Seminar 14: Impact of Covid-19 II
Chair: **Kjell Larsson, SE**

Marco Heinrich, Frieda Heinzelmann, Frank Sowa, DE: On the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Everyday Lives and Coping Strategies of Homeless People

Marco Heinrich is a research associate at the Nuremberg Institute of Technology, Germany. He studied Sociology and Cultural Geography (B.A. degree 2017) at the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen-Nuremberg (FAU) and Sociology and Social Sciences (M.A. degree 2020) at the Philipps-University Marburg. His research interests include qualitative research, housing and homelessness, social inequality, discrimination, social exclusion and deviance.

Frieda Heinzelmann is a research associate at Nuremberg Institute of Technology, Germany. She is currently working on the project: Young (formerly hidden) homeless women and their social network relationships: A Qualitative Study on Ending or Stabilizing Homelessness. She holds a B.A. in Social Pedagogy, Social Work and Welfare Science from the Technical University of Dresden and has worked as a social pedagogue in child and youth welfare. In 2021 she completed her M.A. in Social Work at the Nuremberg Institute of Technology. During her master's studies, she worked as a student assistant in the Projects Smart Inclusion for Homeless People (SIWo) and Rough sleeping and homelessness during the corona pandemic: The case study of Nuremberg metropolitan region, where she began working on the topics of homelessness.

Frank Sowa is professor of sociology at Nuremberg Institute of Technology, Germany. He received his Ph.D. degree from the University Erlangen-Nuremberg and worked as senior researcher at the Institute for Employment Research. He is a sociologist specialized in qualitative and ethnographic methods. Since 2017, he has been working on the topics of homelessness. He leads several projects, e.g. Rough sleeping and homelessness during the corona pandemic: The case study of Nuremberg metropolitan region, Securing Housing. Housing, Housing Losses and Homelessness in Nuremberg and Vienna, Vulnerable Youth in Changing Risk Environments: Figurations of Urban Youth Homelessness in Germany, Denmark and the UK.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the discussion of housing and homelessness experienced a renaissance in the media, politics, and society. With the solidarity calls to reduce face-to-face contact, the question of how people without homes should respond to these calls became pressing. The heterogeneity of homeless people is reflected in the diverse living situations, the different ways in which everyday life is organized, and the varying coping strategies of the people affected. Thus, it can be assumed that the changes brought about by the pandemic affected homeless people differently. In this research, therefore, we will explore the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated government-mandated interventions on homeless people, who were already facing crisis living circumstances before the pandemic began and coped with them in different ways. In doing so, we will look at the specific living situation and everyday arrangements of homeless people as well as identify their new and old coping strategies that determine how they deal with the novel situation. To accomplish this, a total of 17 narratively structured guided interviews were conducted in Germany and analyzed following grounded theory and sequence analysis. Our findings show that homelessness in times of the COVID-19 pandemic means increased dependency on institutional support. This is because government restrictions during lockdowns prevent successfully practiced coping strategies based on informal support networks. However, if these institutional supports can now no longer be maintained because of the pandemic, homeless people are left only with trying to cope with the situation on their own.

Hilary Silver and Laura Colini, USA/EU: Governing Multilevel Responses to Coronavirus Impacts on US and European Homelessness

Hilary Silver is Professor of Sociology, International Affairs, and Public Policy & Public Administration at George Washington University and Professor of Sociology & Urban Studies Emerita from Brown University, USA. She holds a PhD in Sociology from Columbia University and served as Editor of the journal, City & Community. Her research focus is social exclusion, urban poverty and homelessness and the policies that address them in the USA and abroad.

Laura Colini holds a PhD habil. in Urban, Regional and Environmental Studies, University of Florence IT and Post-Doc Marie-Curie, Bauhaus University DE. Her most recent work covers topics related to EU urban policies, migration, housing. She has been working as an academic in Italy, Germany, France, UK, and USA. She currently works as senior policy expert on social and urban policies for the EU COM (URBACT, UIA, EU Urban Agenda). She is also co-founder of Tesserae, Urban Social Research in Berlin, member of the artist collective Oginoknauss and of the International Network for Urban Research and Action INURA.

Solving urban problems entails multiple levels of governance. Laws, policies, and programs, their financing and implementation, overlap and sometimes conflict, giving rise to local variation in public action to address challenges like homelessness. Processes and institutions that enable policy-making across different jurisdictional levels with both public authorities and non-state actors can shift authority and delegate responsibilities downwards, upwards, or sideways (Maggetti and Trein 2018). When a crisis like the coronavirus pandemic hits, pre-existing institutional arrangements experience shocks, presenting opportunities for progressive change. Neoinstitutional theory suggests that the path dependency of existing subsidized housing programs is disturbed, but it is unclear whether the pandemic emergency arrangements will become the "new normal" or whether they revert to earlier institutions. This paper considers how responses to Covid-19 at multiple levels of governance – federal/European Union, state/member state, and local/municipal – built upon and modified earlier approaches to homelessness while retaining and recommitting to the Housing First model. It compares US and European actions to stimulate the economy in the immediate aftermath of the shutdowns, and to invest in longer-term capital improvements such as modernized housing. The initial expenditures helped to deconcentrate congregate shelters, identify available accommodations, house the unsheltered, equip encampments with hygiene, food, and health care, extend cash and rental assistance, ban evictions, and transform systems so that those provided housing during the pandemic will not stay on the streets. Subsequently, localities must address the longer-term challenges of permanently housing the homeless. The comparison across and within countries identifies factors at multiple levels – extent and nature of homelessness, local housing markets, pre-existing social housing and allowances programs, and political forces -- that successfully transform local arrangements in a progressive direction as the pandemic recedes in time.