A case study in the Netherlands: Housing refugees in the old SZW building in The Hague.

The refugee crisis: incumbent responses to grassroots activism.

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1.   Introduction

Almost six years after the first nations in the North of Africa and the Middle East rose up against oppression the stream of refugees trying to flee from the fighting has become an issue of concern for the European Union (EU). Even though most of the people are staying in refugee camps near the borders of their own country, some have made the long trip towards the EU and its borders. 'The latest figure for 2015 marked an increase of 693 thousand first time applicants in comparison with the year before, as the number of first time applicants more than doubled from 563 thousand in 2014 to almost 1.26 million in 2015' (Eurostat statistics explained, 2016). In the Netherlands over 8000 people have asked for asylum up to June 2015 alone (VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, 2015). After entering into the EU all these people need to be housed somewhere, most in existing refugee centers, but, because of the amount of people, also in emergency and temporary housing. The issue of where to house all these people has become a very sensitive subject in many municipalities of the Netherlands. A lot of citizens have spoken out against the placement of so many foreign people into their community.

The reason why the housing of refugees has been met with very polarized views is because it has increased the debate on immigration and it has given the (extreme) rightwing parties fuel for their fire. Especially they are very much against welcoming refugees into the country. This sentiment is only strengthened by the fact that many refugees are from Islamic countries and many of them practice the Islamic faith. Combine this with the anti-Islam sentiment which has been spreading through Europe and this makes it a very current issue. It is also a very difficult issue, especially for the municipalities, because they have to find housing for the refugees in their municipalities and are met with protest from their own citizens.

The main question of this thesis is therefore: *How does the municipality of The Hague respond to pressure from grassroots activity in its plans to use the former ministry of social affairs building for the housing of refugees, and how can this be explained?*

There is another reason why I specifically have chosen this issue. This is also a very personal one. Almost 20 years ago I came with my parents to the Netherlands as a refugee from Bosnia. We too had fled a war and had to be housed by a municipality. We had to deal with mixed feelings towards us from our new neighbors after our arrival. Now, a little over 20 years later, I recently moved to The Hague and live in the Bezuidenhout area. My apartment is about 5 minutes away from a possible future housing facility for refugees, the same housing facility which will be discussed in this thesis. Again I can see the mixed feelings from the neighborhood towards our future neighbors. Only now I am part of the community and not the refugees.

1.1   Background

According to the 1951 Geneva Convention, Relating to the Status of Refugees, refugees receive protection after they enter into a nation state which has signed the convention. They are protected and the states have responsibilities towards refugees. In the Netherlands this means that

a person first enters the Asielzoekerscentrum, or AZC, until they receive the refugee status, and after that they can receive their own residence in one of the municipalities.

To clarify: a person seeking asylum is a person seeking the right to receive the refugee status and with the refugee status you can apply to become a legal citizen of the country which has given you asylum.

An asylum seeker must ask asylum in the first EU country he or she enters and is not allowed to keep going until they reach their country of preference. This is called 'asylum shopping' (Guild, Costello, Garlick & Moreno-Lax, 2015) or seeking specific countries to apply for asylum because they might be more lenient in comparison to other EU countries. These rules make it that the member states situated on the outer border of the EU and located more closely to the countries of conflict will receive the largest portion of refugees and asylum seekers. This can become a big burden for the countries on the outer border of the EU. To solve this issue the EU has created a 'new relocation system which has introduced a new set of criteria considering other numerical factors such as population size, total GDP, average number of asylum applications per one million habitants over 2010-14 and unemployment rate' (Carrera, Blockmans, Gros & Guild, 2015). According to the new relocation key the Netherlands has to take in 4.35% of the asylum seekers who enter the EU. Which are thousands of people.

In the Netherlands housing all these people has become a difficult task for the municipalities, recent events in Geldermalsen, Enschede and Heesch are only a couple examples. The current refugee situation has already been dubbed a 'crisis'. According to the definition in the Oxford English Dictionary; a crisis is a time of 'difficulty, insecurity, and suspense in politics or commerce'. In many municipalities the citizens have protested the placement of a new AZC or the idea to give refugees a house from the social housing lists. In some cases this has even resulted in violence and uproar against the police.

1.2   Aim of the research

Considering the limited research available on grassroots influence on the local policy agenda, the first aim of this research is to contribute to the existing literature. There has been research done on grassroots but not much research has been done on the influence they might have on local policy issues specifically. Another aim of this thesis is to try to understand why an incumbent would opt for a certain response when dealing with grassroots concerning this particular issue. The final aim of this research is for it to be of some practical use.

The housing of refugees is for many municipalities a very current and important issue and so any result found could be of practical use for a municipality dealing with grassroots. A lot of municipalities are dealing with resistance from their citizens to the arrival of so many people with different nationalities. So any insight gained from the municipality of The Hague, in dealing with this resistance against the arrival of refugees, can be used by other municipalities to prepare for the possible resistance in their own municipality.

To do all this, this thesis will try to provide some insight as to the responses of the municipality of The Hague and if grassroots influences indeed have contributed in the change of a specific policy.

1.3   Research question

As mentioned in my introduction, the main question to be answered in this thesis is:

How does the municipality of The Hague respond to pressure from grassroots activity in its plans to use the former ministry of social affairs building for the housing of refugees, and how can this be explained?

To answer this question we have to discuss a couple of sub-questions as well.

- What is the issue and why is this an issue in The Hague?
- Which grassroots took interest in the issue?
- What kind of grassroots are they?
- Does the grassroots involved have members with shared policy beliefs or are they grassroots of convenience?
- How did the incumbent present the issue?
- How did the incumbent respond to the issue?
- How can this response be explained?

2   Theoretical framework

It is interesting to note that 'attention patterns and the democratic performance of governments in responding to change in public moods and in the salience of problems have become a vested object of comparative research, this is still less true for the study of local agenda setting' (Breeman, Scholten & Timmermans, 2015). The municipality of The Hague is a local government with 'its own democratic legitimacy and is enabled to set a local policy agenda' (Breeman et al., 2015). Housing is one of the policies for which the municipality is mostly responsible. It is with the cooperation of the housing corporations that the municipality provides its citizens with affordable housing. Therefore the issue of housing refugees in the municipality would be considered an issue on the local policy agenda of the municipality.

2.1   Literature overview and definitions

Grassroots: When looking at the Oxford Dictionaries the most relevant definitions of grassroots are:

- It is the root or most basic level of an entity. Such as an organization.
- Ordinary people regarded as the main body of an organization's membership.

Organization: Subsequently we also need to look at what an organization is.

- An organized group of people with a particular purpose, such as a business or government department.
- The action of organizing something.

When looking at the literature on grassroots organizations 'the term grassroots calls to mind an image of citizen politics rooted in local community. The notion of citizen participation independent of the interest of elites, whether those elites are in government or industry' (Walker, 2014). Furthermore they are 'voluntary associations independent of the political system' (Andrews & Edwards, 2004) and they 'make public interest claims either promoting or resisting social change' (Andrews & Edwards, 2004). In regards to organizational structure 'grassroots are likely to be more informal, smaller, newer and have fewer resources' (Moore, Winders, Frohling, Jones III & Roberts, 2007) in comparison to an organization like a NGO.

So with this information we can make a working definition which will be used in this thesis, namely:

A grassroots organization is a community based voluntary and informally structured organization, which aims at influencing a specific issue (Timmermans & Van Venetië, 2015).

There are four types of grassroots; the first is consumer activism, the second is citizen action/ participatory governance, the third is not in my backyard (NIMBY) and the fourth is social / cultural activism (Timmermans & Van Venetië, 2015). The issue discussed in this thesis is the housing of refugees in a specific building in The Hague. The interest here lies in the fact that surrounding neighbours do not wish this building to be used to house refugees. The type of activism which best describes this is NIMBY activism. This is 'the protectionist attitudes of, and oppositional tactics adopted by, community groups facing an unwelcome development in their neighborhood' (Dear, 1992).

With the existence of a grassroots organization this means that there also is a challenged party, the incumbent. Actually when looking up the word incumbent I have found that it states it is just a person who holds a particular position or office. Gamson (1975) uses the distinction between challengers and those who are being challenged.

2.2   Possible incumbent responses

According to Gamson (1975) for a challenging organization to be successful they have to achieve a combination of two goals, namely acceptance by the incumbent actor and they would have to have acquired new advantages for their beneficiary. There are then four possible outcomes, full response, co-optation, preemption and collapse, as shown in Table 1.

		Acceptance	
		Full	None
New Advantages	Many	Full response	Preemption
	None	Co-option	Collapse

Table 1. (Gamson, 1975)

Gamson further explains these four possible outcomes as such: 'The full response and collapse categories are relatively unambiguous successes and failures – in the one case the achievement of acceptance and new advantages, in the other, the achievement of neither' (1975). The challenging organization would strive to achieve a full outcome response and the collapse response would be the least successful. The final two are also at opposite sides to one another, co-optation is acceptance without new advantages and preemption achieves new advantages but did not achieve acceptance. To measure new advantages is quite straightforward; every challenging organization has certain goals they wish to achieve. New advantages are, therefore, acquired if the challenging organization has achieved one, some or all of its goals. But for acceptance to be measure there must be one of the four indicators present. Gamson (1975) has identified those as consultation, negotiations, formal recognition and inclusion as shown in Table 2.

Consultation	The incumbent actor has to ask the challenging party for consultation.
Negotiations	The incumbent actor has to enter into long term negotiations, not just at the height of the crisis.
Formal recognition	The incumbent actor makes it clear, often in writing, that they recognize the challenging party as a spokesperson for a particular constituency.
Inclusion	Members of the challenging party become members in the incumbent organization.

Table 2. (Gamson, 1975)

Gamson's theory gives us an idea of what the responses of an incumbent can be but they are not discussed as particular actions. Van Venetië on the other hand has posted, on his web blog, nine specific responses an incumbent can have. These nine responses are the result of interviews conducted with incumbent actors. Table 3 shows the nine responses an incumbent can have in dealing with a challenging organization, or in our case a grassroots organization.

Wait	Do nothing.
Talk	- Use a charm offensive to reduce distrust. - Convince the grassroots: call upon their own rational framing.
Create a new playing field	- Citizenship engagement: create a platform for grassroots. - Formal consultation.
Embrace and collaborate	
Buying off	Give the grassroots financial compensation.
Neglect	In the meantime just do as you were planning.
Imitate and adopt grassroots techniques	- Make your own message personal. - Help or sponsor an existing grassroots. - Create a grassroots movement in openness.
Fight by starting a counter offensive	- Tell your truth to the media. - Mobilize you own supporters. - Start a lawsuit.
Anticipate	Very early start talking to grassroots before they become active.

Table 3. (Van Venetië, 2015)

Some of the outcomes stated in Gamson's theory do appear in Van Venetië's work, as well, just in a different setting. In the latter they are the result of a specific action. Gamson's theory is, for the purpose of this thesis, very constraining. Gamson assumes that all challenging groups have a clear division between the group itself and its beneficiaries. But a grassroots organization is an informally structured organization with participants made up from the community and they are their own beneficiaries. It will be very difficult to find formal recognition or inclusion since having a spokesperson would suggest a form of hierarchy in the challenging organization. Even negotiations will be a difficult indicator to find since a grassroots organization wants to influence a specific issue at hand and does not aim to enter into long term negotiations. Consultation is only an indicator if the incumbent actor has asked the challenging party to give a testimony or to attend a hearing on the subject. Since grassroots organizations are often highly dependent on the public opinion to agree with their stance on an issue they use (social)media and demonstrations to try to influence this. So it is very unlikely for the incumbent to invite the entire demonstrating party into a consultation session.

Since the focus of this thesis is on the responses of an incumbent I will not go into the new advances aspect of the theory any further, because this relies on the success of a challenging organization. I will, however, use the idea of success and incorporate it into the four indicators. In table 4 I have used Gamson's indicators and turned them into possible responses of an incumbent.

Discussion	The incumbent actor engages in a dialog with the grassroots.
Recognition	The incumbent actor recognizes the position of the grassroots and might agree but this does not mean it can complying with their ideas or goals.
Negotiations	The incumbent actor tries to reach middle ground by negotiating with the grassroots.
Acceptance	The incumbent actor accepts the position of the grassroots organization and complies with their wishes.

Table 4.

The order of the responses is such in that the last response is the one with the highest level of compliance from the incumbent actor and therefore is the most successful outcome for a grassroots organization. So, instead of consultation, the first response is discussion. There is no invitation needed and both the incumbent and the grassroots organization engage in a discussion about the issue to see if they can solve whatever the problems are. The second and third response I have rearranged because recognition of an issue does not mean that any of the goals or positions can be met by the incumbent. There might not be enough money to do so or it does not fall into the legislation of the municipality. Negotiations and Acceptance are straight forward in their meaning.

When looking at the nine responses by Van Venetië they are a lot more practical and detailed compared to the four, I have derived from Gamson's theory, in table 4. Another big difference is that the nine responses by Van Venetië hardly involve any cooperation between the incumbent and the grassroots organization or compliance to the demands of the grassroots

organization. Eight of the nine responses, except 'embrace and collaborate', are ways for the incumbent to keep the grassroots as small, quiet and ineffective as possible. This would suggest that the incumbent actor either tries to counter/ignore the grassroots organization or 'embrace and collaborate' which seems to place a constraint to the theory. Figure 1 therefor tries to show how table 3 and table 4 can come together starting from the very passive and minimalistic responses to the very active and elaborate ones. This division into passive and active shows how much effort an incumbent has put into the response. They are then separated in positive responses, which Gamson would consider being responses that would make a grassroots organization successful, and then there are negative responses on the other end of the spectrum.

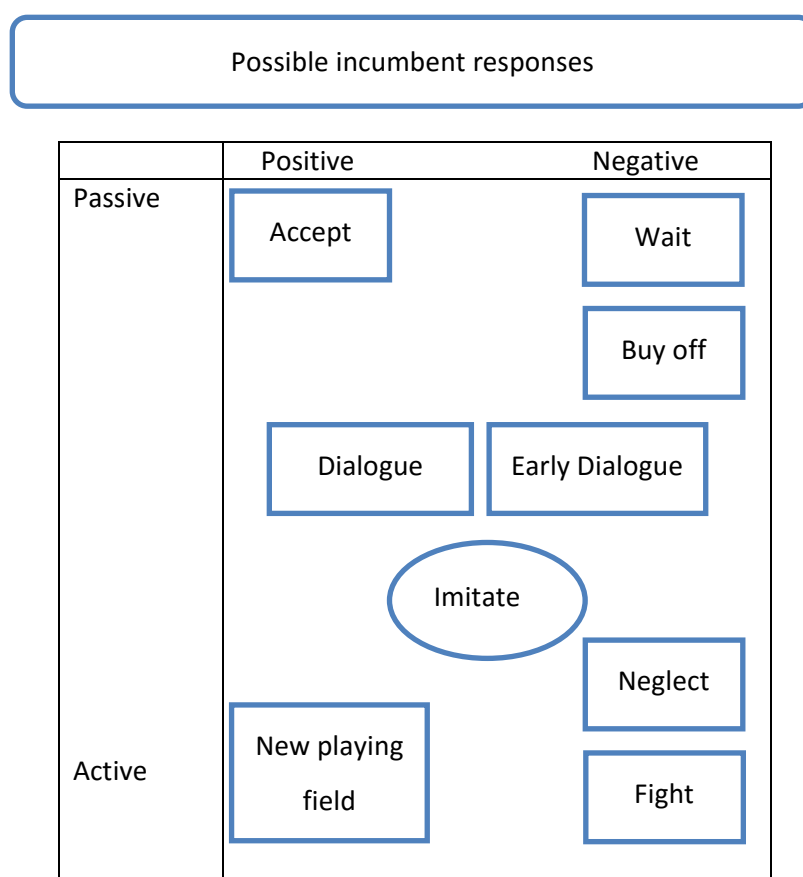| Possible incumbent responses		
	Positive	Negative
Passive	Accept	Wait
		Buy off
	Dialogue	Early Dialogue
	Imitate	
		Neglect
Active	New playing field	Fight

Figure 1.

Figure 1 only states the possible responses an incumbent could have as a response to a grassroots organization but there is a need for further elaboration. Each of the responses in figure 1 are in need of a definition and a way of recognizing them in the field, an operationalization, if you will. The response Imitate is the only one placed in the center of the figure. This is done because this response has 3 different definitions with different outcomes. Table 5 shows the responses from figure 1 with their corresponding definitions and the way each response can be found in the field. Most of the definitions for the responses are entirely from Van Venetië's work, however, some have parts which are derived from Gamson's theory.

Figure 1 with the corresponding definitions and operationalization, as show in table 5, will be the theory I will be testing in this thesis. It is a combination of Gamson's theory, a more theoretical and somewhat older theory, and the theory by Van Venetië, which is more practical based and more current. The combination of the two gives a good balance to find what kind of responses an incumbent can give when dealing with grassroots activism.

Response	Definition	Operationalization
Accept	The incumbent actor accepts the position of the grassroots organization and complies with their wishes.	Changing the initial plan or policy in accordance to the wishes of the grassroots organization.
Wait	Do nothing.	A period of time, at least one month, in which the incumbent does not do anything to continue the policy or respond to the grassroots organization.
Buy off	Give the grassroots financial compensation in return for them ending their campaign.	The incumbent provides a form of compensation to appease the grassroots.
Dialogue	The incumbent actor engages in a dialogue with the grassroots.	The incumbent organizes meetings to inform and answer questions specific to the policy. The meeting is organized after the policy has been public for some time.
Early Dialogue	Early on start talking to grassroots before they become active. If they do become active: call upon their own rational framing to convince them.	Right after introducing the policy organize a meeting and provide the information to deter any objections.
Imitate	Make your own message personal 1, help or sponsor an existing grassroots 2, or create a grassroots movement in openness 3.	Campaign for the specific policy. Give aid to a grassroots supporting the policy or create a grassroots to support the policy.
Neglect	Ignore the grassroots and just do as you were planning.	Ignore any objections and continue with the policy as planned.
Fight	Tell your truth to the media, mobilize you own supporters, take action against a grassroots organization such as a lawsuit.	Go into the offensive by using the (social)media to tell your side of the story. Use legal actions to prevent demonstrations. Mobilize the police or begin a lawsuit against the grassroots.
New Playing Field	Citizenship engagement: create a platform for grassroots in order for the grassroots to be part of the consultation team regarding the issue.	Create a platform for grassroots in order for the grassroots to be part of the consultation team regarding the issue.

Table 5.

To elaborate more on table 5 I will start with the response Imitate. Like I have said before this is the only response placed in the middle of figure 1 and has 3 possible explanations in the definition as shown in table 5. These 3 explanations need to be elaborated on. Part 1: make your own message personal, is a neutral response and might not even be a response to a grassroots organization. It could even be part of an advertising campaign to introduce an issue. Part 2: help or sponsor an existing grassroots, is a positive response to one grassroots and negative one to another and therefore sits in the middle. Part 3: create a grassroots movement in openness, can be seen as a negative response because it suggests that a new grassroots organization is created as a counter to the already existing one(s).

For the second response, Wait, the operationalization states that the waiting period needs to be at least one month for it to be the response: wait. The reason for this is because most incumbents will need some time to come up with a response. They might even need a week or two. For the response to be deliberate the time should be at least one month. An incumbent would have given another response, if they had wanted to, by then.

The form of compensation is not stated for response number three. This is because depending on the kind of grassroots and the type of policy compensation could come in many forms. It could be a simple monetary compensation for the people affected by the policy. But it could also be the creation of a park or new school for a neighborhood. Some grassroots are concerned with one single issue and these grassroots organizations might cease to exist after the buy off. It could have been a condition from the incumbent to receive the buy off. With this response we should also take into account that the grassroots organization did not take the buy off or that they might have taken it but have not completely ended their activities. If they are not a single issue grassroots they might have put their focus on a different issue.

The difference in the two types of meetings for responses four and five is in their goals and timing. Are they simply there to inform and have a moment of Q&A or are they organized to convince the people against it. Also if the meeting is organized right after a policy has been made public it would fall under response Early Dialogue. If the meeting, however, comes a couple of weeks after the policy has been made public it would have made it possible for grassroots to become active and it no longer falls under Dialogue. The other responses need no further explanation.

2.3   Explaining why a response is chosen

As discussed in the previous paragraphs a grassroots organization will try to influence an incumbent and this incumbent will respond in a certain way to the grassroots. But what we have not discussed is why an incumbent will respond in a specific manner. To possibly understand this the advocacy coalition framework (ACF) needs to be explained because it is the ACF theory which will be used to explain why an incumbent chooses a specific response. The ACF states that to understand policy change we first have to understand that the unit of analysis 'is not any specific governmental organization or program, but a policy subsystem (or domain), A subsystem consists of

those actors from a variety of public and private organizations who are actively concerned with a policy problem or issue' (Sabatier, 1999). Secondly, a reason for a change in policy is 'a significant perturbation external to the subsystem, i.e., changes in socio-economic conditions, public opinion or policy outputs from other subsystems' (Sabatier, 1999).

Within a subsystem different public and private actors, from now on referred to stakeholders, can be united in a policy coalition or advocacy coalition. For this to work these stakeholders have to 'share a set of normative and causal beliefs and engage in a nontrivial degree of coordinated activity over time' (Sabatier, 1999). For the ease of understanding these actors have to share common beliefs and have to have worked together in the past. These beliefs are explained as the 'deep core', such as the typical left/right scale, the 'policy core beliefs' which are 'fundamental value priorities', such as the 'division of authority between government and market', and the 'secondary aspects', such as specific regulation or 'budgetary allocations' (Sabatier, 1999). Figure 2 is a simplified chart which shows what is needed for an advocacy coalition.
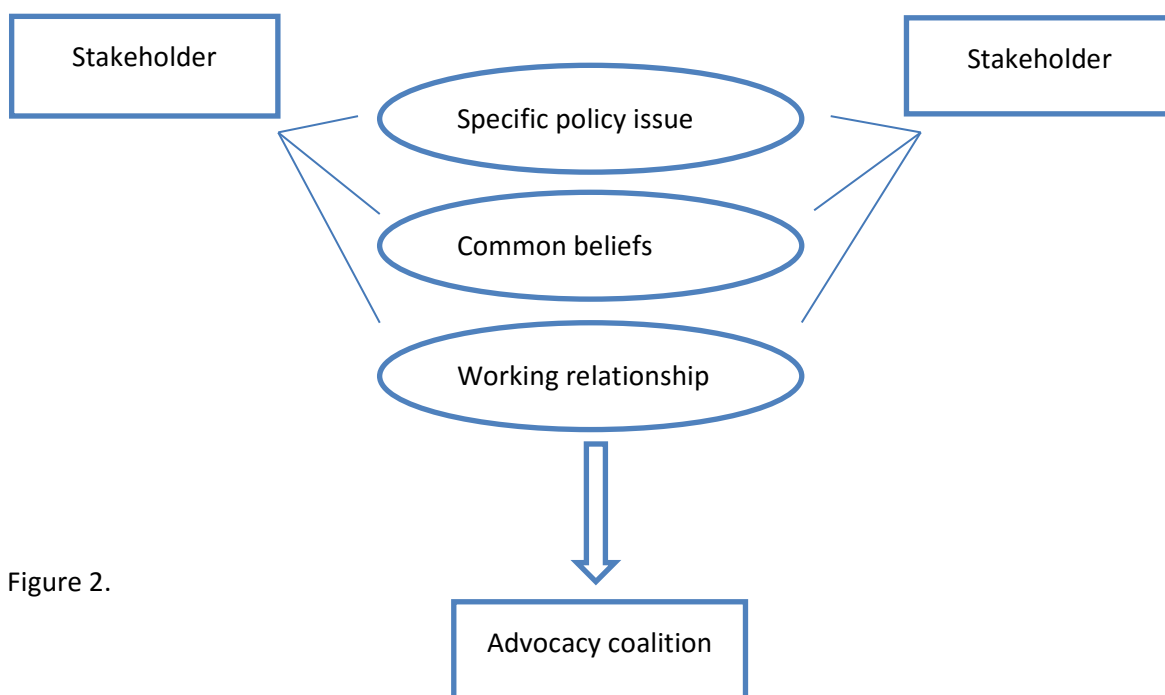

Figure 2.

Now that we know what is needed for an advocacy coalition we can continue this train of thought and one can argue that an incumbent can be part of an advocacy coalition too. For example in discussing the housing of refugees we can quickly recognize more than two stakeholders involved, the municipality and the housing corporations for instance, who have an interest in a specific issue, where to house the refugees, they would have had a working relationship in the past and they would have common beliefs as to how to solve this issue. In regards to the grassroots organization we can argue the same. The grassroots organization can be part of an advocacy coalition. If they are the one stakeholder they might find the media, a NGO, a political party etc. to be the second.

Because the goal is to influence a specific issue, they would share the same beliefs because they wish to influence this issue. Even though a grassroots organization has an informal structure they are still an organization who in the past could have had some form of working relationship with the other stakeholders for this issue. To clarify:

Both an incumbent and a grassroots organization can be part of an advocacy coalition, but an advocacy coalition does not need to have an incumbent or a grassroots organization in the coalition.

Because the nature of grassroots organizations, the informal structure and community based, it is not always the case that they belong to an advocacy coalition. It is more common, however, that the incumbent is part of an advocacy coalition. This is because of the nature of policy setting and agenda setting. In order to get a policy through there are many levels of government it has to pass and at each level there are other stakeholders who can get involved. Once it reaches the public the advocacy coalition can already be formed.

A possible reason why an incumbent will choose a specific response can be found in the strength of the advocacy coalition the incumbent is a part of, or if the incumbent is at all part of an advocacy coalition. If an incumbent and grassroots organization are both part of an advocacy coalition one could argue that the strength of each can be a reason as to what response was chosen.

Sabatier (1999) suggests that outside influence is a possible reason for a policy change. He phrases it as 'significant perturbation external to the subsystem'. That would suggest that one advocacy coalition, in this case the one with the challenging grassroots organization in it, could change the policy made by the other advocacy coalition, the one with the challenged incumbent in it. He also states that 'deep core beliefs are very resistant to change' but that 'policy core beliefs are somewhat less rigidly held' (Sabatier, 1999). So a reason for a specific response can also differ depending on what kind of beliefs are being challenged.

Another reason as to why an incumbent will choose one response over another is what Sabatier calls 'policy-oriented learning' it 'involves increased knowledge of problem parameters and the factors affecting them' (Sabatier, 1999). This increased knowledge is the result of experience in the policy domain or the addition of policy specific information. Responses given in the past to similar issues may result in a change in response the next time or it may proof that a specific response results in an acceptable outcome.

The difficulty now lies in the operationalization of the different ACF based theories so that we can use them in this thesis. Leifeld has tried to operationalize these policy core beliefs as preferences which are discussed in the media and which can be measure with a discourse network analysis. He states that 'actors reveal their preferences in the media or other arenas, and thus other actors feel encouraged to support them or reveal their opposition. As such, this articulation of normative beliefs can be … understood as a "discursive layer" of subsystem politics' (2013). However for the purpose of this thesis the theory of Sabatier will be the primary focus. Sabatier

give us a definition of policy core beliefs, they are 'broad in scope (affecting virtually all members of the subsystem), involve very salient beliefs, and have been the source of long-term conflict' (Sabatier, 1999). To make it more specific, it is about the 'identification of which stakeholders welfare is of primary importance' and about the 'orientation on basic value priorities' (Zafonte & Sabatier, 2004). When speaking of welfare in this case it is not just the monetary welfare of the stakeholders. The word can be interchanged with wellbeing, to give a more accurate idea. I have divided the policy core beliefs in 3 separate topics, namely social welfare, spending policy and safety, as shown in table 7. I have listed some of the subtopics which fall under these 3 but this is not everything.

Policy core beliefs		
Social welfare	Spending policy	Safety
• Ideology	• Tax money	• Health
• Religion	• Economy	• Environmental
• Culture	• Personal	• Personal

Table 7.

What social welfare entails is the social freedoms for the citizens of a country. This is the freedom for citizens to practice their religion and everything that goes with it. They can be free to express their ideologies without restraint or punishment, to be able to show their cultural differences and many more freedoms. Spending policy is everything which has to do with the monetary rights and rules which citizens of a country have. This is the use of taxpayers' money, the workings of how it is used, liberal or conservative, and to what extent is it fairly distributed. It is all the regulations and rules needed to have a healthy free market economy, also the division between market and state interference fall into this subtopic of policy core beliefs. Within the topic of safety falls everything that is used to keep the citizens of a country safe. These are all the health regulations, housing regulations but also environmental regulations. It is also concerned with personal safety. This would be everything to do with keeping a person, their family or their surroundings safe.

How to operationalize what makes an advocacy coalition strong lies again with the ACF theory. At the core the members of an advocacy coalition have shared beliefs and those beliefs are what hold an advocacy coalition together. An advocacy coalition wishes to convey those shared believes into policy. Sabatier therefore does not believe that a coalition of convenience, which is solely based on short term self-interest, will have success in the policy field.

2.4 Hypotheses

In the previous 3 sections of this chapter I have tried to convey what the theories are from which I have derived my own theoretical framework. I have also tried to show what the possible responses for an incumbent can be and why an incumbent would be inclined to choose one over the other. This all has led me to my hypotheses.

H1: If the policy core beliefs of the grassroots do not match the incumbent's policy core beliefs, then the response given to the grassroots is a negative one.

This hypothesis is derived from the ACF and the fact that policy can fall under different beliefs of an incumbent. Even though beliefs, that do not fall under the deep core beliefs, can be more easily altered than if they did, when these beliefs of the incumbent differ from the beliefs of the grassroots it is less likely that they will be altered. The possibility for change or alteration is there but the response will still be a negative one because the beliefs are not shared between the grassroots and the incumbent.

H2: When a grassroots organization does not have members with shared beliefs, but is part of a coalition of convenience, the more likely it is that the response given by the incumbent is a negative one.

A coalition of convenience is based on short term self-interest and does not share the working relationship between the stakeholders which is necessary for a strong coalition. Its goal is also very basic, once achieved a stakeholder can leave the advocacy coalition. Also it does not have members with share beliefs. Because of it the relationship between the stakeholders is not as strong and the incumbent will be more likely to give a negative response. This makes that a grassroots organization with stakeholders who have shared beliefs is a much stronger coalition, and in that case the incumbent would be more inclined to respond positively.

H3: If the grassroots organization is not part of a broad coalition, then it is more likely that the response given by the incumbent is a negative one.

A broad coalition is a coalition with many members, or stakeholders. Such a coalition can be intimidating to an incumbent because it has, or represents, a lot of people. If an incumbent is met by a large group of stakeholders it will leave a bigger impact than if the coalition has only a couple of stakeholders. Not just the number of members in the coalition is an important factor, but also what kind of stakeholders they are. A big NGO, for example, with a lot of recourses can be a very valuable partner in a coalition. Just like a government organization or a big corporation. A broad coalition will consist of a (large) number of stakeholders with significant resources available to them.

H4: The more experience an incumbent has, with a grassroots organization under a specific policy issue, the more likely the incumbent is to give a negative response.

This hypothesis is derived from the theory of policy-oriented learning I have discussed previously. Here the incumbent has had the experience in the past in dealing with similar issues and

therefore has had a growing awareness of the possible grassroots interests. This is what Sabatier calls increased knowledge. This increased knowledge or experience has given the incumbent the upper hand in making strategies to anticipate the grassroots activity and has made plans accordingly. With this growing awareness the incumbent has already made concessions in advance so that the grassroots have very little ground to stand on. Even though these concessions can be seen as positive responses they are not. The reason is because they were already made by the incumbent not as a responses but so that they did not have to respond favorably. So the incumbent has simply done everything they could and there is no more room to comply with the grassroots organizations wishes. So the reply to the grassroots is a negative one. The final reason is that experiences in the past have shown that certain grassroots organization will not be much of an issue and there is no reason to take them into account. So again because of the increased knowledge of the incumbent the response given to the grassroots is a negative one.

3. Research design

The design of this thesis is a qualitative single case study with the municipality of The Hague as the unit of analysis. The main focus will be on the specific responses the municipality has had to grassroots pressure on the policy issue: housing of refugees. The responses are the dependent variable in this research. The Hague, however, is not a typical case study. The Hague is a municipality with a history with grassroots organizations and is therefore more experienced in how to interact with them. This might influence the type of responses given to the grassroots. It is, therefore, a critical case. This, because the municipality is one with experience and history with grassroots. Therefore the findings can be generalized and used for other similar municipalities with similar issues.

3.1 Case selection

To accommodate the many refugees coming to the Netherland the government decided, during the cabinet meeting on the 2nd of October 2015, that they would convert old government buildings into suitable housing for the refugees. The Hague is the first municipality to accept this solution given by the National government. The building that once housed the 'Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid (SZW)' will be used as a temporary home for about 600 refugees till the 1st of January 2016 and after that it will be converted into permanent housing for refugees with a refugee status.

The unit of observation is therefore the municipality of The Hague, during the time span of May 2015 till May 2016. The reason to look into the events from May 2015 till May 2016 is that it is exactly one year of data to look into. Also it was from around May that the term 'crisis' was becoming the standard when discussing the European refugee issue. It was leading up to the summer months in which hundreds of people drowned while trying to make the crossing over the

Mediterranean into Europe. This 12 month period includes the months before the cabinet meeting of October 2015 and all the events leading up to the meeting. It encompasses the months between the decision of that cabinet meeting and the actual refugees arriving at the SZW building in The Hague and it includes the months after their departure in January of 2016. May 2016 is the final month because of the 12 month timespan and the deadline of this thesis.

The reasons to choose The Hague as the case study for this thesis are that for one it is the first municipality to implement the use of empty government buildings as housing for refugees. Another thing that should be taken into account is that the biggest opposition party in the municipality council is the extremist right party PVV. They are as big as the second coalition party and have only 2 seats less than the biggest party in the municipality. The views of the PVV have been very anti-Islam and since most of the refugees are from Islamic countries this decision could be met with some resistance in the municipality. It shows the very polarized views toward the housing issue. The third reason is that according to the taakstelling of 2015, The Hague has to house 420 refugees in the first half of 2015 (Rijksoverheid, 2015), this is less than the bigger municipalities of Rotterdam and Amsterdam but significantly more than the other ones. This gives it a unique position in the middle and any solutions found in The Hague could be used in the other municipalities. The fourth reason why The Hague is a good municipality to use as a case study is the makeup of its citizens and then mainly their heritage. In 2011 almost 49% of the people living in The Hague had non-Dutch heritage and almost 30% had non-Western heritage (Stoeldraijer & Loozen, 2011). This makes that the struggles The Hague would have with the housing issue can be calculated to be similar to that of smaller municipalities. They would see their citizens with non-Western heritage go up significantly with the build of a new AZS or refugee shelter. A municipality such as Geldermalsen, who famously refused the housing of so many people, would with a population of 26300 see their citizens with non-Dutch heritage go towards 20% with the arrival of an AZC as its municipality was suggesting. The final reason to choose The Hague lies in the history it has had with grassroots organizations and because of its experience in how to interact with grassroots. This all makes The Hague a unique municipality to use as a case study.

3.2   Data collection

The data collected for this research has come from multiple secondary data sources. Most of the information has been found by looking into newspaper articles from local and national newspapers. They have been valuable sources when looking to the size and scope of the refugee issue. The articles were found in the printed press but also digital news outlets have been used. When looking for information for the specific plans to house the refugees, official government documents were very useful. These documents were issued by the National government but when looking into the specific plans for The Hague, the documents of the municipality were used. To find information about the grassroots some of the newspaper articles were helpful but it was mostly the

local websites that had more information on them. Table 8 shows all the information sources used for this thesis.

Printed News	• National
	- NRC
	- Trouw
	- Volkskrant
	- Algemeen Dagblad
	• Local
	- Stadskrant
Digital News	• National
	- Nu.nl
	- Nos.nl
Websites	• National
	- Rijksoverheid.nl
	• Regional
	- Den Haag.nl
	- Omroepwest.nl
	• Local
	- Bezuidenhout.nl
	- Facebook.com/Bezuidenhout Den haag

Table 8.

3.3   Reliability

In order to show that this research is reliable I will elaborate on the way I have found the data. The first step was done by using the Google search engine to find the basic information regarding the issue and the initial stakeholders. This was all done in Dutch and I have only used Dutch sources. The initial information was found by using the most basic search topics. Such as 'Refugees The Hague', 'Housing refugees The Hague'. This was followed by a more in depth search by using the information acquired during the initial search. These were search topics such as 'Refugees Bezuidenhout', 'Housing SZW building', 'Taakstelling 2015 Den Haag'. The newspaper articles were found by using the search engines on their own website and for the NRC and Volkskrant I have used LexisNexis. The stadskrant was available to download. The websites are all open to public and most have a search engine on their website.

4.   The case study: The Hague

In the previous chapter I have already mentioned some of the characteristics of the municipality of The Hague and why I have chosen it to be the case for my thesis. I would like to elaborate a bit more on that before we go into the specific issue at hand. The municipality of The Hague is the third biggest municipality of the Netherlands and it houses the Dutch parliament and its separate governmental departments. This gives it a front row seat at the policy making arena of

the Dutch government. Arguably, it is not very strange that it was the municipality of The Hague who was the first to implement the use of old government buildings to possibly house refugees. Having said this, it is also one of the municipalities with a number of unused old governmental buildings which can be used to house refugees. Not all municipalities have such buildings available to them.

Because the government needs less and less office space, due to cut backs and flex work, the department of housing and government affairs created a master plan to reduce the number of government offices. According to their report the government would need 30% less square meters of office space in 2020 compared to 2012. As of the 1st of January the 'Rijksvastgoedbedrijf is the one responsible to implement the master plans' (Rijksoverheid, 2016). These plans aimed to reduce the number of empty buildings and to reduce the cost of having so many empty buildings to take care of. According to the numbers shown in the Rijksjaarverslag of 2015, the estimated percentage of empty buildings, which was 7.4 % for 2015, ended up being 6% because the COA, or Centraal Orgaan opvang Asielzoekers, rented the buildings from the Rijksvastgoedbedrijf (Rijksoverheid, 2016). The COA used these buildings to (temporarily) house refugees, like it did in The Hague.

The building in question, which was used to temporarily house refugees in 2015, was the previous SZW building in the neighborhood of Bezuidenhout. The building was put up for sale on the 22th of March 2016. After sale, the building will be made up for 70% out of apartments and 30% will be free for small businesses. However, there is a demand that the buyer creates enough adequate apartments to house 350 status holders during the first 5 years. The other apartments are free to be sold or put up for rent.

The neighborhood itself is a very young neighborhood with the average age of 37.7 of the citizens living there. 69.5% is between the ages of 20 and 64. In 2015 55.7% of the citizens were Dutch by origin (autochtoon), 44.3% were of other than Dutch origins (allochtoon) and 22% of these came from Western countries. The average in The Hague is 48.8% to 51.2% and 17% are people from Western countries. The average income is €34.500 which is €2500 a year more than the average income in the rest of The Hague (Den haag in cijfers, 2015). Compared to other neighborhoods in The Hague it is considered to be a good and very popular neighborhood to live in. Table 9 shows the numbers between Bezuidenhout en The Hague.

	Bezuidenhout	The Hague
Receive an income	81%	67%
Average income	€34.500	€32000
Autochtoon	55.7%	48.8%
Allochtoon	44.3%	51.2%
Western Allochtoon	22%	17%

Table 9.

4.1   History with grassroots

The Hague, like any big municipality, has had experiences with grassroots in the past. An example of grassroots in The Hague is one in the period 1997-2001 when the municipality needed more space and the plan was to expand into neighboring, smaller, municipalities. Per the 1st of January 1999 The Hague would be allowed to annex the neighborhoods of Ypenburg and Leidschenveen and these would be linked to The Hague through a corridor which would lead through Voorburg. 'This all led to a great uproar amongst the citizens of the neighboring municipalities who were afraid that The Hague would annex their entire municipality. This was met by a grassroots organization which had the slogan: samenwerken, ja, annexatie, nee' (Janssen-Jansen, 2004).

More recently, in 2014, the municipality had to deal with a summer full of protest in the neighborhood Schilderswijk. The protests were back and forth between separate grassroots. The main theme was anti-Israel vs. the ISIS terror group and the anti-Islam movement growing in the Netherlands. It started with a demonstration in The Hague against the Israeli airstrikes on Palestine. The demonstration was partly organized by the Nederlands Palestina Komitee but many other citizens with Moroccan and Turkish backgrounds joined the protest. There were also ISIS flags shown during the protest and anti-Semitist phrases were uttered. This sparked a protest in return in the Schilderswijk neighborhood against ISIS and Islam in general. This was organized by Pro Patria, which is a grassroots organization created by a group of friends. However, according to other sources Pro Patria might also be a front for an extremist right winged organization. This group's demonstration was supported by PVV, the Dutch right winged political party. This demonstration however, ended in fights because some of the people in the Schilderswijk were offended by the anti-Islam phrases uttered. The Schilderswijk is one of the neighborhoods of The Hague where the number of people practicing the Islamic faith is the highest. It has also been referred to as a place with a high number of ISIS supporters. The municipality solved this by ordering that no demonstrations were allowed to be held in the neighborhood.

Because most of the refugees are now coming from non-western, mostly Islamic, countries some of the same fears as in 2014 in the Schilderswijk are now starting again in other neighborhoods, like Bezuidenhout. Most of the people living in Bezuidenhout remember the protests and the chaos during the summer of 2014 on the other part of the city and are now afraid that putting 350 status holders in their neighborhood might cause them the same problems as the Schilderswijk had.

4.2   Overview of the issue: housing refugees in the SZW building

On the 13th of October 2015 the municipality of The Hague announced that the SZW building would be used until the 31 of December 2015 to temporarily house, a maximum of, 600 refugees and after that it would become housing for status holders. On the 16th of October the municipality

organized an information evening for all the people and businesses in the surrounding area concerning the arrival of the refugees. On the 4th of November the alderman J. Wijsmuller announced, on behalf of the municipality and via letter, to all the neighbors that the following week circa 600 refugees would be arriving. They would arrive in groups over a 5 day period and this all would be organized by the COA (Wijsmuller, J., 2015).

To give an accurate overview of the entire issue we have to look at the issue from two separate sides: the side of the grassroots and the side of the incumbent. The incumbent in this case is the municipality of The Hague and the housing of refugees was much sooner a point of interest for them than for the grassroots. The municipality had already made plans and agreements before the decision to house the refugees in the SZW building became public and known to the neighborhood of Bezuidenhout. So I will first go into the issue from the perspective of the incumbent followed by the issue from the perspective of the grassroots organization.

In the coalition agreement of the municipality of The Hague, published in 2014, the area surrounding the Laan van NOI station was mentioned, in the chapter: Investing in key areas (Coalitieakkoord 2014,) as an area which would be fixed up to the benefits of its neighborhood but also the municipality. The SZW building is located in that area and it is right across form the Laan van NOI station. This document shows that the municipality already had plans for the area long before the grassroots became active. Some statements, which are especially relevant to the issue of the SZW building are:

- When repurposing empty office buildings the municipality will look, specifically, for the possibilities to house small businesses.
- We will put more emphasis on the use of already existing structures. By example, transforming office buildings into apartment buildings. (Coalitieakkoord, 2014,)

The document give also an insight to the specific beliefs of the municipality council of The Hague. There are 16 chapters in the document and each can be seen as a chapter on their common policy beliefs. The statements discussed above apply to the use of the SZW building. These statements show the spending policy of the municipality council. With investments they wish to expand the economy, by stimulating small businesses, and they wish to cut cost by repurposing existing structures to solve the housing issue in The Hague. Other policy beliefs which are relevant to the SZW issue is the use of the green areas in the municipality. On page 24 the municipality council states that 'there is more work to be done in some areas in order for people to want to stay there and not just use them to commute from point A to point B' (Coalitieakkoord 2014). The areas around the train stations are some of those areas. This would fall under the Safety policy belief. Making areas accessible, safe and green again. The final policy belief which is relevant to the issue is discussed on page 23 'discrimination on the basis of heritage, sexual orientation, female oppression and isolation do not belong in our city' (Coalitieakkoord, 2014). This would fall under the policy belief Social welfare. These beliefs which were put on paper resulted in the policy to use the SZW building to temporarily house refugees and subsequently house status holders permanently.

From 2015 onwards the municipality of The Hague has been trying to keep up with the number of status holders it needs to house. In 2016 this number went up because the total number of refugees the Netherlands needs to house has gone up. The municipality council has provided the following numbers: 'In the first quarter of 2016 the municipality managed to house 334 status holders. This means that The Hague now – combined with the remnant of 2015 – needs to house a total of 2166 status holders this year' (Raadsmededeling, 2016). The people who already received housing had received apartments belonging to the municipality or apartments belonging to the social housing corporations. However, the SZW building would be able to house a total of 350 status holders and would relieve the pressure of the municipality much more than a single apartment would.

The use of the SZW building would also cut the cost of the municipality in 3 ways. It would lessen the cost of constantly having to move people from temporary housing to other temporary housing, it would cut the cost of paying for the upkeep of an unused building and it would lessen the number of people dependent on the municipality for their survival. Status holders who have received housing can start becoming members of the community, get a job and become less dependent on the municipality.

It is also an opportunity for the municipality to keep its citizens employed. Alderman Wijsmuller stated 'the government has always been an important employer in The Hague but this government is shrinking. We have to broaden our economic profile to keep enough employment. Every empty governmental building gives us the opportunity to achieve that' (Rijksvastgoedbedrijf, 2014).

Finally the use of the building would also relieve pressure on the housing corporations in The Hague, who have to house most of the status holders otherwise. These housing corporations have had a working relationship with the municipality for years and this has become strained with the arrival of so many status holders. The housing corporations have the responsibility to house the lower income citizens in suitable housing. These citizens have to apply to the corporation and wait until they become the first on the list to apply for a house. Usually, to be first you have to be the one on the list the longest. In some municipalities, such as The Hague, this can be years. However, status holders get to skip the list and apply first. This has resulted in many angry citizens, who blame the housing corporations for making them wait so long.

So from the perspective of the municipality the issue of housing refugees in the SZW building is not so much an issue as it is a solution to many of their problems. It became an issue when the first refugees came to be temporarily housed in the SZW building and not everyone in the neighborhood agreed with their arrival.

The grassroots activities started right after the first refugees arrived, some of the refugees complained to reporters about the food they were receiving, the poor sanitary conditions of the SZW building and the fact that there were no TV's in the building to pass the time. As a way of protesting these conditions some of the refugees decided to spend the night camped outside. This resulted in a protest from the neighborhood against the refugees. It started at the Schenkkade on

the other side of the building and when the protesters tried to go to the entrance they were stopped by police and ushered away. The reason why the people from the neighborhood came to protest is that they believe that 'they should not complain about what they receive' (Kranenburg, 2015). The alderman Wijsmuller agreed that this situation was unacceptable (Wijsmuller, 2015). The COA agreed, after speaking to the mayor, that the conditions would be improved. Some of the other concerns of the neighborhood can be found in the frequently asked questions (FAQ) which the municipality provided on their website after the information evening held for the neighborhood. Some of the questions were:

- Does the municipality pay for the temporary housing for the refugees?
- Why the SZW building and not the Julianakazerne?
- Why is The Hague chosen for the temporary housing?
- Will there be families or only men?
- Can they leave the SZW building?
- What kind of supervision will there be in the SZW building?
- Have the refugees been informed about the Dutch common values?
- Do the refugees receive money to live?
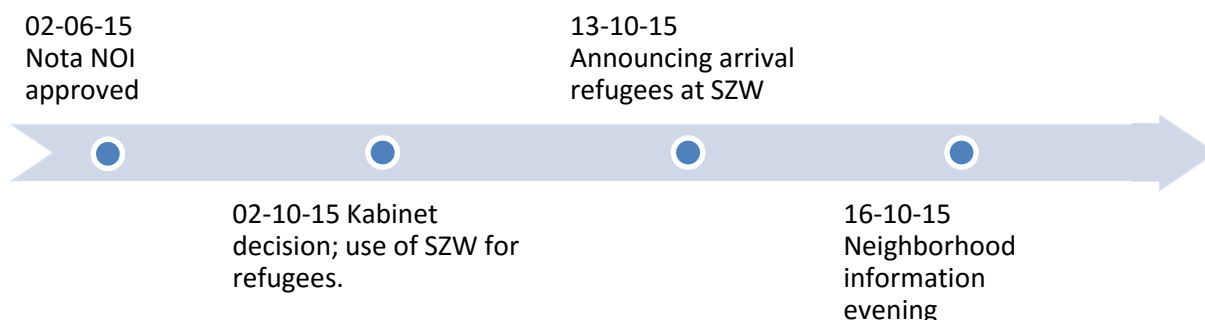- How does the COA ensure that the refugees are not IS soldiers or war criminals? (Bezuidenhout, 2015).

The PVV politician De Winter advised the people in the neighborhood to officially contest the use of the building by focusing on the permits needed (omroep west, 2015). The grassroots created a petition to stop the arrival of more people in the SZW building and to stop the creation of suitable apartments. However, the petition did not receive enough support and has been placed on non-active. After some time the grassroots became linked to De Stichting Wijkberaad Bezuidenhout (SWB) or Wijkberaad Bezuidenhout. These are volunteers who are active in their neighborhood and organize activities. They also represent the people living in the neighborhood in their contacts with the municipality. According to the twitter feed of the chairman, Jacob Snijders, the SWB is active in lobby activities for the neighborhood. One of his tweets referred to a lobby process of 5 years to get the sewage updated (Snijders, 2016). He also tweeted that having status holders living in the SZW building was not a good idea and that the Bezuidenhout was not happy about it (Snijders, 2015). The SWB therefore consulted lawyers to see if they can stop the creation of apartments. The chairman, Jacob Snijders, officially stated 'we are not against status holders … the building is not suitable as a place to live. So we are against any people coming to live there' (Klaassen, 2015 November 30). This, however, does not match with his twitter statement. According to the SWB the building lies between a gas station and a train station, there are no play areas for kids and there is not enough parking spaces. However, according to the spokesperson of alderman Wijsmuller, the building does come to qualify, after the proposed changes, as a suitable living area. The neighborhood will again be informed as soon as the plans are finalized. The plans to which Wijsmuller was referring can be found in the Nota NOI (Gemeente Den Haag, 2015). This is a plan for the entire area, not just the SZW building, which was accepted by the municipality on the

2nd of June 2015. In this plan the SZW building was always meant to be made suitable for small businesses and apartments (Gemeente Den Haag, 2015). In the same Nota NOI the (Stichting) Wijkberaad Bezuidenhout is mentioned as a partner and that this Nota NOI has been created in cooperation with, among others, (Stichting) Wijkberaad Bezuidenhout. The building itself is no longer up for bidding, this closed on the 18th of May 2016. All the potential buyers and their bids will now be reviewed and they will receive word from the notary on the 15th of June (Biedboek, 2016). This would suggest that the potential court case, to see if anything could be done with the permits, will not be happening. Since the bidding has ended and there will be a potential new owner soon.

There is also a grassroots active to make sure that the building does get sold, used and that possibly even some facilities are placed for the people living in the neighborhood. This grassroots is made up from the local business owners who would profit from more people living in the neighborhood. They do insist that they do not represent the entire neighborhood (Bezuidenhout, 2016). 30 companies offered some voluntary aid to the first refugees who came to live in the SZW building. They even offered to be a partner in the discussion between the municipality and the SWB.

On the part of the grassroots there is a division between the people against and for the housing of refugees in the SZW building. The reasons against it vary from fear for the unknown, anger because the refugees are costing the government money or simply because the building chosen to house them is unfit. The reasons pro are also economic but from the other perspective. Namely that, more people in the neighborhood would result in more customers in the stores and more profit for the shop owners. There have been more people for the housing of refugees in the SZW building out of more humane reasons. But since these people did not become active in a grassroots and their interest is in the plight of the refugees in general, not just housing them in the SZW building, they have not been included in this thesis.

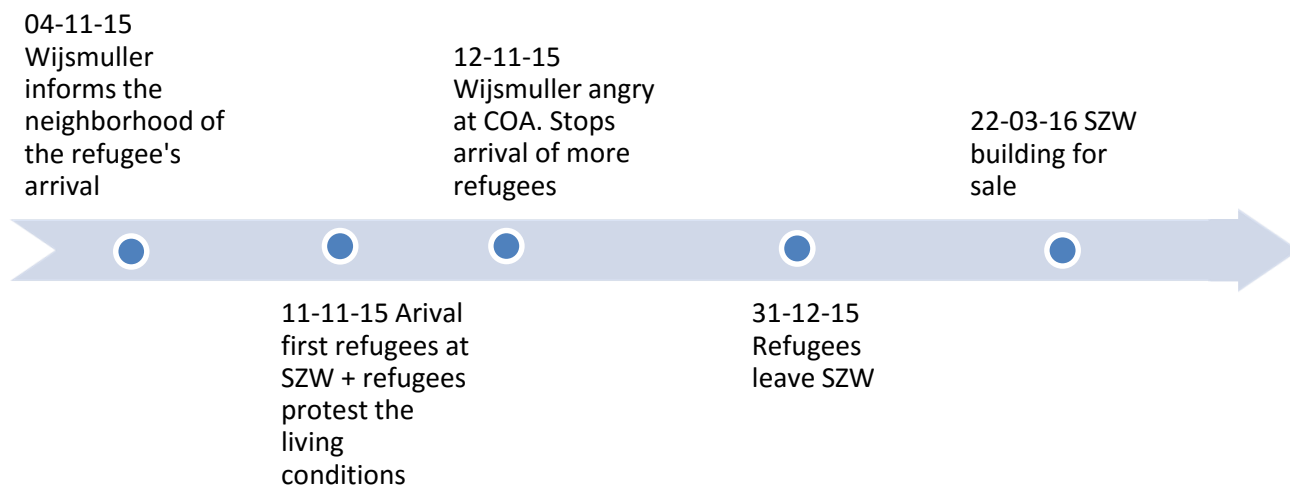Figure 3 shows all the events, mentioned in the previous paragraph, in chronological order.

02-06-15
Nota NOI
approved

13-10-15
Announcing arrival
refugees at SZW

02-10-15 Kabinet
decision; use of SZW for
refugees.

16-10-15
Neighborhood
information
evening

04-11-15
Wijsmuller
informs the
neighborhood of
the refugee's
arrival

12-11-15
Wijsmuller angry
at COA. Stops
arrival of more
refugees

22-03-16 SZW
building for
sale

11-11-15 Arival
first refugees at
SZW + refugees
protest the
living
conditions

31-12-15
Refugees
leave SZW

Figure 3.

4.3   Stakeholders

In the previous section of this chapter I have discussed the issue and who are involved. Even though the municipality is made up of many separate departments and it is specifically alderman Wijsmuller who is responsible for the housing issue, the incumbent in the stakeholder map will be the municipality as a whole, see figure 4. The municipality, COA and Rijksvastgoedbedrijf all are linked together in that they belong to the same advocacy coalition and they all want to use the SZW building to house status holders. The SWB and Local Business owners have the same shape because they are both grassroots, however, they do not belong to the same advocacy coalition. One is for the use of the SZW building and the other is against. If the SWB would be analyzed better it might show that it is in itself a coalition or at least part of a coalition with the PVV who has expressed the same reluctance for the use of the SZW building. The SZW is in the middle because that is the central issue, housing of status holders in the building.
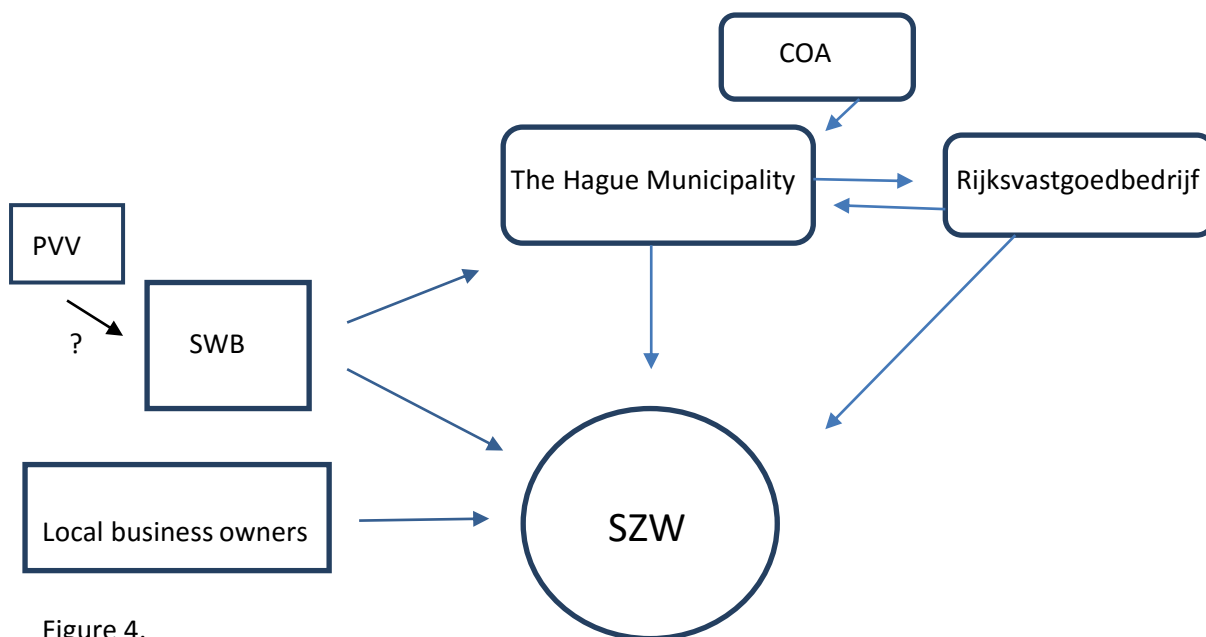
Figure 4.

5. Analysis

In this final chapter before the conclusion I will go into the questions I raised in this thesis and I will try to answer all of them. At first I will go into the sub-questions which can be found in part 1.3 of this thesis. Subsequently I will go into the 4 theses, which can be found in part 2.4 of this thesis. I will end by answering my main question.

5.1   Answering the sub-questions

To start off with the sub-questions; the first question is; what is the issue and why is this an issue in The Hague? The main issue is twofold, the first part of it was temporarily housing for about 600 refugees at the SZW building until the end of 2015, the second part is creating permanent housing for about 350 status holders in that same building from 2016 onwards. The reason this is an actual issue is because the people living in the neighborhood of Bezuidenhout do not want the SZW building to become (permanent) housing for people. They claim that the building is not fit to house anyone and that the surroundings of the building are not meant for people living there. The building is situated between a train station and a petrol station on a busy road. When looking at table 7, this issue can be categorized as a safety issue. The neighborhood finds the building and the surroundings to be a hazard. However, it is not just a safety issue. The FAQ during the information evening show that people were also concerned about their tax money. Who would have to pay for the refugees staying in the building and would they be receiving money? This has to do with the municipality's spending policy. Another issue was stated by a resident of the neighborhood during the information meeting 'my house will not be worth anything anymore' (Klaassen, 2015 October 17).This can be seen as an economical and personal safety issue. And finally people wanted to know if the refugees would be informed about the Dutch societal and cultural norms. Which makes it a cultural issue. The second part of the question is why this in an issue in The Hague. The first

reason this has become an issue in The Hague is that in The Hague there are a lot of old government buildings not in use and the municipality has to find an use for them. These buildings are often on prime locations and are not created to house people. Other municipalities do not have old government buildings and so they might decide to create housing from scratch on the outer parts of a town where there is not much population but in The Hague this is all happening in an already existing neighborhood. A neighborhood with, for The Hague standards, an above average income and where the majority of people is of Dutch or Western descend. The second part of why this is an issue in The Hague is that this municipality has had unrest in the recent past in the Schilderswijk area, where people of the Islamic faith and Dutch right winged nationalist clashed and created a summer of unrest.

The second sub-question looks into which grassroots took interest in this issue. The first one was a group of people in the neighborhood who created an online petition to stop the creation of permanent housing in the building. However, this petition did not receive enough support and is no longer active. The second grassroots is the SWB with their chairman Snijders. This is the grassroots representing the neighborhood and they have hired a lawyer to sue the municipality on the fact that they do not have the correct permits to repurpose the building from office building to apartment building. The final grassroots consists of small business owners in the neighborhood who do want the building to be repurposed and have offered to be an intermediary between the municipality and the SWB.

As discussed in section 2.1 of this thesis, there are four types of grassroots. The SWB is an example of the NIMBY grassroots. The community of Bezuidenhout is facing a new development in their neighborhood and they are against it. They are fine with the housing of refugees in the Netherlands however, just not in that building which is directly in their neighborhoods metaphorical backyard. This was stated during the information meeting in the municipality, according to a news report. 'There are people opposed and who do not want a refugee shelter in their backyard' (Klaassen, 2015 October 17). The grassroots which best describes the group of small business owners is participatory governance. This type of grassroots has not been in depth discussed in this thesis but participatory governance focuses on 'measures designed to support and facilitate increased public access to information about governmental activities, efforts to extend the rights of the citizens to be consulted on public issues which affect them, and to see that the broad citizenry will be heard through fair and equitable representative political systems' (Fisher, 2012). So the business owners have turned it around and wish to be heard by the local government too. They also stated that they want to be a part of the negotiations between the municipality and SWB.

Coalitions either have members with shared policy beliefs or they are coalitions of convenience. In the case of the group of business owners one can claim that this is an example of a coalition of convenience. It is a short term and self-interest kind of grassroots. They wish to make sure the SZW building does become used and the surrounding area fixed up, just as stated in the full Nota NOI (2015). And they have offered to help with this by being part of the discussion between the neighborhood and the municipality. Their goals and solutions are short term and will serve their

basic interest, getting more people to shop and live in the neighborhood and therefore use their shops and services. The SWB on the other hand is a grassroots with members who have shared policy beliefs. The members of the SWB have a history of lobby activities for the neighborhood, which can be seen in the tweet by Snijders referring to the 5 years of lobbying to get the sewage up to date, and they have the strong shared believe to keep their neighborhood as safe and agreeable to live in as possible. They are made up of members from the neighborhood and on the behalf of the neighborhood they act in their best interest.

The fifth sub-question looks at the issue from the perspective of the incumbent and how they presented the issue. According to the Nota NOI of 2015, in which the decision is presented that the SZW building will be sold and that housing, among other things, will be created in the building, was a long time in the making. The Nota mentions that the ideas to fix the area around the NOI station and the office buildings around it, which is called the Beatrixkwartier, were voiced in the spring of 2013. That, combined with the government's decision to sell the unused government buildings, resulted in the Nota NOI of 2015. For the municipality the repurposing of the SZW building was a smart economic decision. The municipality believed that it would bring new business to the area and make it a more vibrant area. The permanent housing of status holders was an afterthought because the possibility presented itself. They were planning on creating apartments anyway and so they might as well solve the refugee problem with that. It would also mean that existing social housing would not be used and to quote the mayor Van Aartsen '' this to prevent that people on the waiting list would have to wait any longer' (Omroep west, 2015 October 20). The way it was presented was a simple announcement to the press and the invitation to the neighborhood to be present at an information evening in which the mayor, police chief and alderman Wijsmuller would answer questions and present the plan. According to the municipality 'the need to shelter refugees is a given, and it is up to all of us to accomplish this task (ANP, 2015 October 13).

The incumbent had a couple of responses to the issue, the first one was Neglect, as can be found in the statement by the municipality: 'There are people who do not wish status holders in their neighborhood. We do not wish to comply with that wish nor shall we' (ANP, 2015 October 13). The second was the Early Dialogue, as mentioned in Figure 1 and Table 5, this was the information meeting a couple of days after the announcement that there would be refugees coming to the neighborhood. During this information meeting the mayor stated that people of The Hague are compassionate people (Klaassen, 2015 October 17). This was done to encourage the people to not object because of sentiment, but because the information provided answered their questions and they could use their own rational mind to accept the decision. Then there was the possible response, the New Playing Field, where a clear citizenship engagement can be found in the group of small business owners who wish to be a part of the solution regarding the issue. If they are specifically created by the municipality is not something I was able to find out but their goal is to be a part of the team with the municipality to get the SZW issue solved as soon as possible. The final response is Wait; after the refugees left the temporary housing the municipality did nothing for

about 3 months until the SZW building was put up for sale. The issue was left and there was no real public continuation of the issue. When the building was put up for sale on the 22nd of March it was clear that the plans concerning the SZW building were going forward. When looking at Figure 1 we see that 3 of the 4 responses were negative ones, ranging from passive, with the Wait response, to the middle with the Early Dialogue, to the active with the Neglect response. Only one response was a positive one, namely the New Playing Field response, and that is the response I cannot show if it was actually a response by the incumbent or if it was created separate from the incumbent but could be used by the incumbent. Figure 5 shows a timeline of when the responses were given. Neglect was a statement given on the 13th of October 2015, followed by Early Dialogue. This was the neighborhood information evening, which was held on the 16th of October 2015. I was not able to find when exactly the small business owners started to take interest in the issue but they did offer themselves as a mediation partner between the municipality and the SWB after the SWB tried to see if they could go to court. This was reported on the 30th of November 2015, so the small business owners became publically involved after that. The New Playing Field is in brackets on the timeline because it might not be an actual response, like I have mentioned before. The final response was Wait, and this was between the 31st of December 2015 and the day the SZW building appeared officially on the real estate market. This was on the 22nd of March 2016.
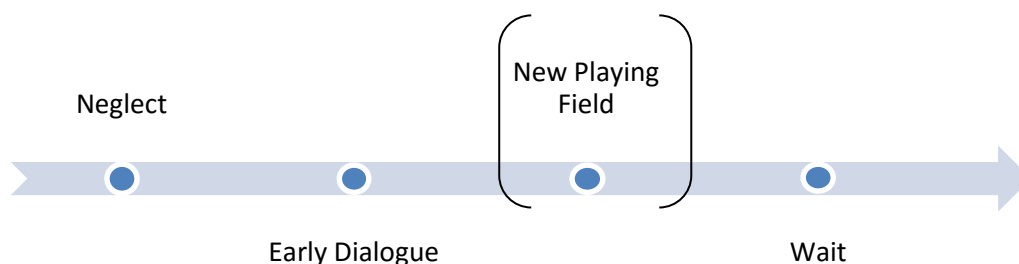

Figure 5.

Figure 5 shows the timeline of the responses given, but when these responses are placed in Figure 1 there is a pattern visible. If the New Playing Field response is not seen as a response, because that was not clear, the pattern of responses goes from active + negative to middle + negative and ends with passive + negative. It is a clear straight line from active to passive, as shown in Figure 6 below. The municipality started with actively responding to the grassroots organization to finally letting the issue fade. How to explain this change in municipality involvement would be another interesting subject for future work. Because I have not looked into this I cannot give an answer to that question.

Figure 6.

Possible incumbent responses

	Positive	Negative
Passive		
		3 Wait
		2 Early Dialogue
		1 Neglect
Active		
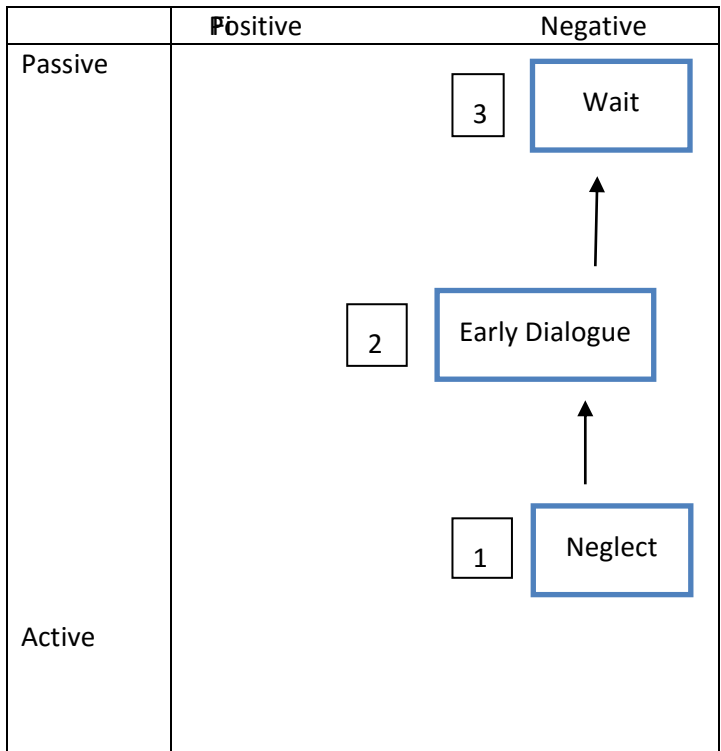
5.2 Testing the hypotheses

As mentioned before, in order to answer the last of the sub questions I will have to go into the hypotheses first. At the end of this chapter I will answer the last of the sub-questions. Even though it is not really part of this section.

H1: If the policy core beliefs of the grassroots do not match the incumbent's policy core beliefs, then the response given to the grassroots is a negative one. The differences in beliefs with this issue are safety, spending policy and social welfare, see Table 7 for the policy core beliefs. The different beliefs regarding the safety issue are twofold. The first is environmental, namely that the SWB beliefs the area to be unsafe to use the building for housing. They do not think any people should live there. The municipality on the other hand believes, as stated in the coalition agreement, that the entire area needs an update and they will be creating more than just living space but also putting in stores and restaurants and creating a modern urban area. The second safety issue is personal and lies in the fact that a large number of people who would live there are from the non-western countries and practice the Islamic faith. This causes concern with the people living in the neighborhood who are afraid for their own safety and that of their children. As found in the FAQ, part 4.2 of this thesis. The policy core beliefs on the subject of safety are not the same between the incumbent and the grassroots. The municipality beliefs that after the renovation of the building and area it is safe to live there but the SWB beliefs that it is not enough just to fix the area up. The petrol station will still be there and so will the office buildings surrounding the SZW building. The

spending policy beliefs where the SWB and municipality seem to disagree is that the municipality sees the repurposing of the SZW building as a way to boost the economy for the municipality and the neighborhood. With the arrival of more people, new restaurants and businesses. Also the financial gain of reusing a building which has been unused for some time. The people in the neighborhood are concerned that the refugees and status holders will only cost money, as the FAQ show. More people in the neighborhood would also result in more trash and noise disturbances. The policy beliefs on the spending policy between the incumbent and the grassroots do not match either. The municipality believes that with the arrival of more people the economy of the municipality and neighborhood will get a boost. The grassroots organization believes that the people who will be living there will only cost money. The status holders will get financial aid from the municipality and the people visiting the restaurants and shops will only create more trash and noise disturbances. So it will cost the neighborhood more. The final policy core belief is social welfare. This is namely because the status holders will probably be of a different religion than most of the neighborhood and of a different culture than the people living in the area, this has resulted in fear and subsequently in resistance to use the SZW building. However, the municipality was very clear that no type of discrimination belonged in their city. So the incumbent and grassroots organization do not agree on this policy core belief either. The use of the SZW building has resulted in very polarized views between the incumbent and the grassroots. So to finally come back to the hypothesis; the policy core beliefs, on social welfare, spending policy and safety, between the SWB and municipality do not match on this issue, therefore the responses given by the incumbent to the grassroots would be negative. Since 3 of the 4 responses are in fact negative, as we have seen, this would suggest that this hypothesis is valid.

H2: When a grassroots organization does not have members with shared beliefs, but is part of a coalition of convenience, the more likely it is that the response given by the incumbent is a negative one. To find if this hypothesis is true, the first thing to do would be determining if the SWB is part of an advocacy coalition in the first place. When looking at the stakeholder map, Figure 4, the only other possible stakeholder part of the coalition could be the PVV political party. They did express support for the neighborhood when the first protests happened so it could be possible that they have formed an advocacy coalition with the SWB. There is a common policy issue that they both are against, the housing of status holders in the SZW building, they share policy beliefs, the most obvious being safety issues and since the SWB has been lobbying for years on behalf of the neighborhood and the PVV is the second biggest party in the municipality, one can argue that they are part of an advocacy coalition. However, not all the basic building blocks are there, see Figure 2. The type of coalition they would be is probably a coalition of convenience because the strong working relationship between the two stakeholders is not present and this would be necessary for the advocacy coalition. It seems to be a short term coalition, specific for this issue, and very much self-serving. Because the SWB never stated that they are specifically against refugees or status holders but just against people living in the SZW building does not make their working relationship seem very long term. Since the PVV is all about closing the borders and not letting refugees enter

the country let alone have housing created for them. With this issue however, both stakeholders would achieve their own goals if the creating of housing in the SZW building would be stopped. Even if the motivation behind those goals is very different. Since the grassroots organization seems to be part of a coalition of convenience the hypothesis states that the responses given by the incumbent would be negative responses. Since 3 of the 4 responses were negative once, it would seem that this hypothesis makes sense.

H3: If the grassroots organization is not part of a broad coalition, then it is more likely that the response given by the incumbent is a negative one. A broad coalition is one with many members or very powerful members, which have a lot of resources available. In the case of the SWB they are part of a coalition with just the PVV and probably only the local The Hague section. Having said that the PVV is the second biggest party in the municipality in The Hague so they are a very powerful stakeholder with a lot of potential resources. This would suggest that the SWB is part of a broad coalition with the PVV. However, the question here is, because it is a coalition of convenience, how much is the PVV invested in this particular issue. When looking at the public records the PVV does not seem to have respondent much after their initial support for the protesters when the first refugees were to enter the SZW building. So since the coalition is broad this would suggest that the responses given would be positive. However, 3 of the 4 responses were negative. This would suggest that either this hypothesis is not correct or there is a part of the hypothesis which would have to be looked into separately. Namely, what if the coalition it is a broad coalition of convenience, such as it is in this case. Does being a member of a coalition of convenience weaken the otherwise powerful stakeholder in a broad coalition? This would be an interesting area to explore further in future work.

H4: The more experience an incumbent has, with a grassroots organization under a specific policy issue, the more likely the incumbent is to give a negative response. This experience with similar issues with grassroots involvement can be found in the municipality of The Hague. They have had an issue with housing in the past, such as the Ypenburg protest. This has resulted in the municipality having a very clear plan ready to present to the neighborhood at an information evening, such as the Nota NOI. In this plan the entire area had been taken into account and it was presented as a possibility for economic growth for the neighborhood. And recent protests in the Schilderswijk neighborhood have shown the municipality how much fear and misunderstanding between two extremist/ nationalist / religious groups can create for a municipality. This is why there was an information meeting held right after the announcement. This is also why the information evening was mostly spent answering the questions of the neighborhood so that the neighborhood could form their own informed opinion instead of the municipality trying to convince them of their opinion. Before the housing of refugees in the SZW building became an issue the municipality had requested the input of the neighborhood by including the (Stichting) Wijkberaad Bezuidenhout in creating the Nota NOI. This shows that from the beginning the municipality had a very positive response in that they included the grassroots in their initial plans. This is an Accept response and this would show that the municipality has learned from the previous issues and

therefore chose to include the grassroots from the very beginning of creating the plans. However, because this was before the housing of refugees became an issue it cannot be the first response. The first response was Neglect where the municipality made clear that housing refugees was not going to be a debate or up for discussion. Like it seemed to be in other municipalities after the announcement of the creation of an AZC or temporary housing. People in Oranje who changed an entire policy by protest. However, with the information evening the municipality was prepared that the people of the neighborhood had many questions so they made it possible for people to ask their questions. The information evening was held only a couple of days after the announcement and people now had all the information. This defused the situation in the neighborhood and no protests were held after that. The municipality stated that the people living in the created housing would not just be status holders but there would be apartments made available for students and the private market, so anyone would be able to rent there. This solved many of the neighborhood fears of the status holders not being able to integrate into the Dutch culture or having only status holders living there. This has resulted in the SWB only being able to try to invalidate the permits needed for the repurposing of the area. There was not much left to protest against. The New Playing Field response became visible after the SWB's decision to hire an attorney, if this was a response this would be a positive one because it could be the municipality's way of trying to solve the issue before it reaches court. The final response was to Wait and the municipality did just that, for 3 months. So because the municipality of The Hague is experienced in dealing with grassroots on similar issues the responses they would give a grassroots would be negative responses. Since 3 of the 4 responses given to the grassroots regarding this issue are in fact negative this would suggest this hypothesis to be valid.

This rests with answering the last of the sub questions, namely; how can these responses be explained? The 3 negative responses given by the incumbent can be explained by the difference in policy core beliefs between the incumbent and the grassroots. They can be explained by the grassroots being part of a coalition of convenience and not having members with shared policy core beliefs. This can also be explained by the experience the municipality of The Hague has in dealing with grassroots on similar issues in the past. The one positive response can be explained by, one, it not really being a response by the incumbent since the New Playing Field was perhaps not created by the incumbent. With the introduction of a new stakeholder, such as the small business owners, the issue is no longer just an issue for the incumbent but for the new stakeholder as well. Therefore there is a New Playing Field but if it is a response by the incumbent is not clear. Secondly, it could be explained by the grassroots being part of a broad coalition and therefore the incumbent had to take them more seriously because of the advantage the SWB had with the PVV as a stakeholder in their coalition. They used the small business owners to create a New Playing Field and they could be the mediator between the grassroots and the incumbent. This is a positive response from the incumbent because now the grassroots can sit around the metaphorical table and voice their concerns regarding the issue to the incumbent. The question remains if this is an actual response.

5.3   Answering the main research question

Finally all that is left is to answer my main question: *How does the municipality of The Hague respond to pressure from grassroots activity in its plans to use the former ministry of social affairs building for the housing of refugees, and how can this be explained?* The municipality has responded with several responses and all but one were negative. With the question if the one positive response is a response at all. The negative responses, as Gamson would state are responses that would make the grassroots organization unsuccessful. The responses started as active responses, with a lot of incumbent involvement but went from less active to the last one being passive. The explanation for these responses lies in the polarized nature of the issue, namely; 1) the policy core beliefs of the incumbent were not the same as the beliefs of the grassroots. 2) The grassroots organization was a broad coalition of convenience. Because it was a coalition of convenience its members did not have shared policy beliefs and therefore the responses of the incumbent were negative. The fact that the grassroots was part of a broad coalition, however, would have resulted in a positive response. The combination of being part of a broad coalition but also a coalition of convenience might be why the responses were negative instead of positive. Because the fact that it was a coalition of convenience outweighed the fact that it was also a broad coalition. This would be interesting to look into in the future. And finally, the municipality of The Hague has had experience in the past with grassroots regarding a similar issue. This experience has led to the responses of the incumbent being negative. Another interesting idea for future work is how the gradual change of active to passive responses can be explained.

6. Conclusion

The policy to house refugees, temporarily, and later status holders, permanently, in the SZW building in The Hague became an issue of interest for grassroots organizations. The NIMBY grassroots was mostly concerned in the building not being safe to house anyone. The idea of housing refugees and status holders also resulted in the neighborhood being concerned with the safety in the neighborhood and the overall cost of the project. The municipality of The Hague responded to the grassroots in several different manners. This thesis has looked at what these responses were and how they can be explained.

The theories of Gamson (1975), which was very abstract, and Van Venetië (2013), which was very detailed, were used to create a new way of looking at the kind of responses the incumbent gave. Figure 1 shows that responses can be positive or negative, depending on the successfulness of the grassroots. And they can be passive or active, depending on the effort placed into the response by the incumbent. The municipality gave 3 negative responses, the first was Neglect, an active response. The second was the Early Dialogue which was in the middle between active and passive.

The last response was Wait, which was a passive response. There was a possible fourth response, the New Playing Field, but I could not show if this was a response by the incumbent.

To determine why a response was given by the incumbent I used the Advocacy Coalition Framework by Sabatier (1999). Using the ACF theory and the work of Leifeld (2013) and Zafonte & Sabatier (2004) this thesis argues that the reason a response is given by the incumbent depends highly on the policy core beliefs of the grassroots and incumbent but also what type of coalition they are and how much experience an incumbent has had with grassroots on similar issues. When testing the hypotheses it showed that regarding the housing issue in the SZW building the incumbent and grassroots did not share the same policy core beliefs which resulted in negative responses. The grassroots was part of a coalition of convenience, it did not share the same policy core beliefs as the other stakeholder, which also resulted in negative responses. And the municipality of The Hague has had previous experiences with grassroots on the issue of housing and refugees/immigrants. Therefore the responses it had given were negative ones. To answer the main question, the municipality of The Hague gave negative responses to the grassroots organization in regards to the issue of housing in the SZW building. The reasons for it were the lack of shared policy beliefs, the type of grassroots organization it was and the past experiences the municipality has had with grassroots regarding a similar issue.

Future work may want to consider what the consequences are for the responses of an incumbent when a grassroots is part of a broad coalition of convenience. Would having a strong stakeholder in the coalition of convenience outweigh the lack of shared policy beliefs? If so, than it would suggest that is would result in more positive responses. And as seen in this case study the responses of the incumbent went from active to passive as time passed by, but stayed negative. Another interesting question for future work would be to look into why this happened and if there is an explanation.

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