Limited Europe. Mobile EU-citizens as service users of homeless services
or: Homelessness of mobile EU-citizens as an effect of a national-european conflict

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Introduction

- mobile EU-citizens using easy to access services of the homeless sector in Germany
- mainly only emergency supply
- restrictive national legislation

=> the social problem of homelessness of mobile EU-citizens in Germany is an effect of a specific migration regime (Mezzadra, Balibar, Hess)
Research

“studying through”: “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/ Wright 1997:14)

„Assemblages are composed of heterogeneous elements or objects that enter into relations with one another. These objects are not all of the same type. Thus you have physical objects, happenings, events, and so on, but you also have signs, utterances, and so on. While there are assemblages that are composed entirely of bodies, there are no assemblages composed entirely of signs and utterances.“ (Levi Bryant 2009)
The inner Differentiation of Europe

- The legal framework, that produces inclusions and exclusions

“Well as far as I notice until now, is like that, that within the European borders so to say few regulations in the sense, so the right of residence is very free, we have the freedom of movement as so to say one of the basic rights and that it is difficult, so to say to contain migration within the EU by this, because we have a lot of freedoms [...] and then somehow a little bit really, to say it very lapidary, one makes them feel as uncomfortable as possible, so that maybe they return however.” (interview)

(„Also wie ich das bis jetzt wahrnehme, ist ja so, dass es ja innerhalb der europäischen Grenzen sozusagen wenig Regulierung in dem Sinne, also das Aufenthaltsrecht ist ja sehr frei, wir haben die Freizügigkeit als einer der Grundrechte sozusagen und dass das schwierig wird, darüber Migration innerhalb der EU überhaupt noch sozusagen einzugrenzen, weil wir da eigentlich viel Freiheiten haben [...] und dann irgendwie so ein bisschen wirklich, ganz lapidar mal gesprochen, man macht es denen dann so unangenehm wie möglich, dass die vielleicht doch wieder zurückgehen.“)
The inner Differentiation of Europe

The legal framework, that produces inclusions and exclusions

“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, that 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, so that also here there are no noteworthy excess expenditures to be expected.” (justification of the law)
The inner Differentiation of Europe

- Reactions on the level of the local homeless services structure

„Threatening scenario is, that hm, when you do something different than that, what the grant provider prescribes, than it is not fundable. Then, one could theoretically, as it is then, after that, what has been told, then [NAME OF ORGANISATION] happened, reduce funding or cut it completely. And despite in all these discussion, that we had, this threatening scenario has never been really, really directly articulated as a threat, but through the colorful subclauses one could understand, of course, where the club is stored [...] in order to hit you; german proverb“ (interview)

„Drohszenario ist, dass ähm, wenn man was anderes tut als das, was der Zuwendungsgeber vorschreibt, dann ist es nicht zuwendungsfähig. Dann könnte man eben theoretisch, so wie das ja dann, nach dem, was erzählt wird, dann [EINRICHTUNGSNAME] passiert ist, Mittel kürzen oder ganz streichen. Und dieses Drohszenario wurde in diesen Diskussionen, die wir geführt haben, zwar nie so richtig, so richtig konfrontativ als Drohung ausgesprochen, aber durch die blumigen Nebensätze konnte man natürlich schon verstehen, also wo die Keule so im Hintergrund hängt.“
The inner Differentiation of Europe

- Reactions on the level of the local homeless services structure

“Conversations with deputies of the municipality's management about the topic of funding, where we, that has been last summer, where we understood, about the topic of the target group (of beneficiaries), in this regard you are strict, you don't want to discuss. The justification is always, you would open a door, demand asks supply and so on, hm you just don’t want to open the door.” (interview)
"'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 a oral universe." (Shore/Wright 1997:14).
Negotiation of participation in a homeless service center

“Nadja motivates all patients in the morning to take a shower or at least to wash their feet and wear new socks. For example Mr. Marcinkevičius from Lithuania. He refuses, doesn't want to take shower. Then at least wash your feet, because after a hot weekend possibly they don't smell well! she explains him in Russian. He slowly shakes his head, slightly stretches his lips and eyes for a short moment and says “Well, ok”. Then Nadja explains to him, that he can do it also in the shower and gives him a towel and a pair of clean socks. Mr. Marcinkevičius disappears in the room with the sign “shower” on its door. Nadja turns to me afterwards and says, that she sends everyone to the shower, so that at least they wash their feet, because she cannot bother the doctor with the smell.” (field notes 23.05.2016)
Negotiation of participation in a homeless service center

“One patient, of who she [staff member Antje] had said before, that he is annoying her, asks for a trouser. She answers no, there is none. Besides that she explains me, quietly, so the man cannot hear it: 'If someone comes with lice or dirty, then there is a higher chance of getting a pair of jeans.’” (field notes 20.05.2016)

„Ein Patient, von dem sie (Antje, Mitarbeiterin; Anm. d.A.) vorher bereits gesagt hatte, dass er sie nerve, fragt nach einer Jeans. Sie antwortet ihm, nein, es gebe keine. Und erläutert mir darüber hinaus, so leise, dass der Mann es nicht hören kann: 'Wenn jemand verlaust und dreckig ist, dann ist die Chance für eine Jeanshose höher.’“ (field notes 20.05.2016)
The inner Differentiation of Europe

Negotiation of participation in a homeless service center

“Another man negotiates with her in russian whether and which clothes he can get. No success. As he turns around and walks into the waiting room, she [Nadja] turns around, I come closer to her with my rowling chair and she says to me: 'They are artists. The worst are the Bulgarians and the Romanians, they want most and discuss most.’” (field notes 23.05.2016)

„Ein anderer Mann verhandelt mit ihr auf russisch, ob und was er an Kleidungsstücken bekommen kann. Erfolglos. Als er sich umdreht und ins Wartezimmer geht, dreht sie (Nadja; Anm. d. A.) sich zu mir herum, ich rolle mit dem Drehhocker, auf dem ich sitze, etwas an sie heran und sie sagt zu mir: ‘Das sind Artisten. Am schlimmsten sind die Bulgaren und die Rumänen, die wollen am meisten und diskutieren am meisten.’“ (field notes 23.05.2016)
Summary and conclusion

- Intra-EU-migration in Germany is regulated by national law and produces specific legal constellations and life circumstances. Thereby it creates urgent needs.

- Political borders are not basically questioned, but their (human) arrangement is negotiated. European Union, which is promoting a European community, exchange and mobility between the member states, is contradictory in itself.

- Homelessness of mobile EU-citizens is an effect of a complex interplay of laws, discourses, institutions, political logics, administrative measures, practices, etc. Using this example it can be shown, how participation and exclusion, control and autonomy, security and humanity are negotiated within the European Union.
To be discussed...

- What about the involvement of Social Work in a (excluding) border regime within the EU?
- How do you assess the situation in other EU member states' countries?
- ...

