The Territorial Embeddedness of Novel Labour Integration Policy: Something Old, Something New and Something Borrowed

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Abstract

This paper examines how local governments can develop new practices in labour integration policy through cross-sector collaborations, and the role of territorial embeddedness in enabling them. The paper is informed by three initiatives for labour market integration of immigrants led by the city district of an urban suburb in the city of Göteborg, in collaboration with actors from the public sector, private sector, and civil society. The paper contributes to research into institutional entrepreneurship and local governments. First, it shows the importance of undermining old, or traditional, practices in labour market integration as part of the process of developing new ones. It also reveals how new practices and organizational forms are added to existing ones, instead of replacing them. Thus, expanding the scope of the public sector in the local labour market integration policy field through elaborative rather than radical change. Second, it reveals the importance to diffuse the new practices, beyond the boundaries of the collaboration that facilitates their creation. Third, the paper illustrates how, rather than hindering, the territorial embeddedness of these collaborative coalitions in marginalized urban suburbs provides access to a wide repertoire of resources, practices, and ideas to facilitate change. Paradoxically, the territorial embeddedness also hampered the diffusion of new practices in the broader field of labour market integration.

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Introduction

This paper examines how local governments can develop new practices in labour integration policy through cross-sector collaborations, as well as the role of territorial embeddedness in enabling them. Theoretically, the paper contributes to the literature on institutional entrepreneurship and local governments. While there is extensive literature on institutional entrepreneurship, there are fewer studies in relation to local governance. Mainly developed in Scandinavian countries and in the areas of municipal environmental and welfare policies, these studies have shed light on the ability of local governments to mobilise endogenous and external resources, methods and ideas in order to develop new practices in emergent policy fields through field switching (Perkmann and Spicer, 2007), borrowing and sharing practices through networks and collaborative platforms (Lowndes, 2005), and creating organizational freedom (Sundin and Tillmar, 2008; Jentoft, 2017) to support institutional change. While these earlier studies have also addressed how the territory shapes the creation and diffusion of novel organisational forms (e.g. Perkmann and Spicer, 2007; Zapata Campos and Zapata, 2019), there is still a lack of more detailed accounts.

In the field of labour market integration policy, triggering events (Hoffman, 1999; Fligstein, 1991) – such as the peak numbers of asylum seekers in Europe in 2015 – have opened windows of opportunity allowing peripheral actors, such as civil society organisations and mid-level officers, to engage in complex governance networks (Kornberger et al., 2019) with room for manoeuvring and

experimentation. These peripheral actors can become institutional entrepreneurs (Hardy and Maguire, 2017), develop new practices (Lawrence et al., 2002), and bring about far-reaching changes that go beyond their specific projects or initiatives in the integration policy field.

While most of the labour integration literature has focused on examining the challenges in local implementation of national activation programmes (e.g. Qvist, 2017; Emilsson, 2015) the emerging diversity of novel practices driven by local governments in collaboration with other actors remains insufficiently scrutinised. More particularly, with very few exceptions (e.g. Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2011; Çağlar and Glick Schiller, 2018; Huang and Liu, 2018), the way in which the territorial embeddedness of many of these initiatives is moulding processes of institutional entrepreneurship has been overlooked. In this context, territorial embeddedness is understood as the degree of commitment of the actors to a particular place such as a region, a city or a neighbourhood (Bridge, 2008; Weerakoon and MacMurray; 2020).

This paper addresses these emerging gaps by examining how local governments involved in cross-sector collaborative coalitions are developing new practices and what the role of territorial embeddedness is in enabling these new practices. Empirically, the paper is informed by three initiatives for labour market integration of immigrants led by the city district of West Hisingen, one of the most marginalised urban suburbs in the city of Göteborg, Sweden, in collaboration with actors from the public and private sectors, as well as civil society.

The study makes three contributions to research into institutional entrepreneurship in local governments. First, the paper identifies the importance of undermining old, or traditional, practices in labour market integration as part of the process of developing new ones (Lowndes, 2005). It also reveals how new practices and organisational forms are added to existing ones (Brorström and Norbäck, 2022) instead of replacing them, thus expanding the scope of the public sector in the field of local labour market integration policy through elaborative (Colomy 1998) rather than radical change, as the 'new' practices are infiltrated (Zapata Campos and Zapata, 2017) into the 'old' ones from the inside. Second, the paper reveals the importance of diffusing the new practices beyond the boundaries of the collaboration that facilitates their creation, and the initial phases of deinstitutionalisation and pre-institutionalisation. Third, the paper illustrates how, rather than hindering, the territorial embeddedness of these collaborative coalitions in marginalised urban suburbs provides access to a wide repertoire of resources, practices and ideas to facilitate change. Paradoxically, the territorial embeddedness also hampers the diffusion of new practices in the broader field of labour market integration.

The next section introduces the main dimensions of institutional entrepreneurship, particularly in relation to local governments and territorial embeddedness. The section develops the analytical framework used in examining the collaborative networks, addressing labour integration in the district and its city. The methodology used to gather and analyse the data and initiatives in the case study are then presented. There follows a presentation of the case of labour market integration policy and the three initiatives. After a discussion of the findings, the paper concludes by presenting its contributions to understanding the role of collaborative coalitions, led by local government, as a source of change in the field of local labour integration policies.

Institutional Entrepreneurship, Local Governments and Territorial Embeddedness

Institutional entrepreneurship

Meyer and Rowan (1977) showed that organisations are influenced by rationalised myths in their environment, rather than shaped and structured by individual intention, initiating the new institutional approach to organisational studies (Alvesson & Spicer, 2019). However, agency (DiMaggio, 1988) and the role of actors soon came back into focus (Beckert, 1999; Dorado, 2005; Greenwood and Hinings, 1996; Powell and DiMaggio, 1991) in what has been coined the agentic turn (Abdelnour et al., 2017). In order to move beyond the constraining effects of institutions and to reintroduce considerations of change, power and agency into institutional theory (e.g. DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Greenwood and Hinings, 1996), an emerging body of organisational research into institutional entrepreneurship has grown rapidly. The concept

of institutional entrepreneurship is therefore helpful in considering, from an institutional theory perspective, how new institutions and change arise (Maguire et al., 2004), and how new practices and logics become new norms.

Conformity in a field can be breached when actors translate disruptive events (Fligstein 1991), such as new legal frameworks, political changes, technological developments and social movements, policies or crises, into field-level changes. In the process, these events create uncertainty for organisations in the field, prompting them to start experiments that diverge from established practices. This is especially the case in unregulated 'institutional voids' (Wejs, 2014) such as climate change governance or local labour market integration policies, the latter having been characterised to some extent 'by municipal voluntarism' (Bulkeley and Betsill, 2013; Wejs et al., 2014). This uncertain situation opens windows of opportunity (Hermansen, 2015; Schneiberg and Lounsbury, 2008) for institutional entrepreneurs to bring about far-reaching changes beyond specific cases in given policy fields (Zapata Campos and Zapata 2019).

Institutional entrepreneurship refers to the 'activities of actors who have an interest in particular institutional arrangements and who leverage resources to create new institutions or to transform existing ones' (Maguire et al., 2004: 657). Much of the literature concerning institutional entrepreneurship has adopted an actor-centric approach by addressing the role that institutional entrepreneurs play in organisational change, either as organisations (e.g. Garud et al., 2002), professions (e.g. Greenwood and Suddaby, 2006) or social movements (Lounsbury et al., 2003). However, in this paper we adopt another perspective according to which institutional entrepreneurship is understood as collective rather than individual; as processual, incremental, and multi-scalar rather than fixed, radical, and single-scaled; and involving an array of collective, interconnected actions from various organisational or governmental levels (Hardy and Maguire, 2008).

Institutional entrepreneurship and local governments

The concept of institutional entrepreneurship has also proved helpful to understand change in public organizations (e.g. Montiel and Husted 2009; Sundin and Tillmar 2008). Governmental institutions can promote economic growth, employment creation, as well as entrepreneurship, by setting conducive structures in place (Spencer et al. 2005). For example, Nasra and Dancin (2010) showed how the state can adopt the role of entrepreneur by recognizing opportunities that emerge within their contexts, and moulding the institutional infrastructure to exploit these opportunities. Nevertheless, as Sundin and Tillmar (2008) have claimed, not only are studies of institutional entrepreneurship in public organizations rare, but most such research has focused on change at higher levels, neglecting change at the middle and lower levels. Sundin and Tillmar (2008), by adopting a multi-level approach considering the individual, organization, and sector levels, illustrated how novel practices created in the middle and lower tiers of an administration as a result of the institutional entrepreneurship of peripheral actors require alliance formation, freedom of action, and legitimacy work.

Research on local governments from an institutional entrepreneurship perspective is even scarcer. While part of the recent literature on institutional entrepreneurship and local governments has focused on welfare services (Mosley, 2014; Jentoft, 2017; Jensen and Fersch, 2019), there is also an emerging body of research investigating the practices developed by municipalities to address the grand challenge of the climate crisis and more sustainable behaviour. For example, Wejs et al. (2014) showed how municipalities in Denmark and Norway, where the national impetus for local adaptation was weak, become institutional entrepreneurs by developing local strategies for adaptation to climate change. By mobilizing resources such as knowledge and engaging in persuasive communication, cities built legitimacy for the development of novel practices.

Field switching (Perkmann and Spicer, 2007) is another strategy developed by local authorities with their counterparts across sectors to capture opportunities, (e.g. resources, practices, and ideas) that arise in various fields over time in order to diffuse new practices and forms. Field switching occurs when 'institutional entrepreneurs seek to deploy new

organizational forms not just in their 'home fields', but are able to switch into newly emerging fields to take advantage of institution-building opportunities' (Perkmann and Spicer 2007: 1118). This ability of local governments, as institutional entrepreneurs, to switch fields has also been observed by Lowndes (2005), who identified three main strategies whereby local governments can redefine and expand their institutional repertoires: remembering or looking in past repertoires (something old), borrowing or transferring practices from nearby fields (something borrowed), and sharing or learning from others' institutional repertoires (something new). Institutional entrepreneurship relies in this case on the entrepreneurs' ability to 'expand and recombine their institutional resources as they face new challenges' (Lowndes 2005: 299), an ability that also resonates with the concept of institutional bricolage (Di Domenico et al. 2010; Lanzara 1998).

Territorial embeddedness in local governance

The management of cities can be conceptualized as a complex action net consisting of collective actions connected to one another according to a particular institutionalized pattern at a given time and in a given place (Czarniawska, 2002; 2004). Seen like this, cities consist of relations among actors involved, the city administration being one of them, and the city and its development a matter of scale (Brenner, 2019). In the context of Scandinavian cities, Zapata Campos and Zapata (2019) have shown how local governments in Sweden can become agents of environmental change and institutional entrepreneurship through mobilizing and recombining resources (e.g. knowledge, human, financial, and spatial resources), rationales, and relations. Local governance benefits from institutional sharing (Lowndes 2005) from the multiple multi-level, horizontal, and vertical networks in which local actors are involved. This strategy is particularly relevant in uncertain and rapidly changing environments 'where local government lacks its own extended repertoire of institutional resources and where central government is pushing hard for rapid change' (Lowndes 2005: 305), as in the case of local labour market integration policies in Sweden.

Both the multi-level nature of the implementation of national integration policies in Sweden and the bottom–up nature of the related initiatives crystallize in collaborative networks of heterogeneous actors involved in the design and implementation.

All these previous studies have shed light, first, on the process by which institutional entrepreneurship in local governments mobilizes repertoires of resources such as knowledge, organizational forms, competences, and practices, either internally or by switching these resources from different fields (Perkmann and Spicer 2007). Second, they have also acknowledged the role of freedom (Sundin and Tillmar 2008; Jentoft 2017) giving room and legitimacy for action to the creative process of developing new practices and change. Third, these studies have also spotlighted the role of place and territorial embeddedness in institutional entrepreneurship (Werakoon and MacMurray, 2021) as the degree of commitment of local actors to prompt change in a particular neighbourhood or city (e.g. Zapata Campos and Zapata 2019); as enabling or hindering the creation and diffusion of novel practices and organizational forms (e.g. Perkmann and Spicer 2007); and as the local community from which bricoleurs draw their resources, (Phillimore et al, 2021, Carstensen, Sorensen och Torfing, 2022). Yet, more in-depth clarifications of the territorial dimension of institutional entrepreneurship in local governments are missing in the literature. By drawing from a case embedded in the local governance of the city suburbs, this paper contributes to develop more fine-grained accounts of the territorial dimension of institutional entrepreneurship to fill this gap.

Analytical framework

In the analysis and discussion we build on the literature previously presented and particularly, on the three strategies identified by Lowndes (2005), using them to structure our data and discussion as a point of departure. We first show how these heterogeneous actors develop strategies consisting of: undermining the traditional practices of local government (something old); expanding the scope of local government in labour market integration policies by borrowing practices, resources, and ideas from other domains (something borrowed); and

stabilizing these changes by diffusing the new practices and creating institutions in the making (something new).

Methodology

This paper is the result of an action-research project in a case study (Flyvbjerg 2001) of labour market integration in the city district of West Hisingen, in Göteborg, Sweden, and three collaborative initiatives it has initiated (see Figure 1 and below where the initiatives are presented) addressing the labour market integration of immigrants.

Recent developments in institutional theory studies have resulted in a call for more participatory action research (Hampel et al. 2017) whose findings can help actors to improve policy practice and change – as in the present case. Action research consists of the co-production of knowledge by practitioners, community members, and researchers in cycles of research, action, and reflection. The relationship between researcher and researched is a subject–subject relationship (Charmaz 2014; Fals-Borda 1991). The assumption is that participants in such research are engaged with as competent and capable partners who explore their social worlds and realize change (Hampel et al. 2017: 582). In the present case, by adopting an action research approach, we benefit from access to internal decision-making processes and data (e.g. by participating as members of these initiatives), using them to advance the discussion of our findings, as we elaborate on later.

Three of the most salient initiatives driven by the city district of West Hisingen inform this paper (see Section 5): the One Stop Future Shop ('One Stop'), the Advisory Board to the City District, and the Clean Car Service (CCS) cooperative. These initiatives are tied together as overlapping actor coalitions, as described in the next section. The City District runs One Stop and CCS in collaboration with other local actors, and has created an Advisory Board with 25 representatives from local companies, civil society, and the public sector. One Stop was the first initiative, followed by the Advisory Board, and then CCS. Since May 2017, we have been allowed to observe the meetings and activities of One Stop. We started participating as observers in the Advisory Board meetings in February 2018 and in the steering group meetings of CCS in May 2018. One of us was also a member of the One Stop advisory board. We conducted more than 60 hours of observations, one focus group interview, and 55 in-depth in-person interviews. Desk research was also conducted, as we have had unrestricted access to relevant documents, including the minutes of meetings (see Table 1).

Figure 1. The three initiatives and the City District
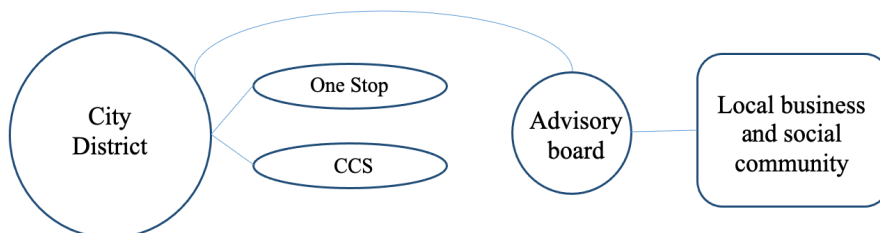
The interviewees – the two city district politicians representing the major parties, the District director (also chair of Advisory board) five district officers, all employees and the project leader of One Stop Future shop, eleven members of the Advisory Board representing civil society organisations, private companies and city departments, the members of the CCS Steering group and 2 employees – were asked about the initiatives' history, underlying rationales, perceived effects, main activities and achievements, organizational structure, financial, human, and material resources, membership and recruitment, physical facilities, and latitude for activities, challenges, scale-up opportunities, and future plans. The interviews lasted 45–90 minutes and were usually conducted where the activities of the initiatives take place. Most interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

During the observations, we took notes that were later coded as data. When observing CSS and the Advisory Board, we usually observed the meetings. During One Stop meetings, the researcher participated as a board member and took notes.

Table 1. Data collection

Initiative	Observations	Interviews	Documents
One Stop	20 hours of meetings and activities	30 individual	Steering documents and minutes
Advisory Board	20 hours of meetings (10)	12 individual	Minutes and presentations
CCS	9 hours of meetings (9)	13 individual and 1 focus group	Minutes and presentations

From the beginning, we discussed with the practitioners, our preliminary understandings of the actions observed during our participation in meetings, and the discourses and narratives captured while conducting interviews, trying to progressively avoid adopting an external and hierarchical positionality between us researchers and the practitioners. Adopting an action research approach facilitated a progressive discussion of our early results with the constellation of actors participating in the three studied initiatives, both in informal and formal settings, such as: internal meetings of the three initiatives, three scientific conferences where some actors attended either as participants or as co-authors, and several larger workshops and seminars with practitioners of the labour integration policy field. These interactions provided an opportunity to validate the more descriptive aspects of our analysis, to test our findings and refine our conclusions. We were quickly aware of the intersecting relations that we maintained with a good number of actors participating in these three initiatives, in terms of migration status (both of us have a foreign-born family background), political and professional beliefs (engagement in issues of migration and segregation), social position (as middle class professionals), personal preferences and even emotional responses of sympathy and friendship among the participants in these three constellations. These similarities facilitated that us as researchers were progressively perceived as one more participant, rather than an outsider, prompting our collaboration beyond the scope of our research project and the initiatives in which they participated.

Our research strategy has been pragmatic in that it began inductively with collecting and coding data, resulting in myriad concepts and themes that emerged at the early stage of our analysis. The analytical work then evolved into abductive, iterative moves between collecting, sorting, coding, probing the data, and discussing our preliminary findings with the practitioners until we could reconstruct the multi-layered stories if the three initiative (Charmaz, 2016). Many of the concepts and themes were thus successively dropped after iterative presentations and discussions in which we probed our preliminary analysis jointly with practitioners and researchers.

Then, we again sorted these emergent themes into larger categories, and continued collecting new data through new interviews to follow and further develop a particular track (e.g. the reiteration of the 'old' practices in the narratives of the interviewees). Three main categories emerged from the material: eroding existing rules and practices by talking about them as not working any more, creating new ones by borrowing them from other fields, and stabilizing the new practices by diffusing them. The themes suggested theoretical concepts and frameworks, some of which we were already familiar with (e.g. see Lowndes 2005, for an analysis of institutional entrepreneurship in terms of something old, something borrowed, and something new). This is why we decided to use Lowndes' framework as a starting point for discussing our findings, structured around three main strategies.

Yet, we could not find theoretical references in the literature on institutional entrepreneurship about the territorial dimension of the collaborations, or about the changes they brought about. After initially taking advantage of Lowndes' framework to present the findings, we then observed the necessity of dropping it in order to do justice to our findings.

This resulted in the refining of Lowndes' framework and the introduction of a new element: the territorial embeddedness of the institutional entrepreneurship shaping these strategies.

The Labour Market Integration Policy Field

In Sweden, immigrants suffer higher unemployment, occupy less qualified jobs, and experience worse working conditions than do citizens born in the country (Joyce 2015). Educational and professional skill gaps (e.g. Aldén and Hammarstedt 2014; Bevelander and Irastorza 2014), the challenge of learning Swedish, the lack of social capital and networks (Håkansson and Tovatt 2017), a highly regulated and qualified labour market, and discriminatory processes within organizations (Ghorasi and Sabelis 2013; Joyce 2015) are some reasons for this gap (Asplund et al. 2017). These barriers are experienced differently by different migrants, depending on their level of education, professional experience, ethnic background, gender, and time in the country (Asplund et al. 2017; Dumont et al. 2016).

In recent decades, Sweden has introduced policies and reforms to facilitate the integration of immigrants into the labour market. After processes of decentralization, in 2010 a national reform transferred the responsibility for integrating the newly arrived from local governments to the central Swedish Public Employment Service (PES). Simultaneously, a stronger focus on labour market activities was introduced, reflecting wider trends in activation policies for integration (Künzel 2012; OECD 2016). Nevertheless, the heterogeneity of the newcomers (in terms of professions and education) and the complexity of the challenges they faced (regarding housing, health, language, family reunification, and education) resulted in increased complexity in a policy field that was already experiencing high levels of uncertainty (Qvist 2017). Consequently, despite (and probably because of) the reform, the necessity for collaboration among local actors became even greater (Emilsson 2015).

Despite considerable efforts, most post-2010 collaboration initiatives resulted in isomorphic practices across the country and very few involved non-governmental actors (Joyce 2015; Qvist 2017). However, beyond national policy measures, many other practices are designed and implemented by local governments in coalition with other actors. For example, only 34% of the costs of the integration measures in Göteborg were funded by the national government in 2016 (OECD 2018). The literature has overlooked these novel bottom–up practices. In the Göteborg Region alone, over 180 initiatives with a direct or indirect focus on labour market integration have been recently identified (Diedrich and Hellgren 2018), many prompted by the refugee arrival peak in 2015, although most were the result of previous efforts. Often organized as collaborative spaces, a good number of them are led by the local government in new or redefined practices and include initiatives that range from public social procurement, job fairs, and cooperatives, to business incubators for social inclusion.

The emergence of more 'autonomous practices for integration' is possible due to a diversity of financial resources coming from other governance levels (OECD 2018: 12). Parallel to the coercive mechanisms to implement national integration policy measures mentioned above, a number of normative and cognitive mechanisms have developed at the national and European levels, providing a multi-level administrative and budgetary framework in which these local initiatives can grow (Künzel 2012; OECD 2018). In the current context of the digitalization and shrinkage of the Swedish Employment Agency (half of its local offices were closed in 2019), the role of local governments in developing new initiatives to facilitate the labour market integration of immigrants is more important than ever.

Göteborg, Biskopsgården and the Labour Market Integration Initiatives

Göteborg, Sweden's second largest city, was until December 2020 administratively divided into ten districts. Municipal elections are held every four years. The political representatives in the district councils reflects the outcome of the elections in the city of Göteborg, not the distribution of votes in the districts. The political parties at the local government level are led centrally by commissioners and a municipal council. The city districts are led by politicians in

district councils, appointed by the municipal council, and the city district administrative offices are led by district managers.

Göteborg's city districts are responsible for primary school, elderly care, and individual and family leisure activities and social services. In terms of labour market integration, most responsibilities are held centrally by the Department of Labour Integration and Adult Education. Operatively, the Department implements its activities through several competence centres in different parts of the city. These competence centres target adults who benefit from social subsidies and are registered with the Swedish National Employment Agency with the expectation of becoming integrated in the labour market or in education within 18 months. Their activities relate to coaching, training, education and professional orientation, job internship, and job matching. In the city districts, most activities related to the integration of immigrants are driven by social service departments with a predominant focus on welfare services.

In autumn 2016, Sweden received a record number of asylum seekers, many from Syria. The phenomenon of immigration is, however, not new. With a population of 571,868, 26.3% of the residents of Göteborg are foreign born (City of Göteborg 2020) and over 36% have a migration background (City of Göteborg 2019). Almost half of the foreign-born population arrived more than 10 years ago (OECD 2018). Different foreign-born populations have successively arrived in the city since the end of the 1950s. Since the late 1960s, most of these immigrants found their homes in the new suburban housing built during the Million Programme on the periphery of the city to accommodate the labour force working for the globally successful Göteborg-based industries Volvo and SKF (producing rolling bearings) (Holgersson et al. 2010). Many of these newly built neighbourhoods, planned as satellite suburbs with modern housing but lacking public and private services, quickly deteriorated and were successively occupied by newly arrived immigrants. In recent decades, Göteborg has developed profound spatial, economic, and housing segregation (Björnberg 2010), with some of the districts in the south-west of the city predominately being inhabited by 'Swedes', while other suburbs are predominately inhabited by foreign-born citizens (City of Göteborg 2019).

Biskopsgården, a neighbourhood in the West Hisingen city district on the island of Hisingen, is one of the latter. Built in the 1950s, Biskopsgården provided accommodation for the workers of booming multinational corporations such as Volvo with factories on Hisingen, many of whom emigrated from Nordic countries, Portugal, and Turkey. Nowadays, 86% of Biskopsgården's 25,000 residents have migrant backgrounds, predominately from countries such as Somalia, Iraq, Iran, Bosnia-Hercegovina, Yugoslavia, and Syria (City of Göteborg 2019). Residents of Biskopsgården have lower incomes, higher dependency on subsidies, higher unemployment, worse health, lower life expectancy, and below-average formal education (Tunström and Wang 2019). For example, while only 2.8% of the Sweden-born residents of Göteborg do not have jobs, in North Hisingen 16.4% of the foreign born are unemployed.

One stop future shop is started

Simultaneously, a number of activities run by different coalitions of actors operating in the city suburbs have been developed in recent years to address this inequality. From 2009 to 2011, the EU-funded project 'Growth Biskopsgården', led by the city district of Biskopsgården, had focused, for example, on supporting entrepreneurship in the district. It followed another similar 2012–2014 project called 'Entrepreneurial West Hisingen', supporting entrepreneurship through training, coaching, and a 'greenhouse' for new business. In this new project, the districts of Biskopsgården and Torslanda (the latter, with a mainly native Swedish population and a strong business tradition, is the site of Volvo factories) merged administratively in the new West Hisingen city district. The project won the Euro Cities award for cooperation in 2015. A year later, a third project, 'One Stop Future Shop' (2016–2019) co-funded by the City and the European Regional Development Funds, was started.

One Stop, a business incubator for vulnerable groups underrepresented in business, has offices in Vårvärderstorget, an emblematic square in Biskopsgården. Aiming at increasing the

number of new entrepreneurs among the foreign born, the programme's activities included pro bono legal advice from the law department of University of Gothenburg, seminars, as well as workshops for start-ups and business in the region run by One Stop officers with previous entrepreneurship experience, multilingual abilities, and diverse cultural backgrounds. One Stop also developed a food incubator in a container kitchen to train future restaurateurs, and the start-up FastTrack, the last one a parallel project funded by the Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth. After three EU-funded projects, a successful record, and several prizes, starting in mid 2018, One Stop became an integrated part of the city district's permanent structure through the new Innovation and Business Centre. In these projects, several actors operating in Biskopsgården have remained constant: a very entrepreneurial young project manager, a supportive coalition of actors (e.g. Göteborg Business Region and the Red Cross), and an engaged and supportive political representative in both the Municipal Properties Council and the West Hisingen District Council. The new One Stop project was led by the West Hisingen City District and placed organizationally under the new district director. Like the politician (and other members of the coalition, such as the Red Cross representative, and the One Stop officer), the district director also had an immigrant background and experience of working with new methods.

An advisory board is formed

In January 2017, the district manager formed the Advisory Board, a platform with representatives from the private sector, public sector, and civil society operating in West Hisingen, with the purpose of promoting employment opportunities and improving security. Since then, the Advisory Board has met four times a year implementing a business and problem-solving approach.

The meetings of the Advisory Board were usually animated by retelling success stories of some of the earlier fast and efficient actions carried out by members of the Board to solve local problems, actions that the traditional public administration could not undertake or would do so too slowly. Such stories include that of an ATM that was installed in a square through a collaborative effort. Another example is when One Stop's container kitchen needed its pipes insulated so it could remain operating during the winter. The problem was urgent as it was already too cold, and solving it within the city organization would have taken too long as the container is on private land and excavation to install sewer lines would require paperwork that would take longer than the winter lasted. The problem was solved the next day by a member of the Advisory Board who runs a construction company: he sent an excavator, material, and other equipment and did the job.

Clean Car Service, a joint venture

In 2017, the district manager organized a study visit to Volvo Cars, also a member of the Advisory Board, as one of the activities of some city district directors is learning about the corporate life in the territories where they work. During that visit, the City District Director had the opportunity to talk with the company's CEO, suggesting cooperation to address the challenges of the territorial and economic segregation of the district where both organizations operate. A few days later, the City District Director got a call from the Volvo Cars HR Director to propose working together to provide car cleaning services for their corporate car fleet in a way that could generate jobs among the long-term unemployed through some form of social entrepreneurship. The district director, after some frustrated attempts to endorse the writing of an application to officers of the city administration, gave this task to the One Stop project manager, who was more accustomed to writing project applications and developing novel forms of labour market integration through entrepreneurship.

This joint venture, however, encountered several hindrances on its way to implementation. When the Senior City Counsel advised the city district not to embark directly on an entrepreneurial role, even though it was to promote social inclusion, the district manager and the One Stop manager sought advice from an external law firm, from which they got support. Despite these difficulties, the project application was successful, leading to the creation of the

Clean Car Service (CCS) cooperative through a novel partnership between Volvo Cars, West Hisingen City District, and the cooperative Vägen Ut!.

CCS initially employed nine long-term unemployed people, half of them foreign born, to provide car cleaning services for Volvo Bil employees who use leased Volvo cars. Volvo Bil is a Volvo Cars' daughter company that provides company-benefit cars and other car services to Volvo Cars and Volvo Group employees. The CCS partners met six times a year in a steering group to discuss progress. In implementing CCS, the officers from Vägen Ut! and Volvo Cars became particularly involved, working both at a strategic level and in the direct implementation and marketing of the service: they might meet with CEOs, present the project in international conferences, or deliver flyers about the car cleaning services in the Volvo Bil canteen. As the founder and manager of small social enterprises, the Vägen Ut! representative had robust entrepreneurial knowledge that was very useful for running the cooperative, while the representative from Volvo, the company's talent manager, had professional experience of inclusive recruitment as well as personal experience with civil society organizations. The talent manager was the first person occupying this new position, which was offered to him by the company's CEO after he had taken a 20-month work leave to start a sport club with foreign-born children in one of Goteborg's urban suburbs. CCS ceased operation in May 2019 when the funding expired. Despite winning a prestigious prize for the original partnership between a multinational corporation, a cooperative, and the city district, and the efforts of the partners, particularly the two driving actors from Volvo Cars and Vägen Ut!, no alternative ways of continuing the service on a more permanent basis were found, although communications and meetings continued between the former partners.

Discussion

To examine how cross-sector collaboration with heterogenous actors can be a source of change in local governments, we draw on Lowndes' (2005) analytical framework for local governments as institutional entrepreneurs as a point of entrance to structure our discussion. In the following, we first show how the collaborative initiatives studied here: a) undermine from the inside, and in coalition with external actors, traditional public administration practices (discredit something old); b) expand the traditional practices by borrowing management ideas, practices, and competences from other domains (borrow something) while preventing or overcoming resistance; and c) try to stabilize the new practices of the local government in supporting entrepreneurship (creating something new) through diffusion at different levels. In Table 2, we summarize the strategies and practices discussed below. Thereafter, we further develop this frame to introduce the territorial embeddedness shaping these strategies for institutional entrepreneurship in the local government.

Table 2. Strategies and practices to prompt change

Analytical focus	Strategies	Practices	Outcome
Old –undermining	Discredit the old	• persuading • reiterating • storytelling	Acceptance for the new
Borrowed – expanding	Borrow and blend the old and the borrowed	• borrowing, blending, and reframing • anchoring • circumventing and contesting	Change, old practices blended with new and borrowed
New – stabilizing	Connect to the old to stabilize	• diffusing • stabilizing	Stabilizing change attempts

Undermining the 'traditional' public administration (something old)

In the three initiatives, the public administration, both in the city's central offices and locally in the district, is often described as 'traditional', 'slow', and 'inefficient' in its capacity to address the complex challenge of labour integration policies, as well as difficult to collaborate with. This critique generally precedes argumentation for the need to develop new and 'non-traditional test paths' to facilitate the rapid labour market integration of foreign-born citizens, but also to stress the need to change the District's organisation, way to work and attitudes. That is, to undermine the traditional and give room to simultaneously present the new:

> It is easier to collaborate with the outside than with the inside [i.e. the local government]. (One Stop officer)

> After 6 weeks [of sending mail within the municipality] no one had replied. Or the person to contact had moved. (One Stop officer)

> The public is too slow to react in these situations. (Advisory Board member)

These claims do not imply a desire to disband existing traditional activities in general, such as professional training activities provided by the public sector. Instead, they suggest the insufficiency of these fit-all measures to reach the most vulnerable groups, as well as their slowness and inefficiency in adapting to and seizing opportunities that require immediate and flexible intervention open to the situation at hand, when solving local problems that might need local adaption:

> In a district like ours … it turns out the measures are designed for people who are relatively close to the labour market. … Our dilemma is what do we do with those who are very far from the market? … We talk about 1300 households … (City District officer in relation to One Stop)

Another example is in the origin narrative of CCS. The City District Director explained how when they first decided to work with Volvo Cars, he challenged several bureaucrats in the district administration to develop a proposal. It was only an actor from the 'new' administrative structure (i.e. a One Stop officer) who was willing to explore the potential of this collaboration. The actors used special vocabularies and rhetorical devices to create new stories in which using a 'non-traditional' structure successfully solved the problems faced. In so doing, they developed a set of symbolic/rhetorical practices that through 'persuasive language' (Ruebottom 2013: 100) eroded and undermined the traditional public administration structure to prompt change.

Another undermining practice is reiteration. The discourse of the participants is saturated with reiterative negative descriptions of the 'traditional' and 'conventional' public administration's solutions – rigid and inflexible – in contradistinction to the success of other solutions. While observing a one-and-half-hour meeting, we noted 15 reiterations. Similarly, stories were also recreated and retold as part of the symbolic work of these institutional entrepreneurs (Lounsbury and Glynn 2001; Zilber 2007), as the example of the ATM or the frozen pipes. These stories internally strengthened the rhetorical power of these emergent networks of actors to reinforce the need for alternative solutions (e.g. Zilber 2007). A similar practice of storytelling was used to legitimize the Advisory Board's seizing opportunities proposed by companies, offering activities that could create jobs, carrying out education, or facilitating socio-cultural integration among suburban youths through overcoming bureaucratic hindrances:

> Normally, municipal schools are closed during summer. But 'you can't close a sports centre where people can't go on vacation' … 'Can we borrow the centre, we'll arrange the staff?' and the answer was 'no'. I tried to explain [to the representative of the responsible municipal body] how difficult it was – now I know that M [head of social care, present at the meeting] will help me. (Advisory Board meeting observations)

These collaborative networks become porous environments facilitating the infiltration (Zapata Campos and Zapata 2017) of ideas from external organizations into the public administration, ideas that deviated from more orthodox traditional local government and aimed at providing local solutions to local problems:

> This cement company, they came to us with an offer to train some people in a special technique for construction work. I said yes, a bit rebelliously, as it was still cheaper than having them go through normal procedures. … We cannot say 'no' to such micro-solutions. We cannot solve the world's problems like this, but we can solve ten people's problems. That's the kind of approach we have in this group, we act fast. (Advisory Board meeting observations)

Through these undermining practices, the public administration could adopt ambiguous roles, on one hand the traditional, slow (mainly in the central municipal organization, but also some parts of the District) and on the other hand the new, progressive, open to and facilitating new practices.

Expanding the scope of the local government (something borrowed)

The actors also expanded the scope of local government by: a) borrowing practices, rules, and organizational structures from other domains; b) anchoring them in the city administration; and c) circumventing potential resistance to the introduction of these new practices and, at times, by overtly confronting organizational resistance.

a) Borrowing

Novel organizational structures, practices, models, and competences were developed by borrowing them from other fields, through institutional sharing (Lowndes 2005; Crouch and Farrell 2004) among the participants (Boxenbaum and Battilana 2005). For example, business-like structures and managerial practices were introduced to the Advisory Board, such as the problem-solving format of their meetings, responds to the desire to attract participants from the private sector, to create innovative solutions to the problems of the urban suburbs, and to introduce a feeling of ground-breaking novelty. Similarly, One Stop was inspired by business incubators but adapted to the characteristics of the problem it was intended to solve, translating the borrowed idea of business incubators to the novel concept of a business incubator for social inclusion. Another example is borrowing the organizational work cooperative model from civil society in the collaboration with the cooperative Vägen Ut!, [The Way Out!, (s cooperative focused on creating work for individuals who cannot enter the labour market)] and Volvo Cars to create CCS. This model of collaboration between a multinational corporation, a municipality, and a cooperative resulted from borrowing structures and practices from civil society and applying them to the public sector.

The borrowed practices were then blended (Simsek 2009) with the old existing structures:

> She [the project manager] has built the organization based on old experiences, but with the new experiences … (City District politician)

Borrowing and blending also occurred through recruiting new members with experience of creating businesses or business training (rather than of social services), bringing different practices and assumptions into the public administration. The City District Director's idea was that this new logic, brought by One Stop and its crew of more action/solution/business-oriented officers, would spread to other parts of the organization, sparking change from the inside:

> What I want, is that they should have influence as well … their way of thinking and working should have influence on our organization, you see? (City District Director)

By borrowing and locally adapting, translating, and blending practices, structures, competences, and values, the boundaries of the local government were expanded to encompass practices supporting entrepreneurship for social inclusion. Such a strategy of expanding the scope of the public sector (in terms of new practices, expectations, and values) in the labour market integration of immigrants, resonates with processes of publicness (Bozeman 1987) whereby local government extends its boundaries towards domains typically belonging to other actors. This practice stands out from the isomorphic practices previously identified in the literature (Quist 2017; Joyce 2015) and has been overlooked by previous research into labour market integration.

b) Anchoring: anticipating resistance

The One Stop project leader dedicated much of her time and energy to anchoring the idea of a business incubator for social inclusion in the different political parties, reframing it either as an investment to save social costs or as a human right, to suit different political parties and audiences at multiple levels depending on their ideological preferences. Meetings and communication with many different actors were ongoing:

> We need to create new spaces by networking with other actors, in a way that they do not feel threatened, to explain what we do, to anchor what we do. (One Stop project leader)

Anchoring converges with the process of reframing and refers to collaborating with potential actors around ideas in order to enrol them, strengthen cooperation, and overcome resistance (Czarniawska 2002; 2004). The framing and bonding here enacted by the project leader increased the legitimacy of the initiative to create novel practices and organizational forms for local labour integration policies in the local government, and in so doing subtly changed the taken-for-granted templates of policy making. This persuasive organizational communication (Suchman 1995) explains, as we develop later, the stabilization of the new practice within the city.

c) Circumventing and confronting resistance

However, there were moments when resistance had to be circumvented (Oliver 1991). For example, when the City District wanted to support the creation of CCS, Instead of accepting the Senior City Counsel's interpretation of the law, the City District leadership decided to seek advice from an external law firm, from which they got a positive recommendation that they acted on.

By supporting the creation of the cooperative CCS, the local government developed a new practice while eroding the assumption that the local government's role as a service provider would be inappropriate as it would compete with private activities. Similar strategies have also been reported in environmental policies in the same municipality, where municipal officers have developed activities that expanded the scope of the public sector, and broke taboos, such as promoting a more entrepreneurial role of the city (Zapata Campos and Zapata 2019) in order to change citizens' environmental behaviour. From this, we can also conclude that new methods for the labour market integration of immigrants also require strategies to confront resistance stemming from prevalent norms and taboos.

Stabilizing organizational change by diffusing new practices (something new)

While the Advisory Board was from the outset part of the administrative structure of the City District, CCS and One Stop were temporary projects, struggling to become permanent structures within the company and the city, respectively.

Despite initial resistance, One Stop became part of the permanent local government structure within the City District in June 2018. The new Innovation and Business Centre (IBC) crystallized as a collaborative effort between the City District and the administrative body for business development in the city, anchored in the municipal budget. By stabilizing the IBC as part of the permanent city district structure, the boundaries of the legitimate practices and expectations of local government expanded to also address local labour market integration through supporting entrepreneurship for social inclusion.

The stabilization of this new practice resonates with the concept of the proto-institution (Lawrence et al. 2002) or emerging institution (Czarniawska 2009). Proto-institutions refer to the 'practices, technologies, and rules that are narrowly diffused and only weakly entrenched, but that have the potential to become widely institutionalized' (Lawrence et al. 2002: 283). The new practices and methods (particularly IBC and CCS) are already spreading far beyond the territory of the city of Göteborg through awards, conferences, news articles, project funding, platforms, participants being head-hunted to other organizations, etc. However, it seems easier for this idea to travel to the European arena than within the city. Although One Stop is increasingly well known outside the city, still 'there are only a few [from the city] who know about it' (City District politician).

> The commissioner has visited us to see what is going on. But the party is not involved as such, from the central positions – I am the party here. They are not involved in operations or in any such way … (City District politician)

Spreading the concept of entrepreneurship for social inclusion in Sweden, as a practice of local government, has also been difficult. The One Stop project manager tried to contact other initiatives in Sweden to create a national network for sharing ideas and solutions. However, 'no one showed interest and very few answered the mail' (One Stop officer). In contrast, the European arena seems to be more open to sharing innovations, as indicated by various awards and by the participation of One Stop in a European conference in October 2018: 'They have been nominated as the best in the EU … the best entrepreneurship and the like' (City District politician).

In short, gaining external legitimacy has been easier than attaining internal acknowledgement and legitimacy.

Embeddedness and institutional change in local governments

To this point, Lowndes' framework has served to structure our analysis. Yet, what this framework cannot explain is what enables and hinders the strategies of undermining something old, expanding and adding something borrowed, and stabilizing something new that lead to institutional change. Issues related to the local and territorial embeddedness of the collaborative coalition and the City District emerged repeatedly as the context moulding the different strategies for institutional entrepreneurship. In the following we elaborate on three instances of how local and territorial embeddedness shaped institutional entrepreneurship.

First, undermining the 'traditional' local government structures, practices, and outcomes was not new. Rather, it was those who were expressing this criticism who gave their rhetorical work credibility and strength. It was actors situated in positions of power within the District who openly and loudly expressed their criticisms and thereby put them on the agenda (Dahl 1961), prefacing the pre-institutionalization of new practices and structures (Greenwood and Hinings 2006). Despite the institutional embeddedness of these actors within the local government structures, they have developed enough 'organizational immunity' (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006) to reflect on and express this criticism as part of the process of 'theorization' to justify new practices and organizational forms (Greenwood et al. 2002). This immunity stems from their physical and organizational location on the periphery of the city, in the city suburbs and the city district, far from the city headquarters in the city centre. This distance creates a space for critique, as a previous stage of the creative process of developing new practices, that has been underexamined in the literature.

Second, the location of actors within the same territory of Hisingen facilitated the borrowing of practices and organizational forms from other fields. The territorial identity of Hisingen bound together disparate actors, such as the CEO of Volvo Cars with the City District Director of one of the most segregated suburbs of the city, resulting in the CCS cooperative. The physical presence of several institutional actors in Hisingen, such as the Göteborg Business Region and the Red Cross, also facilitated the creation of the collaboration behind the One Stop Future Shop project. Moreover, the rationales to provide services and goods in Hisingen also encouraged a diverse array of small and large corporations and civil society organizations to participate in the Advisory Board. That is, the physical embeddedness of disparate actors in a marginalized suburb supported the creation of small-scale spaces for experimentation that enabled these 'seemingly oppositional actors', first, to 'cautiously learn to collaborate' (Zietsma and Lawrence 2010), and then to safely develop a 'free space' (Sundin and Tillmar 2008; Jentoft 2017) in which to create new labour market integration practices within the local government.

While previous literature (e.g. Bearne and Orlikowski 2015 and Orlikowski 2015), generally in organization studies (e.g. Kornberger and Clegg 2004; Beyes and Steyaert 2012), has acknowledged the role of space and distance in collaboration, the territorial setting, territorial dimension, and territorial implications of collaborative alliances for institutional change have been overlooked. These spaces were also more porous than the local institutions in the city centre, permitting the infiltration (Zapata Campos and Zapata 2017) of ideas and

practices from other fields. By hosting the process of institutional entrepreneurship, the territory of the marginalized urban suburb creates a fluid but safe space with the necessary physical and cognitive distance from the city headquarters from which orthodox practices of labour market integration are orchestrated.

The actors involved in these coalitions showed a 'sophisticated understanding of the cultural boundaries and meanings of institutions' (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006: 238) and of the mechanisms that govern institutions. These political skills (Garud et al. 2002; Perkmann and Spicer 2007) helped both anticipate and circumvent potential resistance to the new practices. Yet, when it comes to addressing criticism and resisting following the rules, it was instead the cultural skills of the actors embedded in the city suburb territory that facilitated the adoption of some strategies of defiance. The cultural diversity of some of the main actors within the coalition made them cultural brokers (Bhabha 1994, Diedrich, 2021) who exploited the ambiguities of belonging to different worlds. This ambiguity was pragmatically used to legitimize not following the rules in certain situations, instead acting in counter-cultural ways. The capacity of these collaborative coalitions to confront resistance also depended on their embeddedness in the territorial and cultural periphery of the urban suburbs.

Third, paradoxically, the same distance from the city centre and its administrative headquarters that enabled the creation of space for experimentation and novel forms of collaboration also hindered the diffusion of the new practices beyond local territorial boundaries. The level of embeddedness of these new practices and organizational forms in the wider institutional field and in the organizations of the collaboration partners remains crucial for the future of this proto-institution (Lawrence et al. 2002).

The local embeddedness of these collaborative coalitions in the territorial periphery of the city enabled the development of an organizational immunity that made them 'less affected by the governance mechanisms of their institutional environments' (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006: 238). This territorial embeddedness in the suburbs of the city provided the collaborative initiatives with a broader repertoire of resources (e.g. language, culture, and local knowledge of social institutions, residents, and neighbourhoods) that were fundamental for undermining traditional practices, creating a safe space for critique, as well as borrowing and creating new practices that also hindered the diffusion and institutionalization of the new practices to other public administrative bodies in the institutional field. Territorial embeddedness therefore remains a fundamental feature in both enabling and hindering local government institutional entrepreneurship, a quality that has been overlooked by the literature.

Concluding Discussion

Our study contributes with new insights into the understanding of institutional entrepreneurship in local government and the role of territorial embeddedness. First, it stresses the importance of undermining the 'old' or existing practices (Hardy and Maguire 2008) as part of the creative process of constructing institutions in the making. The new institutional literature shows the importance of disrupting institutions (Hampel et al. 2017) and of deinstitutionalization (Oliver 1992) in institutional change. This study shows how actors within local government criticize existing institutional arrangements in order to imagine, make room for, and gain legitimacy for new practices (Seo and Creed 2002). It also shows how institutional entrepreneurship can help increase uncertainty through 'the creative destruction of the institutional order rather than proceeding it' (Hardy and McGuire 2008: 11).

In that regard, it is important to note that 'traditional' public administration practices as such are not questioned in the present cases, merely their ability to address certain problems with the necessary speed and flexibility, as part of a strategy to build something new. The new practices are added to – not replacing - the existing ones, 'expanding' the scope of the public sector in labour market integration, rather than substituting one for another. The change they construct is therefore not radical but rather cumulative or 'elaborative' (Colomy 1998), aiming at embedding change in existing structures and practices in order to infiltrate them (Zapata Campos and Zapata 2017) and 'be contagious'. Therefore, undermining or discrediting institutionalized practices to address new problems, rather than dismantling these practices, is

the strategy followed. The perception of uncertainty and the sense of urgency not only proceed from and follow change, but also must be maintained during the creative process of constructing something new. By revealing the intricacies of this process, this paper presents a nuanced view of the complex relationship between uncertainty and institutional entrepreneurship, as Hardy and McGuire (2008: 11) called for.

Second, our study refines theories of institutional entrepreneurship in local government by revealing the importance of diffusing changes beyond the boundaries of the specific collaboration in order to stabilize and institutionalize the new practices. The concept of proto-institutions (Lawrence et al. 2002) as institutions in the making still weakly entrenched in the organizational field served to expand our understanding of the need to diffuse new practices at different levels when stabilizing them. The paper shows how these coalitions of actors took advantage of the window of opportunity created by the refugee crisis, episodes of criminality in the neighbourhood, and reports of inequality published by the city. The sense of emergency generated by these events might be difficult to sustain for long, so these proto-institutions should probably be pushed quickly into full institutionalization before this window closes. In an original contribution, we illustrate how institutional entrepreneurship moves beyond early phases of deinstitutionalization and pre-institutionalization to expand towards the diffusion and institutionalization of the new practices (Greenwood and Hinings 2006).

Third, by developing a finer-grained account of the territorial dimension of institutional entrepreneurship in local government, this paper has filled a gap in the previous literature. Rather than hindering change, the local embeddedness of these initiatives in the city suburb enabled both the development of organizational immunity (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006) and a broader repertoire of resources, (e.g. languages, culture, and knowledge of local institutions, residents, and neighbourhoods) that turned out to be essential for undermining old practices and creating a safe space both for critique and freedom of action and creativity (Sundin and Tillmar 2008; Jentoft 2017), which, conversely, hampered the diffusion and institutionalization of the new practices to the field level. These spaces were also more porous, facilitating the infiltration (Zapata Campos and Zapata 2017) of practices from other fields through these collaborative alliances, in contradistinction to the city headquarters with stagnant boundaries and where the more orthodox old practices were organized. Territorial embeddedness thus remains a fundamental quality, a feature that has been overlooked by the literature on institutional entrepreneurship in local governments.

In terms of the labour market integration literature, this paper contributes by developing several insights. First, the paper advances the growing body of research on entrepreneurial municipalism (e.g. Thompson et al. 2020) and collaborative governance (e.g. Lindsay et al., 2021, Norbäck and Zapata Campos, 2022) by showing how local governments can adopt a more proactive and entrepreneurial role in coalition with local actors (including enterprises and civil society organizations) in designing and implementing labour market inclusion policies when experimenting and developing bottom–up solutions that differ from orthodox praxis. This development can also lead towards new forms of statehood, opening up new political collaborative spaces (Torfing et al. 2012, Ek and Qvist, 2022, Norbäck and Zapata Campos, 2022) for inclusive growth governance. Second, the paper shows how the growing presence of cities in this policy field resonates with processes of 'publicness' (Bozeman 1987) whereby local governments are expanding their scope of action beyond 'traditional avenues of governance' (Karvonen et al. 2014:110) typically belonging to other actors, such as the state. This local public expansion of the repertoire of practices of labour market integration, however, differs from isomorphic practices resulting from the simultaneous local implementation of state policies (Qvist, 2017; Joyce, 2015). Third, the paper also shows how these novel practices of labour market integration are grounded in the territorialized nature of local government and how, in big cities, spaces of socio-economic and spatial segregation, such as marginalized city suburbs, can instead turn into free spaces for critique and creativity as well as a resource pool for tinkering and institutional bricolage (Garud and Karnoe 2003, Barinaga, 2017).

This emergent role of local governments as change actors has scalar implications, resulting in territorialization at the local level of this policy field (e.g. Zapata Campos and Zapata,

2019). To what extent these novel practices born out of cross-sector collaborations and territorial embeddedness, succeed to improve the labour market inclusion of immigrants, and are stabilized and sustained in time, is a theme to explore in future research.

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Ethical Approval

Approval for this research has been tried by The Ethical Committee of Göteborg (Regionala etiksprövningsnämnden i Göteborg) who in decision 913-18 November 2018 decided that the research did not need ethical approval.

Disclosure Statement

We have no competing interests.

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