertical and horizontal dimensions)

INTEGRATION POLICY SCORE (MIPEx-L) AND POLITICAL AFFILIATION OF WHOLE-COMM LOCALITIES (preliminary findings)



Source: MPG

# The growing politicisation of immigrant integration policymaking – the impact on policies



Our research also suggests that collaborative interactions related to immigrant integration between local governments and societal stakeholders are *less frequent* in localities where there is a *higher* presence of anti-immigration parties (particularly those with centre-right or mixed LGs, while for centre-left LGs the opposite effect is observed)



# whole COMM

MIGRANT INTEGRATION IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

More about the project on:

<https://whole-comm.eu/>

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