

Seminar 15: Migration and Homelessness II (Room: TBD) - Chair: Eoin O'Sullivan, IE

Raluca Cosmina Budian, Susanna Salvador, Ignasi Marti Lanuza, ES: Understanding Migrant Homelessness: Pathways Approach and Barriers to Housing Access in Spain

In Spain, social policies often prioritize housing, employment, and social services over homelessness (Rodríguez Cabrero & Marbán Gallego, 2020), yet homelessness persists, with marginalized individuals suffering worldwide (Pophaim & Peacock, 2021).

This study delves into the intricate journeys of migrants experiencing homelessness in Spain, offering a comprehensive analysis of their pathways into, through, and out of homelessness.

Recognizing the challenges in studying the trajectories of migrant homelessness, our research is driven by a focused exploration of the pathways approach and the barriers confronting migrants seeking to transition out of homelessness in Spain. Drawing on our analysis of 33 life-stories of individuals in Barcelona, Madrid and Lleida, we uncover a complex interplay of intersectionality between access to housing, barriers, and migrant status within the framework of the pathways approach (Clapham, 2005; Navarro Lashayas, 2016). Simultaneously, we employ a phenomenological method to gain profound insights into the subjective experiences of homelessness and the meanings participants attach to these experiences (Bernard et al., 2017; Creswell, 2007).

Our findings challenge conventional wisdom by revealing that the challenges faced by homeless migrants are not solely a consequence of their undocumented status; rather, they emerge through nuanced interactions of class dynamics, racialization, and immigration status. These dynamics establish conditions that heighten vulnerability and barriers to securing stable housing, often triggered by life events such as job loss.

Navigating through homelessness involves negotiating multifaceted trajectories influenced by structural realities, leading to either downward spirals or integrative passages (Chamberlain & Johnson, 2018). While some individuals transition out of homelessness through supportive networks and stable housing, others face bureaucratic impediments and societal barriers.

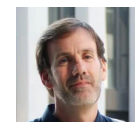
This research advances our understanding of migrant homelessness outcomes, emphasizing the need for comprehensive and preventive strategies in Spain. By recognizing the multifaceted of homelessness, it is important to maintain a perspective on proactive strategies for homelessness prevention (Mackie's, 2023).



Raluca Cosmina Budian: Postdoctoral Researcher at the Esade Institute for Social Innovation and a member of the Institute's Decent Housing Observatory.



Susanna Salvador: Project Coordinator and Associate Director of the Decent Housing Observatory of Esade's Institute for Social Innovation.



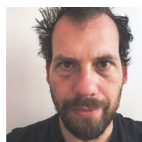
Ignasi Marti Lanuza: Professor in the Department of Social Sciences, Director of the Institute for Social Innovation and Director of the Decent Housing Observatory at Esade.

Bruno Meeus and Elisabeth Mareels, NL/BE: Homelessness, precarious citizenship, and practices of 'forced inhabitation' in Cureghem, Brussels

In this contribution, we report on ethnographic research we conducted in the marginalized neighbourhood Cureghem in Brussels. For the study, we talked to, among others, a dozen people with precarious citizenship who live in the neighbourhood for short or longer periods of time. In the contribution we explain:

- Which conditions underlie the situation in which people have to develop 'forced inhabitation practices'. Forced because the neighbourhood is a last refuge (Agier 2013) for these people who experience diverse forms of discrimination and illegalisation. Inhabitation practices because the neighbourhood offers not only forms of shelter but also the possibilities for livelihood creation (Boano & Astolfo 2020; Clapham 2023);
- That in the recent decades and as a result of a particular politics of 'world-building' (Zigon 2017), various actors have built and maintained a socio-material infrastructure in the neighbourhood to facilitate these practices of inhabitation;
- That the contemporary neighbourhood thereby emerges as a polycentric set of humanitarian, charitable, kinship, ethnicity, commercial and various other micro-regimes that provide limited groups of people in a specific situation of homelessness with (temporary) access to shelter, income, social relations and more;
- That the people we spoke with help reproduce these micro-regimes but also tactically adapt and repurpose them themselves.

The fieldwork in Cureghem was part of an international comparative research project on arrival infrastructure for migrant newcomers (AIMEC).



Bruno Meeus (Utrecht University of Applied Sciences) is a senior lecturer in ecosocial work, strives for social and ecological justice in a diverse society, and researches the housing and living environments of people in precarious situations. He obtained his PhD as an urban geographer in 2011 and then worked with social professionals, anthropologists and architects within smaller and larger research projects (Steunpunt Wonen, H2020 ReROOT, AIMEC). Based on his own ethnographic research in Brussels (Innoviris), he developed in recent years a framework for analysing the arrival infrastructure for newcomers.



Eli Mareels is an anthropologist (PhD) and did research within the recent Brazilian diasporic and Pentecostal field between Brazil and Belgium (2007-15). She worked at DoucheFLUX, a Brussels' day centre for homeless persons (2016-22). Since 2022, she has been teaching at Odisee University of Applied Sciences (social work department) and took up research again for the AIMEC project which looked at the various ways in which migrants build a livelihood through arrival infrastructures in Cureghem (Brussels). Currently, she is part of the ATLAS research project about access to housing and social infrastructure for people with precarious residence status in Brussels.