Homelessness of Mobile EU-citizens as One Effect of a National-European Conflict. Insights Into an Ethnography of Participation in Europe Using the Example of Germany

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> **Abstract**_*This paper is about homelessness of mobile EU-citizens in Germany and suggests an innovative approach to the discourse about migration and European migration management in the field of homelessness research. Coming from the perspective of critical migration studies it is assumed that "Europe" is not homogeneous but a space where different types of mobilities are evaluated differently and inclusions and exclusions are negotiated. Consequently it is argued that the social problem of homelessness of mobile EU-citizens is one effect of the attempt to regulate intra-EU-mobility according to a specific European mobility regime. Based on first findings of an ongoing ethnographic research on this subject, it is shown that in- and exclusions are negotiated on different levels: the legal framework, the local homeless services structures and the practical level of homeless service centres. To understand the phenomenon better, historically shaped discrimination patterns based on specific imaginations and concepts of moral economies need to be taken into account.*

> **Keywords:** _*Homelessness of mobile EU-citizens, intra-EU mobility regime, inclusion and exclusion, Europe, homeless services*

Introduction

The corridor of the responsible authority is painted in different shades of turquoise, it seems to be huge and cold. We arrive at the door, we were told and take a seat on the metal chairs in the corridor. After a few minutes Ms. Marten calls us in. Iulia introduces us and Mr. I. Ms. Marten seems to be friendly and interested in him. She wants to help and makes a phone call to reserve an emergency accommodation for him while talking. Finally she makes a copy of his passport and advises us: "hardship case". We should mention this in the emergency application at the Social Court in case Mr. I.s application will be denied. After that we go to meet Ms. Jonas, one floor downstairs. Also there we are waiting again. It takes quite a while. We wait. And wait. Finally we are called in. Iulia starts again to introduce us and Mr. I. The employee, who introduces herself as Ms. Frantz, asks a few questions after pointing to the new law since beginning of 2016. According to this law "EU-citizens basically don't get any benefits if they aren't working here or aren't residing 5 years."Finally she takes all the documents and says that she is going to her divisional head, because "EU-citizens are top priority. They receive in very few cases social benefits from us, the divisional head then always looks at it."We are asked to wait for her in the corridor. After a while she is back and explains that Mr. I. won't get anything because neither his need nor the jurisdiction of the social security office is clear. A confirmation of his incapacity to work and his bank statements are missing. Besides, he doesn't have the right to free movement since he cannot make his living on his own. I am annoyed, because it is the foreigner's competence alone to investigate this question, but I remain silent. Iulia knocks her head and listens carefully. If beyond that there is a need of emergency accommodation we would have to go upstairs, since this is another funding, Ms. Frantz explains. She would come along with us and explain her point of view. Upstairs we wait again in front of the room of Ms. Marten. Ms. Frantz disappears in Ms. Marten's office. I can hear their voices through the open door, but both are talking in a low voice, I can't understand anything. Finally Ms. Frantz comes outside and passes us by: "It's [to] start soon."Then Ms. Marten comes out of her office, locks her door and tells us: "It took a long time.""Yes, indeed", I answer, "and now we are back for emergency accommodation.""I don't decide this", she says and leaves, two papers in her hand. Iulia and I look confused at each other: What is going on? We decide to wait again. After a few minutes she comes back and asks us into her office. She seems to be in depressed mood, she often looks down, her face is vacuous. She tells us that Mr. I's not going to be accommodated, because not everything has been utilised. Besides "the emergency situation for exactly today is not recognised, because he is sleeping rough already since 2 years. The concrete emergency situation is not evident."We are quite embarrassed. I ask for a written notice. There isn't such a thing, Ms. Marten explains me. "Next time", she says, "we could possibly commu-

nicate a little earlier and prepare everything, in order that it won't take so long then. I am really sorry, that it took so long today. Luckily it's Thursday today, the Jobcenter is open long and also the lawyers. Therefore I gave you the hint earlier today. I had already such a premonition."(field notes 13.07.2017).

For more than 10 years, the composition of the group of people using homeless services, especially so-called low-threshold services, i.e. services accessible without any official proof of entitlement, has been changing in urban areas in Germany. Nowadays, the services are widely used by mobile EU-citizens. There is no reliable statistical data on the number of both homeless people in Germany in general and homeless mobile EU-citizens especially. The German national umbrella organization of homeless services "Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Wohnungslosenhilfe (BAG W)" estimates a number of 860,000 homeless people in Germany in 2016 and about 52,000 of them sleeping rough. About 50,000 people are estimated to hold an EU-passport other than a German passport (BAG W, 2017). Practitioners in low-threshold services in different German cities report that the percentage of EU-citizens using those services is very high compared with the German society in general. Homeless mobile EU-citizens often pauperize very rapidly and live in absolute poverty in Germany. Both service users and staff members of homeless centres report communication problems and experiences of discrimination (see, for example Reichenbach, 2012). In the meantime, national legislation is changing to exclude EU-citizens more and more from social assistance. Situations like the one described are well-known to social workers in this field.

In my research, I develop some ideas to grasp a better understanding of this phenomenon based on an ongoing ethnographic research, applying an approach of critical migration studies. Hence, I understand the social problem of homeless-ness of mobile EU-citizens (in Germany) as an effect of a specific migration regime, i.e. a specific interplay of different material and immaterial elements that result in a certain reality. Thus, even Europe itself is repeatedly produced and reproduced in both, the image and its material elements. These processes of (re-)production result in certain in- and exclusion patterns that offer different European citizens different levels of participation.

The aim of this paper is to show that, and in which way, the social problem of homelessness of mobile EU-citizens is one effect of such processes. Based on the data of my research, I will give here an insight into some processes and mecha-nisms on different levels, through which the differences within Europe and the different levels of participation are negotiated. For that purpose I will first introduce my research methodology. Second, I will present some of my findings of how in- and exclusion processes on the legislative, institutional and the level of interaction form a specific system of inclusion. Finally, I will summarize my findings and sketch

out some working hypotheses both for further academic research and the practical level of social work and political decision-making. To meet ethical standards of social research, all names of organisations have been deleted and peoples' names are all pseudonyms.

Methodology

In my research, I approach the problem of homelessness of mobile EU-citizens in Germany from a perspective of Europeanisation. This means to understand this problem as a local effect of a national-European conflict deriving from processes of European integration. Therefore I focus on the negotiation processes and the contradictions that go along with these processes and the national interests on a local, national and EU-level. I use the ethnographic approach of "multi-sited ethnography", following Susan Wright's and Sue Reinhold's "studying through", where "the anthropologist is seeking a method for analysing connections between levels and forms of social process and action, and exploring how those processes work in different sites – local, national and global"(Shore and Wright, 1997, p.14).

Based on phases of participant observations in a medical centre for homeless people in Berlin, I broaden my research field step by step including different types of empirical material (expert interviews, documents, field notes of joining social workers, grey literature,…). This way, I get engaged with the field dynamics and needs and define it at the same time. Thanks to my professional experiences as a social worker in different homeless services in Berlin, I got in contact with lots of different stakeholders. Most of them found the topic of my research important and were pleased to support me. Whereas my professional background enabled me to get access to different sites and to get a broader perspective including lots of different points of view, nevertheless being known with my positioning certainly also affected what was told and shown to me.

I started my fieldwork with phases of participant observation in the medical centre for homeless people, followed by interviews with staff members and members of the organisation running the place, different political stakeholders as well as NGO members on the level of the municipality, the federal level and the EU-level. A few times I attended social workers assisting homeless mobile EU-citizens in Berlin to assert their rights, like e.g. described above. Finally, I participated in different meetings and events, where different stakeholders network with each other and where furthermore argumentation strategies are developed and the social problem of homelessness of mobile EU-citizens is negotiated. Last but not least, several documents and grey literature are part of my data. Since the problem of homelessness of mobile EU-citizens is embedded in a highly emotional and political context

on the local, the national and the European level, it was crucial to build a relationship of trust with the stakeholders I got engaged with. Consequently, I have made sure that privacy is protected by confidentiality and anonymisation using pseudonyms for all people I met during my fieldwork.

Methodologically, I use the concept of Assemblages, which connects institutions, legal framework, administrative measures, practices and architectural arrangements (Deleuze and Guattari, 1999): "The relationship among the elements in an assemblage is not stable; nor is their configuration reducible to a single logic. Rather, an assemblage is structured through critical reflection, debate, and contest"(Collier, 2006, p.400). Using this concept, emergent mechanisms and scope of actions can be made visible, that steadily reconstitute themselves. Besides, I refer to Clarke's (2005) situational analysis to analyse the data. That way, a deeper understanding of the underlying processes is possible without fixing them. The following findings result mainly from the analysis of my field notes, expert interviews and several documents.

In- and Exclusions Produced by a Legal Framework

As a first step, I focus on the legislative level, exploring how different levels of inclusion and exclusion are produced by it. During my research, I attended social workers asserting the rights of their clients, like Iulia and Mr. I. Mr. I. has slept rough in Germany for approximately two years. He is sick and, as he says, unable to work. He doesn't have any income and sleeps in a small tent in a park. Due to his illness, he needs drugs on a regular basis. Since sleeping rough is step-by-step worsening his physical condition, he now wants to apply for social benefits to overcome this situation, relying on his right of free movement as an EU-citizen. But as shown earlier, his first application was refused referring to the relevant national laws.

According to these laws, EU-citizens are excluded from social benefits during the first five years of their stay in Germany unless they work or are a family member of an entitled person. There exists only the right for so-called "bridging benefits" (Überbrückungsleistungen) – once in two years, for four weeks maximum or until leaving the country. Besides, the Foreigners Registration Office gets notice of each foreigner applying for any kind of social benefits. This way the Office gets information about a possible non-existence of the right of free movement. In such a case, these EU-citizens can be asked to leave the country and additionally in certain circumstances can be denied to re-enter the country again for the next two years.

This law is in force since the end of 2016. Basically, it's not a new law, but it is another change of the relevant German Code of Social Law, that has been changed already many times over the last years to exclude economically inactive EU-citizens

more and more from social benefits. EU-citizens' entitlements to social benefits in Germany have been questioned already for some years. Especially the entitlements of economically inactive EU-citizens are highly contested. While Social Workers, migration services and other stakeholders, especially of civil society, argue for a basic right to minimum subsistence benefits for everybody as a humanitarian necessity, politicians and governmental stakeholders mainly argue for an exclusion of economically inactive EU-citizens. The European Court of Justice decided in 2013 (C-333/13 (Dano)) that nation states are allowed to refuse EU-citizens social benefits if they are not working or have been entering the other member state for the purpose of receiving social benefits. Following this restrictive decision and a general restrictive atmosphere towards migration, the same court decided in 2014 (C-67/14 (Alimanovic)), that nation states are allowed to refuse contribution-free social benefits for EU-citizens, like the minimum subsistence benefits in Germany, in case they didn't succeed to find a job and have never been working in the other member state or having been unemployed longer than six months after working less than one year. Unexpectedly and disappointing for many social workers and NGOs, the European Court of Justice argued similarly to the German governmental stakeholders, who find the national position approved.

Bringing these questions to the European Court of Justice needs to be seen in the context of the debate of expected high numbers of EU-citizens migrating to Germany after the enlargement of the EU in 2007 and the final opening of the labour market for Romanian and Bulgarian citizens in 2014. During these years the discourse was highly influenced by populists talking about "poverty migration" and related to the freedom of movement for workers from Romania and Bulgaria. Still it was questioned whether the German interpretation contradicts the European regulations of Freedom of movement and other European rules. Nevertheless, individual homeless mobile EU-citizens claimed via social courts social benefits and different German courts pronounced different judgements on the matter. Then the space for such different national interpretations of the European legal framework became even smaller, with the already mentioned law amendment of the relevant Social Code, Books 2 and 12 from December 2016. Now this law is widely known as "EU-citizen-exclusion-law" (Unionsbürgerausschlussgesetz). Explicitly it connects social law with regulation of migration:

> It is to be expected, that this rule of exclusion from social benefits after the German Social Code, Book 12, will unfold an effect of control. Hence, presumably – at least five years after the law being in force – only for a small, not countable number of people entitlements to the Code Social Law, Book 2, will arise, so that noteworthy excess expenditures are not to be expected. The number of persons, who are entitled to social benefits (a stay of five years since

registration at the responsible Registration Office) when the law is coming into force, should be very small, therefore here are no noteworthy excess expenditures to be expected.

Or to phrase it like one of my interview partners, who is working in a welfare organisation at questions of migration and who describes the political goal clearly:

Well as far as I notice until now, it is like this: within the European borders there exist sort of few regulations to this effect. The right of residence is very free, we have the freedom of movement which is like one of the basic rights and therefore it is difficult, to talk about contained migration within the EU, because officially we have a lot of freedoms […] and then somehow, one lets them, a little bit really to say it very upfront, one makes them feel as uncomfortable as possible, so that maybe they return however. (Consultant in a national charity organisation, 2017)

The mentioned law amendment is highly criticized by NGOs as not corresponding with the German constitution and ignoring the reality of migration (Deutscher Bundestag, 2016). The lawyers' network "Neue Richtervereinigung" even talks about the law as creating a group of modern slaves, who are forced to accept jobs under these conditions to survive. According to those lawyers, the right to a dignified life is in this context replaced by Apartheid in social law (Deutscher Bundestag, 2016, p.64).

For Mr. I., all this means a life in very precarious conditions. He still doesn't have any money for his daily needs nor his drugs. Instead, he is dependent on others and their humanity and capacities. Further, the Foreigners Registrations Office might investigate upon his right of free movement and find out that he is "economically inactive" and not a family member of an entitled person and send him back. Thus he is highly excluded from society but, as I want to show, at the same time also the included "Other".

Several consequences of the described developments can already be observed in the German context: First, a shift of focus within the legal discussion away from the European level back to the national one. The German constitutional court is asked to decide whether the exclusion of mobile EU-citizens from minimum subsistence benefits corresponds to the German constitution. Until today the Constitutional Court was not required to deal with the matter. However the court already clarified a few years ago concerning asylum seekers that human dignity is not to be relativised by political interests to regulate migration (Bundesverfassungsgericht, 2012). Second, a shift of focus within the national legal discussion from social law towards police law. Since there are less opportunities for inclusion in the German society by social benefits, social workers therefore try to realize a shelter together with the homeless person to overcome the emergency of homelessness at minimum, based

on the argumentation of humanitarian emergency assistance. Nevertheless, even this is a contested question, like seen in the example of Iulia and Mr. I. Recently another consequence started to develop: a shift of focus towards the right to free movement, thus towards foreigners' law. Some stakeholders start to call for the Foreigners Registration Office to take action, i.e. to expulse homeless mobile EU-citizens from the EU member state where they reside. These tendencies can be observed in certain municipalities and not only in Germany but also in other EU member states.

Challenging the Local Homeless Services Structure

As a second aspect of analysing the intra-EU mobility regime, I look at the level of the local homeless service structure in Berlin to trace processes, in which in- and exclusion are negotiated. Here, practitioners from different NGOs report that some years ago the municipality has recalled the funding of a medical centre for homeless people in Berlin, due to the treatment of so-called "not-entitled" mobile EU-citizens. Like Mr. I., for whom the services of the centre regarding to the municipality was not meant to be the address to go to. People have been treated there without regard to their citizenship and their status concerning social rights. The centre didn't hide but rather documented all treatments and patients for the municipality. A little time earlier, the municipality had stated clearly that the treatment of this group of patients in those centres funded by the municipality will not be refunded, unless the person is a member of a country that signed the "European Convention on Social and Medical Assistance" or if it is an emergency treatment or the treatment of a reportable disease. In Berlin, this instance caused a lot of disturbance and uncertainty, since these "not-entitled" people were treated not only in the mentioned medical centre, but also in other centres, which became afraid for their funding. Interestingly, details of the incidences never became public. The organisation running this centre decided to continue to work with their own funding instead and intensively ran for donations. A further reaction of the organisation to deal with this crisis was to start to build a network of all organisations offering medical treatment for homeless people in Berlin. Finally, they founded a "Round Table medical treatment of homeless people". Within this network, the participating organisations and persons get to know about each other better, share experiences and develop common goals and strategies to reform the services of medical treatment of homeless people in Berlin. One of their main goals is to provide access to medical treatment for everybody, especially for mobile EU-citizens.

A crucial obstacle in this process is the conceptualization of migration. It seems as if the members of the municipality, as well as other official stakeholders, are assuming that migration is a push-pull-process. They understand it as a mechanism

with a logical connection between offer supply and demand. This economic idea is highly controversially discussed, not only in the economic sector (for example Lee, 1969; Boyd, 1989; Glick Schiller *et al*., 1997), but also in the field of migration. The theory has been quoted repeatedly in the field and became effective. One of my interview partners describes the imaginations connected with it by using the metaphor of "opening a door":

> In conversations with deputies of the municipality's management about the topic of funding and target group. It was last summer, and we noticed about the topic of the target group [of beneficiaries], in this regard one wants to be strict, no one wants to discuss it. The justification is always, you would open a door, demand asks supply and so on, you just don't want to open the door. (Director of a local NGO, 2017)

This rather mechanical idea of migration points to an underlying logic of security. NGOs also talk of the fear of "foreign infiltration" on the municipality's side. Such fear goes along with the need to control migration and therefore to save the nation state. As it can be seen also in other moments of the migration discourse in Germany, processes of Europeanisation as well as movement of people go in hand with a contra-discourse of revitalising the nation state and its borders.

To gain more power in the local negotiation processes about access to medical care in Berlin, the municipality finally refers to the relationship of dependency between them and the NGOs, who get state funds. And last but not least, due to the lack of transparency of what happened, a threatening scenario has been built, as many people in the field explain. For example, one interviewee, who is part of the management of an NGO:

> The threatening scenario is, that, if you do something different than what the financier prescribes, as effect it becomes not fundable. Theoretically, like, according to what has been told, like what happened to [NAME OF ORGANISATION], the funding could be reduced or cut completely. And despite all these discussion we had, this threatening scenario has never been really, really openly said as a threat, however through the colourful subclauses everyone could understand, of course, who is boss. (Director of a local NGO, 2017)

To find a way out of this dilemma situation between official treatment prohibition and professional treatment necessity, NGOs follow two main argumentation lines. One follows an economic thinking by trying to measure the treatments and patients to show the need of funding and necessary structure changes. The second argumentation line follows a national security logic and argues with the security of the (national) society: The medical treatment centres undertake tasks of the public

health service, such as pre-diagnosing HIV/Aids or Tuberculosis. Therefore, the medical treatment of homeless people plays an important role in securing the society, thus needs to be state funded.

In- and Exclusions in Homeless Service Centres

In a third step, I now focus on the level of interactions within a homeless service, especially how participation and in- and exclusion is negotiated here. While the framework might change quickly, practices might remain unchanged. Further, it seems practice changes are not to be explained automatically by changes in the framework. This means for ethnographic research, to endure apparent missing connections and to trace them patiently: "'studying through' entails multi-sited ethnographies which trace policy connections between different organizational and everyday worlds, even where actors in different sites do not know each other or share an oral universe" (Shore and Wright, 1997, p.14). Thus, the following remarks are not directly connected to the mentioned aspects, but still describe relevant processes.

I present here two effect-generating structures on the practical level, which produce ex- and inclusions in homeless services: first, classifying the service users, second, distributing resources. Both methods neither reflect the interactions completely nor are they representative for all homeless services. Still, it is important to look at them to understand the processes of negotiating participation on the practical level.

Classifying service users

The aim of low-threshold services for homeless people is to meet homeless peoples' most urgent needs. For that purpose they basically provide shelter, food, sanitation as well as consultation. Moreover, these centres are places to meet other people and to network. For low-threshold services, their accessibility is crucial: people in need can access them without an official proof of entitlements or any other necessities. In Berlin, these centres are across-the-board state-funded, with no regard to the exact numbers and kind of users. Compared to the highly individually differentiated access to social benefits, as shown, these services are meant to be free to use for everyone. It can be shown though, that in practice these are also spaces of in- and exclusion. Here, the ways of discrimination are different and sometimes more subtle than the regulations by the legal framework.

During my participant observations, I have accompanied a social worker offering once-a-week social counselling in a day care centre for homeless people. The team of the social worker was asked to assist the staff of the day care centre, since they felt overwhelmed by the number of service users they cannot talk to, due to the lack

of a common language. Most of them, as they said, were mobile EU-citizens, especially Romanians. So once a week, one or two social workers offered social counselling in different languages, amongst others Romanian. Also, the day care centre hired a language mediator for Romanian who is working there twice a week. The team called these days "integration days". As an additional intervention, they limited the access for "Romanians" and published this by sticking an information sheet on the entrance door with a text in German and Romanian:

> *Integration days in [CENTRE].*
> *Dear guests, we want to offer an extensive programme with counselling, cultural events etc. also to our Romanian-speaking guests. But we can only provide this on two days of the week, namely on Tuesday and Wednesday. We ask you for understanding that Romanian-speaking guests only have access to [CENTRE] these two days. Thank you very much! The team of [CENTRE].*

The centre wants to meet the needs of their service users, who are characterized by many differences. It can be assumed that despite of all their differences all of them live in poverty and precarious situations and need assistance to overcome them. Since homelessness is a result of structural and individual determinants, the reasons for each individual situation might differ. Interestingly, here neither the situation nor the reason for it is the key characteristic used to categorize the service users, but their language. But a certain language is not only the criterion for classifying people into groups but also for regulating access to the provided service. And instead of frankly communicating this constraint by saying that the service is restricted for some people, the restraint is formulated positively as an extra service for apparently Romanian people, which can be provided only two days a week. An explanation in which way the ability to communicate in a certain language is connected to the restricted access to the centre, that is meant to be accessible for everyone in need, is missing. It seems that it is not about the integration of Romanian-speaking people but about their exclusion. But as the following scene of my field notes shows, it is not about a definite exclusion but about a certain level of exclusion. Entering the centre is a crucial moment in this process of positioning:

> Markus [staff member] asks me to hold his position for a moment while he needs to manage something. No problem, I answer. He gives me his pen and shows me the tally sheet next to the entrance door. It's a small paper with a chart on it, stuck with tape at the glass door. I should just write in the tally sheet whether male or female and "German" or "Foreigner". It is important to write down everyone and to take care, whether the person has been here before today or enters new, he explains me. (…) a man enters, I welcome him and want to write him down in the chart, but I don't know on which side to put the line, "d" (for

German) or "a" (for foreigner). So I wait for Markus and ask him. (…) Markus goes to the tally sheet and makes a sign at "a" for "Ausländer" (foreigners). "Aha," I say, "and how do you know that?" "One recognizes Romanians" he says. I ask again: "How exactly?" "Well, the women for example, just look at them. You see it." (field notes 08.11.2017)

After having managed to access the centre, the users get classified a second time. Now the categories are male/female and German/foreigner. Interestingly, I was told by other social workers before, that people are not asked for their language skills when entering the centre (as one might expect following the mentioned information sheet) but separated based on the colour of their skin.

Another scene from the same centre indicates a certain hierarchical order of the categories: The so-called "Integration days" don't only aim to assist the group of "Romanian-speaking", or better "Romanian-looking", homeless people to overcome their precarious situation and to be included. In fact, people, labelled as "Romanians" are made visible, while other nationalities are obviously not taken into account:

An elderly man enters the room, Markus welcomes him and writes a sign at "d". I ask him, whether he knows this man already. "One year", says Markus, "he is coming here already a long time. He is Italian, but counts for us as German." After some more questions Markus makes it clear, that "a" means "Romania" and "d" all other countries. (field notes 08.11.2017)

It is obvious, that nationality, ethnicity and visible attributes are mixed here. The fact that it is not clearly communicated what aspect it is about, indicates an insecurity of how to deal with a feeling of being overwhelmed of certain service users, of supposed excessive demands, stereotypes and prejudices in a racist structure of society and a lack of words. This can lead to discrimination, like shown. As the social worker I attended told me later, the local authorities are informed about the situation and have not taken any action until now.

Distributing resources

Further participation and exclusion is negotiated in interactions, for example if resources are distributed. Also, the behaviour of the support-seeking person is often regulated and people are categorized. In such situations, people often use their body parts in order to reinforce their words. This can be observed in the frequently occurring distribution of (mostly material) resources, such as clothes, shoes or sanitary products, but also in matters of attention. One important criterion to decide upon the distribution of such a limited resource is the availability of the needed product. In general, the demand of material resources and attention is higher than the enabled supply. So the staff members need to decide how to distribute the restricted supplies. Clear rules that would make the decision process

transparent and understandable, don't exist. So with a few exceptions, every decision taken is a single decision by a single staff member. Different aspects influence these decisions and besides individual sympathy, the indicated level of need is relevant. The level of need is evaluated on the basis of a normative scale. This practice reminds of the moralizing distinction between "true" and "not-true" or "worthy" and "unworthy" poor, which developed in the European middle ages and led to the challenge to distinguish one from the other (Oberhuber, 1999). The act of decision-making can be shown in the following scene I described in my field notes after a day of participant observation in the medical centre:

> One patient, about whom she [staff member] had said before, that he is annoying her, asks for a pair of trousers. She answers no, there is none. Besides that, she explains to me, quietly, so the man cannot hear it: "If someone comes with lice or dirty, in consequence there is a higher chance of getting a pair of jeans." (field notes 20.05.2016)

Other aspects are generalized assumptions and imaginations which – consciously or not – also affect the discussions, decisions and practices. For instance one staff member doesn't hesitate to generalize her experiences according to a homogenising and discriminating pattern:

> Another man negotiates with her [STAFF MEMBER] […] whether and which clothes he can get. Without success. As he turns around and walks into the waiting room, she turns around, I come closer to her with my office chair and she tells me: "They are artists. The worst are the Bulgarians and the Romanians, they want most and discuss most." (field notes 23.05.2016)

Finally, as I observed in the medical service centre, the distribution, for example of clothes, is repeatedly connected to a pedagogic stimulus, that sets German language as a norm. Again and again, the distribution of clothes is under the term of asking for it in German. Emphasizing that in Germany people speak German, language becomes a core feature of "Germany" and the standard of "integration". At the same time, the staff member who uses this technique the most can present herself, who is not born and raised in Germany and had learned German as adult, as a good example of integration – in opposition to whose who don't speak German.

Putting Pieces Together: Theoretical Reflections

Each of the processes shown result in certain relations of in- and exclusion, thus in different levels of belonging and participation. These processes do not occur accidentally nor automatically, but they can be understood and thought of in a productive way through the lense of certain theoretical concepts. I suggest to apply basically the concept of "differential inclusion", which helps to understand the selective inclusion of migrants within a migration regime of, for example, the European Union, in contrast to an understanding of border as medium of either in- or exclusion. Rather, it describes the European migration management as a highly "selective, hierarchical, and spatially and temporally heterogeneous" (Bojadžijev and Mezzadra, 2015) system. Such a perspective suggests to understand the European Union itself as a space for "a multitude of practices of inclusion and exclusion"(Walters, 2005, p.163), where both the "inside" and the "outside" is negotiated, but also an inner differentiation of it. As could be seen in the data, the concept of national borders is not questioned, they are seen as given and its arrangement as humane as possible is negotiated. Borders then do not only divide the existing world, but are reactions to changes of the world and of the society, make these changes visible and finally shape the world: "borders, far from serving simply to block or obstruct flows, have become essential devices for their articulation"(Mezzadra and Neilson, 2012, p.64).

Consequently, migration management consists of lots of different elements, such as legal frameworks, administrative measures, institutional structures and individual behaviour. Thus, basically the social problem of homelessness of mobile EU-citizens in Germany can be understood in general as a legal conflict about the relation of the actual stay and the basic right to minimum subsistence benefits of a person. One central mechanism of these processes, therefore, is the entanglement of EU-regulated foreigners law respectively freedom of movement and national social and police law. But it is not only a legal conflict resulting mainly from given laws. Rather, the described process of governments constantly changing the law and thereby increasingly restricting the access to social benefits shows how the legal conflict is embedded in broader social processes. Besides, these social processes are also influenced by moral implications and historically shaped imaginations that last but not least affect the access to limited resources such as housing and especially affordable housing. Interestingly the situation of homeless mobile EU-citizens is rarely seen in Germany as a problem of affordable housing but, as seen, as a problem of regulation of migration, influenced by moral ideas, emotions and certain imaginations.

The reference to the discourse of moral economies and especially to Didier Fassins "politics of life" is helpful here to frame the problem of humanitarian interventions. Using the example of the mission of MSF (Médecins sans frontiers/ Doctors without borders) in Iraq and the upcoming question of staying or leaving the country, Fassin emphasises the contradictions that underlie "temporary moral economies, well beyond the sphere of intervention of humanitarian organizations themselves, in what characterizes the political disorder of the world: the inequality of lives" (Fassin, 2007, p.520). The example of the employee at the medical service centre who decides who deserves clothes and who doesn't shows how much the humanitarian intervention is contested also in the field of homelessness. Therefore, in future analysis it needs to be asked, how these "inequalities of lives" are negotiated within the different levels relating to the social problem of home-lessness of mobile EU-citizens.

Last but not least, taking a post-colonial perspective on homogenising and discriminating patterns and structures into consideration, recalling racist imagina-tions, like in the shown example, is more than a single symptom of individual excessive demands. It is rather an indication of the still racist structures of the world and its societies, which are also effective in the field of homelessness. The concept of "global hierarchy of culture" by Michael Herzfeld offers a useful theoretical framework to analyse and understand these patterns. Following this concept, "Europe" is not a homogeneous entity nor its exclusions incidental, but they follow a colonial logic of creating and excluding 'the Other' (Herzfeld, 2002, p.920). In the European context, these logics can be seen most obviously with people belonging or ascribed to belong to the ethnicity of Roma: no matter whether they hold a passport of an EU member state, thus holding the EU citizenship, Roma still face discrimination all over Europe on different societal levels (FRA, 2018) and are produced as, so to speak, the "inner Other" (Balibar, 2004). In the public German discourse, the status of citizenship and labelled ethnicity are mixed, but not only in Germany. This happens for different reasons and as seen, for example by classi-fying service users based on a racist structure of society. Following these discourses, it can be seen that the use of ascriptions and categorizations is more about creating a certain reality than describing such. Such processes need to be understood as embedded in certain historical conditions and are often violent. Consequently, categories as such should be challenged and deconstructed (see Lorey 2012 (2010)).

Conclusion

The aim of my research is not to judge upon the decisions or the behaviour of individuals, but to understand the connections in which individual action is embedded. The perspective of European ethnology opens up a wider understanding for the single action regarding homelessness of mobile EU-citizens, which is neither an exclusive German nor local problem. Rather, it can be seen that it is an effect of a national-European conflict. Further, that "Europe" doesn't exist by itself but as a result of continuous (re-)production processes and that it is not a homogeneous space but a space where different positions are negotiated. Even on the level of the European Union, which promotes international exchange and mobility within its member states and enables exclusions and discrimination at the same time the way of dealing with borders, the "inside" and "outside", also seems to be the subject of negotiation. While on one hand, the freedom of movement for workers within the EU is one of its highest goods, on the other hand, there are highly differentiated forms of exclusion from national welfare systems to the point of complete exclusion from any benefits (except for return). It is a political negotiation process then to balance the different interests and underlying imaginations and expectations and to define so-called European values like "humanity", "solidarity" and, finally, Europe itself.

Based on the theoretical background of a system of differential inclusion, I showed with my research on homelessness of mobile EU-citizens in Germany, first, that intra-EU-migration in Germany is regulated by national law, and that it produces specific legal constellations and life circumstances. As seen, this creates urgent needs for the person affected. The data show that law changes are influenced on one hand by political interests of different stakeholders, and on the other hand by struggles about it using e.g. legal instruments. Second, political borders are not basically questioned, but their (human) arrangement is negotiated. The moral conflict of right to participation and need for exclusion is not only negotiated on the level of practitioners, but also by policy makers on the national and EU-level. Third, homelessness of mobile EU-citizens is an effect of a complex interaction of laws, discourses, institutions, political logics, administrative measures, practices, etc. rather than it is an ostensible issue of lack of housing. Using this example, it can be shown how participation and exclusion, control and autonomy, security and humanity are negotiated by policy makers and other stakeholders on the local, regional, national and the EU-level. And finally, homelessness of mobile EU-citizens needs to be understood as embedded in a still-colonial structured society. The same goes for social work in the field of homelessness, therefore social work needs to reflect critically its own position and actions.

Thus, this research is relevant not only for the German, but also for other national and supranational contexts, as well as for politicians, practitioners of social work and scientists in the field of homelessness and beyond. Although the presented findings are intermediate results of a still ongoing research they might as such help to better understand the phenomenon of homelessness of mobile EU-citizens as a basis for interventions to solve this social problem and possibly to overcome obsolete structures.

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