# European Port Cities:
# Disadvantaged Urban Areas in Transition

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## Interim Report: Phase II, Year 1

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# Contents

# 1. Introduction

As outlined in detail in the Final Report on Phase I, as well as in the applications to Phase II, this project focuses on disadvantaged urban areas in European port cities. Port cities have been chosen as common sites for all research projects and activities, because they have been affected by ongoing economic and social transformation processes in an exemplary manner. Ports all over the world have been restructured in the context of global technological and economic change. Port neighbourhoods and their environs have been subjected to social and economic degradation, particularly affecting segments of the local economy traditionally related to the port. Segments of the urban population making a living off the port have lost their job opportunities which were to a great extent located in the sector of unsteady employment and related to informal or insecure economies. Besides the structural changes of port-related economies, global socio-political developments such as new migration and the redefinition of the European borders also contribute to massive transformation processes in the port cities under study.

Against this background, the aims of this project are twofold. *Ethnographic case studies* provide in-depth research on the living conditions and strategies of everyday survival of particularly vulnerable groups who, affected by these processes, experience various forms of social exclusion. According to the specific conditions of each city, the range of groups and actors included in this project varies from urban homeless and migrant/refugee street vendors or small entrepreneurs in ethnic economies to former dock workers or sailors on inland waterways. As a common denominator of all cases and a key concept guiding all research activities serves the notion of *urban subsistence* (see Final Report on Phase I, pp. 5-7*)*, summarising a set of strategies, activities and cultural knowledge necessary to survive under conditions of economic and/or social insecurity. Despite explicitly acknowledging their problematic situation, we consider those actors as experts for survival in difficult conditions, whose specific cultural knowledge may be put to good use for developing and implementing practice oriented programmes.

Focusing on actors´ practical subsistence strategies and on their cultural knowledge, this project thus takes a basically asset-oriented approach. This ties in with the second aim: the development of *practice-oriented programmes*. All NGOs participating in this project have been quite experienced in developing activities enhancing participation and self-organisation of the groups they are serving. Based on the findings of ethnographic case studies, the programmes developed explicitly for this project (and described in this report), therefore put a strong emphasis on strengthening and empowering community structures and on providing platforms and infrastructure for better communication.

# 2. Results and Conclusions: a Preliminary Overview

In the following Interim Reports, the current state of work in ethnographic research and programme development is summarised for each of the cities. All cities involved in this project have recently been undergoing massive structural transformations, resulting in fundamental changes to the relationship of city and port. Migration is another key factor affecting all of the cases, although to different degrees.

Illustration 1: Locations of Case Studies

In all of the cities, former port areas have fallen into disuse over the last decades, losing their economic base and being stigmatised as "dangerous" and "criminal" areas. Despite this, many of these neighbourhoods used to be characterised by a strong sense of local identity and social belonging and still-functioning social networks and self-help organisations. Another strong potential of social cohesion has been introduced by various migrant and refugee networks, often operating within the framework of informal economies, providing much-needed services at relatively low cost to the socially degraded populations of these areas.

Currently, waterfront and dockland development schemes have been implemented in many of the cities, London being one of the prime exemplars. These processes of gentrification have been affecting not only the former industrial areas around inner city ports, but also neighbouring residential areas mainly inhabited by socially deprived groups, thus severely disrupting local identities and social networks.

The following case studies outline the potential conflicts and problems arising from the different interests of actors involved in contemporary port cities. Contested urban space, economic activities and modes of subsistence on the informal level, and insecure conditions of illegalised migrants and refugees form the major themes of these studies as well as of the programme development. More detailed results and research-based policy recommendations will be added in the following Final Report of Phase II.

# 3. Case Studies

## 3.1. Report: Algeciras and Ceuta

*by Henk Driessen, University of Nijmegen, Carolin Alfonso and Eva Kaewnetara, University of Hamburg*

### 3.1.1. Ethnographic Field Study: Algeciras: Border or Port City?

Algeciras – Short Summary and Preliminary Findings:"Puente entre dos Continentes y Nexo entre dos Mares"

#### 3.1.1.1. Introduction

This report is based on field studies carried out in March and August 2004. Data were gathered from participant observation, interviews with experts as well as migrants and from the evaluation of the local press.

Algeciras is located in southern Spain, in the bay of Algeciras to the West of Gibraltar and to the South in close proximity to the African continent, so with clear weather conditions one can distinguish the outline of Northern Africa. Algeciras has approx. 120.000 inhabitants (Driessen 2003) and belongs to the Cádiz province. This special geographical location bears a twofold function for Algeciras as a city: On the one hand the city is perceived as the last southern border city of the so called „Fortress Europe" against the unwanted entry of migrants of so called third world countries. On the other hand the city represents THE place for goods handling in the Mediterranean region and ranges in the top three Spanish most important port cities along with Barcelona and Valencia and is the biggest port as far as the transit of container handling is concerned (Puerto de Algeciras 2003). Before drawing the attention to the resulting conflicts and possible questions for further research, a short summary of the development of the port and city of Algeciras is sketched out.

#### 3.1.1.2. The Local Context: Development of Port and City

Algeciras, or *Al-Jazira Al-Jadra* – the „green isle", as she was named when founded by Arabic Berbers in the 7th century A.C. – was already an important strategic port at that time. The city was destroyed in the 14th Cent. and it was not rebuilt before the second half of the 18th Century by King Charles III as a stronghold against Gibraltar (Fundación Municipal de Cultura). In the beginnings of the 20th Century, Algeciras was a rather sleepy province city, which lived from livestock farming and records small export of Cork. (Torremocha (n. y.), p.105 passim)

##### 3.1.1.2.1. *Beginning of the 20th Century (1900-1934)*

The city experienced a first boom during the first decades of the beginning of the 20th century, when it was discovered as an elegant summer resort. This boom found its expression in a first extension of the port with the construction a quay for the fisherman. During the years of recession between 1917-1923, which heavily affected the whole country, the construction of the quays as well as the smuggling trade with Gibraltar helped to smooth the economic consequences for the Algeciran population. But soon after the crisis has been surpassed the extension of the port stagnated,

because of the lack of financial means and investments until way down into the years of the Franco regime (Torremocha (n.y.), 105 passim).

### 3.1.1.2.2. Franco Regime (1934-1970)

This stagnation continued until the end of the 1960, whereas there were a few half hearted attempts to go on with the extension of the port. But then, the political events taking place during the Franco Regime on an international scale, had also heavily affected the local population of Algeciras. Due to conflicts with Great Britain, Franco decided to closed the border *(la verja)* to Gibraltar, which had enormous economic consequences for the *Algecireños*. Gibraltar then represented an important source of income for a good portion of the Algeciran population, be it as workplace in the British colony, or be it through active participation in the smuggling business. Therefore they saw their income source been taken away or their business becoming ever more dangerous. Although there had been developed a plan to promote the economic development of Algeciras in 1965 already, it was not before the closing of the border that the Spanish central government and the province government joined efforts to promote the economic growth of the *Comarca*. This plan included the promotion of the settlement of heavy-industry, alongside with the traditional fishing and fish processing industry. Also this plan designated as a defined goal the increased extension and the improvement of the port installation facilities.

### 3.1.1.2.3. 1974 - Today

In the following years a number of heavy industry plants became established along the Bay of Algeciras. Two industries are to be stressed as the biggest provider of workplace: the steel plant ACERINOX as well as the petrochemical plant of CEPSA. These two are the principal causes of the water and air pollution which heavily affects the bay and the city with its inhabitants. Algeciras has ever since had poor quality measure values of water and air and has the highest rate of cancer diseases in whole Spain.

The development of the port coincided with the modernisation of port/ship technology, through the implementation of Containerisation, which was taking place on a global scale. Therefore a great proportion of the working population were absorbed either in the newly settled industries or the port, which also attracted Spanish and non-Spanish workers, looking for a new job (Torremocha (n.y), 105 passim).

Taking these factors all together they boosted the development of the port. Nowadays its the leading Spanish port with regard to the handling of passengers, vehicles, containers and traffic (2002: Handling of 55 Mio t containers in transit, approximately 4 Mio. vehicles and 1 Mio. passengers a year); and the leading Mediterranean port for the management of containers in transit. At the same time, Algeciras is denominated the commercial and financial centre of the *Campo de Gibraltar* region.

Especially the last twenty years brought along a number of structural changes, like for example the sea was forced back to build the *Avda. Virgen del Carmen* and to transfer the mole of the traditional fishing boats. The port was modernised and extended among others with the financial assistance of the EU. As one example could serve the plan of the extension of the *Isla Verde*. This plan designates to obtain 50 ha of surface by extending the port facilities into the bay of Algeciras (this first phase is scheduled to be finished in the beginning of 2005) and then in a second phase – which should start in 2006 – obtain another 56 ha. The Cargo handling was transferred to newly

constructed quays to keep at a distance from the ferry and passenger terminals. Nevertheless, and especially during the high season in the summertime, there are several obstructions among the Cargo and Ferries. To solve these conflicts resulting from the close proximity of both, there have been made very concrete plans to transfer the passenger terminal further to the west, i.e. further away from the city centre.



Illustration 2: Aerial View of Algeciras

The settlement of international companies, like the MAERSK/ Sealand and big national companies like the TCD – *Terminal de Contenedores de Algeciras*, has scarcely no positive financial effects worth being mentioned for the city whatsoever. Of course the Port creates a modest demand for labour for certain proportions of the population. Actually some 1000-1200 work for the MAERSK, 100 for TCD, 600 for the *Autoridad Portuaria* and the greatest part find work in the industry. But only a small proportion of the high profits are invested in the social or cultural development of the city (Salguero Duarte 2003). Algeciras possesses a very high rate of unemployment 16 % , which doubles the national average (Driessen 2003). The author was told in interviews several times, that the port seemed to have developed on the back of the city. Surely the tremendously fast development of the port contributed to the difficulties of the cities incapability to develop at the same pace, and therefore, to say it with Henk Driessens words, its a rather uneasy relationship. Officially there exists a department in the *Autoridad portuaria* which task it is to develop measures to improve this relationship. But apart from organising guided tours to the bay of Algeciras for Algeciran school classes in springtime, no further measures could be seen until now.

In the end the port seems to have the character of an isle, a stopover for international companies, which has no positive effects neither on the city nor the district.

### 3.1.1.3.  Preliminary Findings and Directions for Further Research

#### *3.1.1.3.1.  Appropriation of Space and Ethnic Entrepreneurship*

It has become clear that Algeciras lives on a huge proportion on a parallel economy. Algeciras is, and has always been an important centre for smuggling – in the past it was the smuggling of alcohol and cigarettes; nowadays its increasingly illegal drugs and trafficking of people. The latter activities being ascribed to the port related area around the *Plaza Nstra. Sra. de la Palma*, where the crowded main daily market takes place.

Along the port, i.e. along the *Paseo de la conferencia* the more institutionalised entrepreneurs are allocated: customs, ship insurance agencies, ship suppliers, *Autoridad Portuaria*, and *Centro de Formación Portuaria*. On the other side, along the "entrance" to the ferry terminals on the *Avda. Vírgen del Carmen* there plenty of ticket selling offices to Ceuta or Tanger, as well as small restaurants and cheap *hostales*. The houses in this port related areas are very dilapidated in comparison with the „upper" area, and is coined as a dangerous or even „no-go-area". According to several interview partners this is so intended to prevent investors from investing in this area. Abandoned old buildings, new buildings never finished, deficient maintenance of public space, i.e. streets, squares characterise the picture of that area. No doubt drug-dealing, contraband and money laundering is taking place in Algeciras, but definitely not in that area. But this on the same time cultivates the myth of the dangerous city as written down in nearly all tourist guides. In the "upper" part of the city, this being the part around the *Plaza Alta*, one can perceive a totally different picture of the city. Perfectly well kept roads, a very large, modern pedestrian precinct way which includes two streets full of shops of the consumer goods industry. Also an increased building activity can be seen in that area, where old buildings are being renovated (again with EU funds), in order to create a city centre which is more attractive for tourism, whereas the port related areas remains as dark, shabby and dilapidated, and no building or renovating activity can be detected.

In the general picture of the city there is no real visibility of Moroccan migrants. This may change during the summertime, in the high season when the streets get crowded with the ferry passengers . There is no explicit Moroccan quarter. Nevertheless there seem to be a process of the appropriation of space in the port related area mentioned earlier already. In this area the Moroccans are highly visible, especially on the *paseo marítimo –* the Waterfront – and in the streets around la *Plaza Nstra. Sra. de la Palma*. The mosque is located here, young, mostly male, Moroccans run Internet cafés and public telephone booths; as well as Moroccan bazaars, which sell fashion, leather goods and presents, groceries and *Halal*-butchers, as well as small restaurant, cafes and cheap hostals (*hostales)*. This high concentration may lead to the assumption that there is an increasing process of emergence of an ethnic infrastructure and these ethnic niches seem to be the result of self-help and self-employment on the part of these *ethnic entrepreneurs*. In other words an appropriation of space seem to take place in this waterfront and port related area, where Moroccan migrant can rely on a dense transnational network of people and activities.

#### *3.1.1.3.2.  Algeciras and Migration*

According to ACOGE (a NGO providing help and assistance for all migrants (residents, transit or non documented) in juridical, medical and educational issues, living and workplace conditions. They offer language courses, provide assistance with

inner familiar conflicts arise and furthermore offer lectures for schools to help to create awareness of the migrants´ situation] at the moment there are approx. 5000 Moroccan migrants in the whole district of Algeciras, which comprises five communities. Compared to the overall population of Algeciras this is very small number . This again reflects the air of transience of the city: Most of the incoming migrants prefer to migrate towards the bigger Spanish cities or even to migrate further to France or Italy – due to the lack of working opportunities. A recent development is that migrants return at a later moment to Algeciras, having been living in other parts of Spain. The subjectively perceived closeness of their homeland seem to gain more importance and influence their settlement decision. Male migrants living in Algeciras work in the hotel/restaurant business, female migrants as nannies or maids in Spanish households. Male African Migrants work as street vendors. According to information obtained from ACOGE there is a relatively new development regarding the stronger presence of east European migrants. These migrant, mostly Ukrainians and Romanians work on the orange plantations in *La Jimena*. Because they are not well informed about their rights, they work for an extremely poor salary, which maybe one reason why the former plantation workers, the Moroccans, are increasingly displaced by these new groups, which in the end may lead to conflicts among these two migrant groups.

Algeciras remains the biggest gateway to Europe. Especially during summertime there are two parallel movements: those migrants on their way back home for holidays and those migrating to Europe. And again, there remains the strong air of transience. Under the name *"Operación estrecho",* the municipality build a bridge in 1999 in the eastern part of the city, in order to guide the stream of migrants around the city so to not be noticed at all by the inhabitants. In the eight years from mid-June to mid-August close to 1 Million people pass through the port, Spanish and foreign tourists who cross the Straits to Ceuta and Tanger on shopping and sightseeing tours included. During the high season there are especial waiting places for the passengers, but anyway the dispatching takes maximally 8 hours.

Apart from the "legal" migrants from Morocco, the Bay between Algeciras and Tarifa bears the sad record of being the target of more than 50 % of the clandestine migration into Spain

Night after night migrants (90% being Moroccans) try to reach the shores of Spain in so called *"pateras"*, small, open fishing boats. In the Cádiz province there have been arrested 16.600 migrants in 2002 (ACOGE Memoria Año 2002). The Spanish government has had a strong determination to keep control of the unwanted migration and in 1998 signed a bilateral agreement with Morocco in order to enable measures which allows to send these migrants back immediately, as well as a close police co-operation (Driessen 2003). It remains to be seen, whether the new Zapatero government will adopt other measures on this behalf.

### 3.1.1.4.   Summary and Further Questions for Research

These preliminary findings related here and a first evaluation of the interviews conducted seem to support the notion that Algeciras is perceived more as a border city than as a port city The air of transience is omnipresent. An interview partner told the author: Algeciras always made an effort to keep people on the move and not to make people stay in the city. The saying: *"Puerto entre dos continentes y nexo entre dos mares"* remains mere empty talk.

A focus to develop further will be on the Moroccan community, its emergence and consolidation. In that, and with reference to the frame of the joint project the main question will be about the *ethnic entrepreneurs*. The assumption is, that because of their exclusion from the regular economy, they have found their own way of urban subsistence and it is going to be investigated which factors are determining for their self support strategies. In order to contextualise and complement the study, the appropriation of space will also be taken into account, i.e. the spatial segregation related to social exclusion and the different patterns of migration, as far as the Moroccan community is affected. Mainly research will be focused on:

- Figures about economic participation of *ethnic entrepreneurs* and informal work
- Social and economic relationship among the migrants
- Transnational and/or transregional networks to obtain capital and/or labourers
- Use and appropriation of public space and public facilities
- Relation between legal and non-documented migrants, especially focusing on the relation between entrepreneurs and informal work
- Use of assistance of the NGO

### 3.1.1.5. References

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Driessen, Henk (2003) Enclavement of Moroccan Immigrants in the Port City of Algeciras/Spain

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Salguero Duarte, José (2003) Desde la otra orilla

Torremocha Silva, Antonio (n.y.) Breve historia de Algeciras

## 3.1.2. Ethnographic Field Study: Migrants in Ceuta

### 3.1.2.1. Introduction

This report is based on preliminary findings resulting from a field study conducted in July and August 2004 in the Spanish port City of Ceuta. The data for this report were gathered from participant observation, interviews with immigrants as well as from the evaluation of the local press. In a previous field study carried out in 2003 the research area was defined and the relevant groups of actors were identified. Resulting from these findings the main focus of this present report is therefore the phenomenon of the transnational migration between Africa and the European Union in general and the situation of illegal immigrants in Ceuta in particular.

### 3.1.2.2. The Local Context

Because of its geographic and political situation, Ceuta is a prime example for the problems of urban transition which form the core of this project. Geographically situated in the north of Morocco, it is a part of Spain politically. From a Spanish point of view, Ceuta, together with Melilla in the east of Morocco, is a European enclave (*Plaza de Soberanía*). From a Moroccan point of view, these enclaves are historical anachronisms and are to be considered as colonies. So far, Morocco's attempts to gain support for their decolonisation have been unsuccessful. The UN is adhering to the

argument that Spanish settlers have been living there since long before the foundation of the modern state of Morocco. Accordingly, the contested term „enclave" will be used in the following text.

The peninsula, directly facing Gibraltar, is spreading far into the Mediterranean. Towards Morocco it is closed off by the Atlas mountains. It is part of the EU, but with a particular status. There are specific treaties with the EU in general, and arrangements with Spain in particular.

### 3.1.2.3.   Research Background

Since Spain joined the EC in 1986, the border between Ceuta and Morocco represents not only the frontier between both states, but additionally represents the utmost EC border as well. As a Spanish enclave on Moroccan territory, Ceuta is of huge attraction to legal and illegal immigrants. Especially since the mid 1990s Ceuta is facing an enormous flow of Migration.

The particular status of Ceuta is not accepted by Morocco, the latter being the country of transition for nearly all migrants. Therefore, the Moroccan government offers close to none support concerning the control of the Ceuti-Moroccan border or the influx of illegal migration into the Spanish enclave. According to estimates of the Moroccan police, approximately 6000 migrants are waiting to cross the borderline. Part of them wait in the surrounding Moroccan cities, but also the woodland around the fence marking the border, is a sought after hiding place until the right moment to cross has come. The press refers to these places as "Immigration-stock-exchange"[1]. Actually attempts to make the aforementioned fence even more difficult to cross and consequently reducing the influx of unwanted immigration are being taken, its actual height from 3,5 meters being elevated to 6 meters. This hermetically sealed border consists of eight km long walls with barbed wire, with police patrolling and watchtowers controlling it permanently.

### 3.1.2.4.   First Findings

Day to day  several persons try to cross the border to Ceuta mostly in the cover of the night. Most of them are aged between 18 and 35. Apart from Moroccan and Algerian migrants, many migrants come from countries south and west of the Sahara. Recently more cases of pregnant women or mothers with children have been reported. Many of these attempts have been frustrated by the Spanish *Guardia Civil*, who in the course of this year have been hampered approx. 8000 attempts of illegal border crossing by people from sub-Saharan countries, according to official statistics[2].

Despite the enormous security measures including the huge fence build to prevent people from crossing, still some manage to make it into the city without being caught. For a successful passage of the border overland, wooden ladders are being constructed or holes are being cut into the fence. Other possibilities consist in crossing the wet border in small wooden fishing boats, the so called *pateras* or by means of the so called *motores humanos*[3]. However, in most cases immigrants rely on people traffickers who take astronomically high sums for their "services".

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[1] El Faro, Ceuta. 29.08.2004: p. 10-11
[2] El Pueblo de Ceuta, Ceuta. 29.08.2004: p.19
[3] This expressions stands for a method where the immigrant is given a diving outfit along with a tire and is being pulled through the water

If Immigrants are being caught by the pertinent authority and registered, s/he is offered shelter in the C.E.T.I *(Centro de Estancia Temporal de Inmigrantes)*. This refugee camp is subjected directly to the central government in Madrid and has place for about 500 people and is at the moment hopelessly overcrowded. A former school building, the *Centro de San Antonio de Juan Carlos I* , is being used as a temporal solution to give shelter to approx. 140, mostly sub-Saharan, migrants, and in a rented former pension another 50 people are being installed. However, it is estimated that some hundred immigrants, mostly Algerians men, are currently living on the street[4].

All those who weren't assigned a place in the C.E.T.I are being assisted by the *Hermanos Franciscanos* of the White Cross. This organization does social work by offering food, basic medical treatment, as well as advise and support when dealing with the local authorities.

Because the *Centro de San Antonio de Juan Carlos I* closes its doors between 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Its inhabitants are being forced to hang out in the city. The presence of sub-saharian immigrants in public places along the waterfront, especially on the *Plaza de la Constitución*, as well as in parks like the *Jardínes de la República de Argentina* or the *Plaza de África* can not be overlooked. Because the period between the first registration and their assignment of a date to present their asylum application takes about three to four months, immigrants see themselves confronted with the necessity to earn some money in order to satisfy their basic needs. If savings are running on empty or assistance resulting from transnational networks doesn't suffice, there exists the possibility to achieve a small income by modes of "urban subsistence". Along the waterfront several modes can be seen: Assisting with car parking, watching for the cars, holding the doors etc. These tasks are denominated *"auto-école"* (Driving school) by the immigrants.

### 3.1.2.5. Conflict and Social Exclusion

In Ceuta, conflict and social exclusion are made particularly visible by the frequent arrests of "illegals". From the administration's point of view, potential sources of conflict lie in the number of migrants illegally entering the city, as well as in the drugs trade. Drug trafficking is regularly debated in the local newspapers[5].

### 3.1.2.6. Further Questions

Apart from the research about migration motives and expectations and hopes for the future, the specific situation of illegal immigrants in Ceuta is going to be studied. Besides the cultural knowledge and strategies in order to survive migration, social networks are going to be studied which offer different forms of help and assistance to the migrants. Furthermore questions about the perception and appropriation of public space by migrants themselves are going to be followed.

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[4] El Faro, Ceuta. 22.08.2004: p.7
[5]     El Pueblo 09.04.2003: 3, idem 25.04.2003: 8, idem 29.04.2003: 5; El Faro 09.04.2003: 18, idem 24.04.2003: 11, idem 29.04.2003: 14

## 3.2. *Report: Dublin*

## 3.2.1. Ethnographic Field Study: Dublin Dockland Area

*by Astrid Wonneberger, University of Hamburg and Treasa Galvin, Trinity College, Dublin*

### 3.2.1.1. Research Background

As outlined in the Report of Phase 1, the research area is part of the Inner City of Dublin. The focus lies on two particular areas of interest:

One area are the docklands of Dublin including several dockland communities, who used to be dependent on the docks and who are still associated with the docks both by themselves and the rest of Dublin. This area is particularly affected by transformation processes.
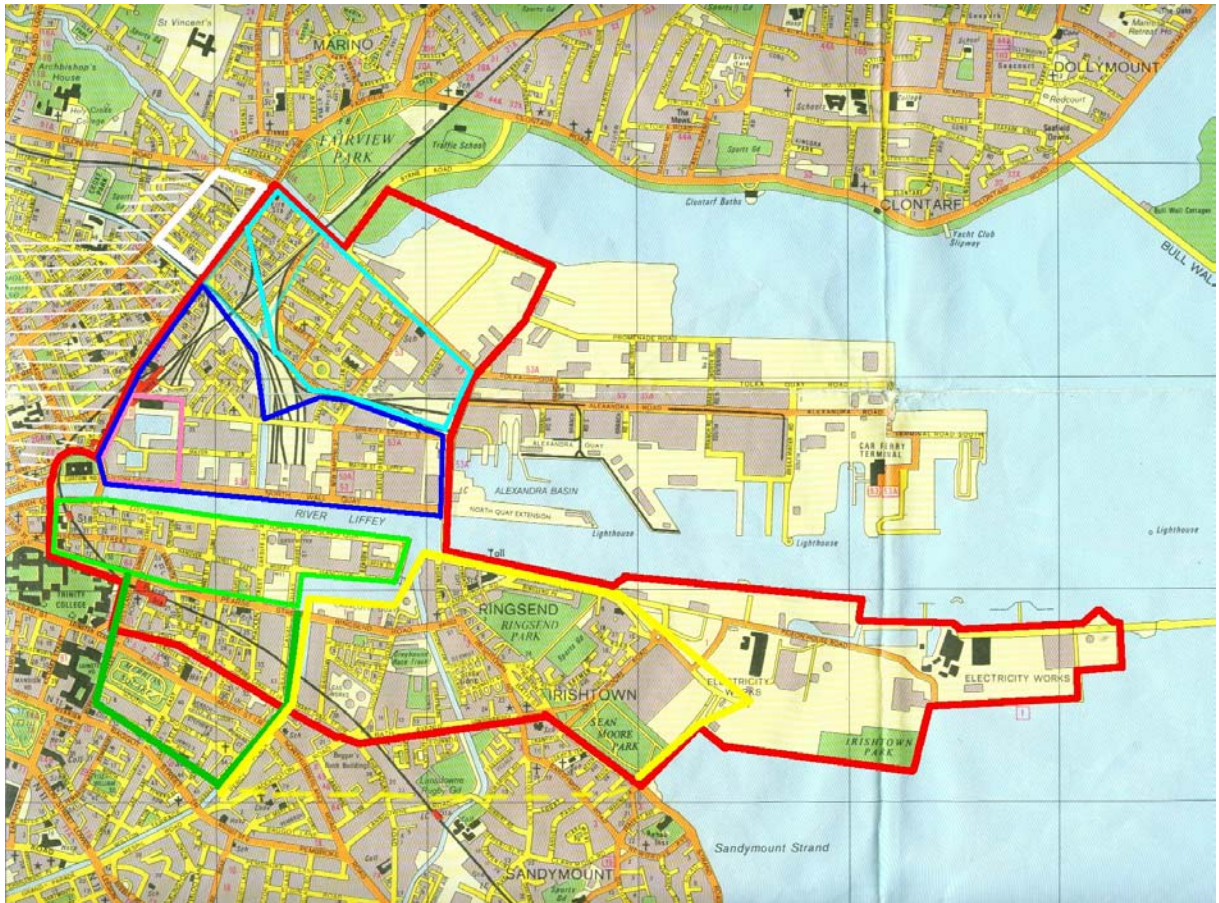


Illustration 3: Dockland communities: DDDA boundaries (red), East Wall (bright blue), North Wall (dark blue), City Quay (light green), Westland Row (green) (together: Pearse Street), Ringsend (yellow), Hinterland (white). Also marked: Custom House Docks/IFSC (pink)

During the research of phase 1, migrant communities, who are scattered over the Inner City of Dublin and who are represented by our partner NGO ARASI, became the second focus of the Dublin project.
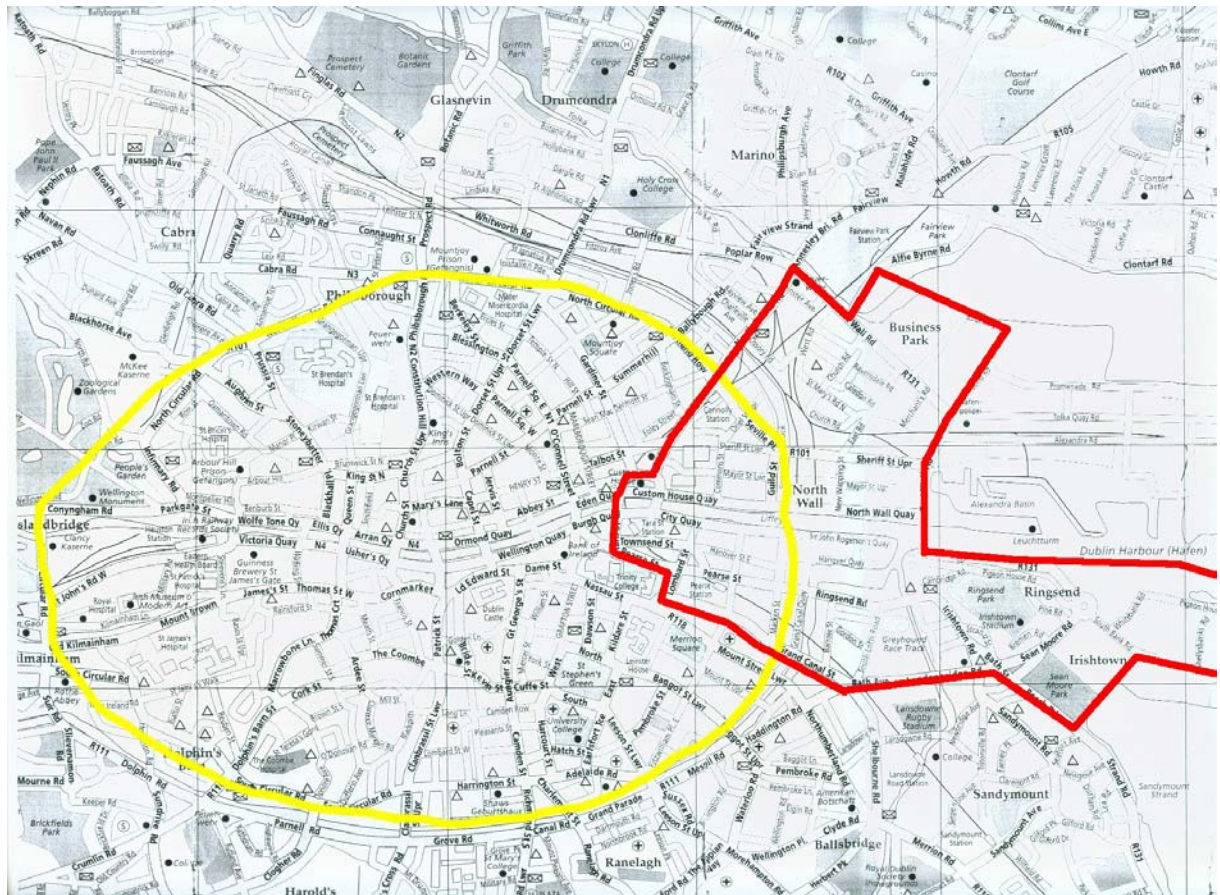
Illustration 4: Dublin Inner City (yellow) and Dublin Docklands (red)

### 3.2.1.2.   The Local Context

A more detailed history of Dublin, its port and port-related area has already been outlined in the Report of Phase 1. The most important characteristics are:

Dublin's docklands developed into a typical working-class area in the 19th century. The whole port area remained very busy until the late 1960s, when international mechanisation and containerisation brought new and crucial changes to Dublin and its port and communities:

Dock-related professions, particularly casual and manual forms of labour which the dock communities depended on, became increasingly redundant. At the same time, many factories moved out to the suburbs, which left the dock communities with mass unemployment. The old docks, warehouses, stacks etc. fell derelict.

In 1986, the redevelopment of the area began with the creation of the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) on the Custom House Docks site. Eleven years later, in 1997, the Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA) was set up in order to redevelop the rest of the former dockland area until 2012. Apart from a few, selected listed buildings, at the moment everything is being demolished to give way to new housing, hotels, retail, offices (an estimated 40,000 new jobs will be created), marina, amenities (campshires, parks), tourist attractions (moorings, museums, etc.). In short: The entire area is currently under construction and transformation.

Illustration 5: Construction in the Dublin Docklands

### 3.2.1.3.  Forms of Social Exclusion and Urban Subsistence

The biggest problems of the area can be traced back to the decline of the docks due to mechanisation and international containerisation. With the end of labour-intensive, manual forms of work the communities had depended on, the dock-related areas had to face a lot of problems, namely poverty, unemployment, which was partly due to insufficient education. There was no need for second-level education since everybody left school very early and started to work on the docks or in dock-related industries, alcohol abuse, later drug addiction, crime and vandalism increased, too. The lack of leisure amenities worsened the situation.

The residents felt (and still feel) to be let down by the government, particularly with the establishment of the IFSC, where the richness of finance business was and still is visible directly beside the impoverished flat complexes of the old communities.
The establishment of the DDDA brought on the one hand hope that things were going to change for the better, on the other hand scepticism that the communities were again left out in the planning and transformation process. They feared that only the rich were to profit and their situation would even get worse. Therefore, they protested against a number of issues that were addressed in the Masterplan, partly successfully. The communities also achieved to have representatives on board the DDDA who have an impact on the planning process.
The issues which they address and which they feel particularly excluded from include employment/money, education/training, infrastructure (no public bus, no post office etc.), too much traffic. Another aspect concerns the new plans for public space: Whereas public amenities, such as parks, playgrounds, swimming pools etc., are generally welcomed, the communities protest against the privatisation of public spaces (private parks, playgrounds etc.). Housing is another important issue, as the new apartments that are being built are too expensive for most of the local residents,

and the 20% social and affordable housing that have to be part of the new planning scheme are not sufficient for the local housing need. The old established communities are also critical towards the new gated apartment blocks, which will create a new and separate community within an area which used to be characterised by a sense of neighbourhood, where everybody knew everybody.

However, there are also positive changes that were brought in with the support of the DDDA. They established, for example, new contacts with various firms and employers in the IFSC as well as other local employers, offered training courses, internships and similar schemes that were especially designed for local youths. Thus, a few local people have already found jobs in the new business, even though their number is still very small. The DDDA also fund various events and projects in the area.

All in all, however, there is still a lot of resentment against the Authority and the new development. The statement of one community representative demonstrates and summarises this attitude: "It's an ongoing battle".

### 3.2.1.4.  Self-Organisation and Representation

All the former port-related communities are characterised by a strong sense of community, functioning networks, also pride of their heritage and a high potential for self-organisation. They already established a large variety of local initiatives (e.g. community centres) who fight the current problems. They deal with social and educational concerns, offer training courses for women or long-term unemployed people, they care for elderly residents or offer child-care facilities. Some focus on the planning process and protest against some of the plans (the gated luxury apartment blocks for instance). Others are more concerned with preserving the working-class, dock-specific culture of the area: They collect oral histories, restore old machines (e.g. the Liffey Bell).

### 3.2.1.5.  New Findings

In the Report of Phase 1, we presented a number of questions that were still open for research. Some of them could be answered in the course of further research and will be briefly summarised now.

*How do the communities differ? Are some areas more affected than others? Are different aspects of life affected in each community?*

Research showed that each community suffers from specific problems, but all are affected by the issues introduced earlier. However, the general impression is that the areas with the biggest problems and worst reputation (North Wall, Pearse Street) are also affected most by the transformation processes. That is probably due to the proximity to the city centre.

*What is the importance of informal networks?*

Informal networks have always been essential for the life in the dockland communities. In the hey-days of the docks as well as today, informal networks were used to find work, housing, mutual help of all sorts. Family networks seem to be particularly important. Women seem to play an outstanding role in keeping the community together.

Networks are also important for social control, which is something that people see changing now and which is a change that many regret: Especially children and

teenagers were controlled, because everybody knew everybody in the area, and if somebody saw a child do something, they would tell the parents, who again would tell the kid not to do it again. However, although the people still know each other, this does not seem to work as well as it used to. The reasons for that remain to be investigated.

Networks also exist on organisational levels, both within the communities and between them. The latter is quite a new phenomenon, as the communities used to be very separate entities. When the redevelopment started, however, local initiatives began to cooperate and establish networks with their sister organisations in the neighbouring communities in order to be more powerful in achieving their own objectives in the course of the new plans. Thus, the redevelopment of the area created new links between the dockland communities.

*Which forms of urban subsistence and economic strategies do exist?*

Most of these strategies were already characteristic for the area and important for survival in the docklands at the time of the thriving docks, though in a different form:

Apart from the importance of informal networks, which were already mentioned, a general flexibility of employment is also still typical for many dockland residents. Already a typical feature at the time of the thriving docks, when labour was mostly casual, even today many people do not just have one profession or one job, but they take whatever they can get, try very different things or have different jobs at the same time (e.g. taxi driving, construction, computer training, cleaning).

Another still ongoing strategy concerns the half legal/illegal dealing with goods. Until the mid 1990s these good were mostly items that were stolen from ships or trucks, usually by labourers/residents themselves. This is mostly gone today. However, still very common is the dealing with illegal CDs, DVDs, clothes, perfumes, mobile phones etc. which usually come from outside the area. Where they were stolen and by whom remains to be found out.

The area is also characterised by a general dependence on social housing and social welfare. This can also be summarised under the term "strategy", because the residents need a lot of knowledge to know the system and their rights, in order to make use of them.

*How important are the Dockland festivals?*

The local festivals, some of which take place every year, others only every two, three or four years, are all very important for two objectives: One is to keep the community together by organising an event where everybody attends. The second is to use this public event as a means of expressing protest, i.e. against the gated apartments and general gentrification of the area.

Illustration 6: South Docks Festival, Pearse Street, 2003



Illustration 7: South Docks Festival, Pearse Street, 2003

The DDDA Docklands Festival, which was set up in the course of the redevelopment, plays no major role in the life of the communities, although the original idea was to incorporate all local festivals into one big event. However, this plan failed for different reasons:

Firstly, the communities received only very little extra funding for organising a large event instead of the old-established local festival. For this reason nobody was ready to put extra time and effort into it. Secondly, no community wanted to give up their own festival. While the DDDA wanted to transform it from a local festival to a city-wide,

commercialised activity with thousands of visitors, including tourists, the local communities wanted to keep it on a local level, a festival specifically designed for the local residents, where everybody knows everybody, even if it is open to visitors.

Therefore, the Dockland Festival did not take place in 2003, and there is none planned for 2004, whereas some of the local festivals are still running, such as the South Docks Festival in Pearse Street, which takes place every summer.

*Are there boundaries within the community borders? Are these boundaries affected by the transformation process?*

All dockland communities are no homogeneous entities, they rather are divided into several areas with different reputations. While some parts are considered to be more affluent than others, others are perceived as more problematic or dangerous. This is an important factor that has to be taken into consideration for setting up initiatives: If the venue is in the "wrong" place of the community, not all people will attend.

Local boundaries are also disturbed by urban planners. The new transformations create new boundaries: One example are the new gated apartment blocks which create boundaries between the new residents/the new gated apartments and the old communities.

New boundaries are also created by building or changing the existing infrastructure/urban landscape. The Spencer Dock development in the North Wall is one example for that. The former Spencer Dock, including old railway tracks, will be transformed into a new residential area including a new playground for children. This amenity is badly needed in the area and therefore welcomed by the local residents. The new plans for the docklands, however, also include a bridge over the Liffey, the so-called Macken Street Bridge. This bridge, planned by Dublin City Council, was also welcomed by the communities, but only for pedestrian and public transport. Despite their protest, the new bridge will be built as a vehicle bridge to take away traffic from O´Connel Bridge. This will increase the traffic in Seville Place/Guild Street and Macken Street dramatically. Thus these streets will become a new boundary, especially for children, who will not be able to cross the street and access the new playground. Therefore, the entire North Wall area will be divided into two parts.

### 3.2.1.6.   Remaining Questions/Tasks

On the research level, more detailed data are still needed on the following issues:
- networks
- the community of Ringsend
- inner boundaries and rivalries
- gated communities

## 3.2.2.   Practice-Oriented Programme: Refugees in Dublin

### An Insight into Facilities in Ireland for the Reception, Integration and Repatriation of Refugees from West Africa

*By Mercy Ebun Peters, Association of Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Ireland (ARASI)*

The study aims at informing on the movement of persons seeking asylum, with an introduction taken from West Africa, being the one region in Africa that has structures

in place since East and South Africans fled Apartheid in the 1980's and the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Also, West Africa has been chosen because of the high proportion of West Africans in Ireland seeking asylum.

Both movements of persons initiated different responses for the purposes of Reception, Integration and Repatriation, from West African States going through a learning curve to implementing structured processes.

Institutions inputting to this are the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the National Commission for Refugees (NCFR) and the Economic Movement of Governments (ECOMOG), in Nigeria, being the Member State that is the driving force within ECOWAS.

In the Republic of Ireland, detailed examination of the initial response to date is being carried out, highlighting developments in policies and processes as a direct result of the increase in numbers of persons seeking asylum and maintaining credibility of the asylum process. Government Agencies chosen for this are The Reception and Integration Agency and The Office of The Refugee Applications Commissioner – Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

On the Educational and Health Needs of Refugees, The Northern Area Health Board (NAHB) and The Vocational Education Committee (VEC) have been chosen.

Refugee Communities, varying according to National, Ethnic and Religious Associations are the focus, in examining Community Development.

Accessing services for Health and Education will be compared against their provision and the Community's measures adapted to cope for resettlement and integration.

### 3.2.2.1. Target Groups

The main focus of ARASI this year within the framework of the European Port Cities Project is the support of 'Integration Processes for Refugees' and this greatly assists the study in that extra costs associated with subcontracting project staff are minimised.

ARASI has identified the Target Groups to be:

*Host community*:
- Community Development/Health Centres
- Secondary Schools and Vocational Institutions

*Refugee community:*
- Single Parents
- Youths outside of Parental Care
- Community Leaders
- Entrepreneurs

### 3.2.2.2. Needs and Methodology: Workshops and Questionnaires

Consultations have begun with the Refugee Community, sourcing out individual and group experiences and needs.

Single Parents have mostly highlighted difficulties encountered when accessing Adult Educational Services for improving on Language and Computer Literacy Skills – being that of inadequate Child Care facilities as opposed to the extended family structure in countries of origin and criteria imposed for qualifying for such access.

New mothers informed on the lack of choice on dietary needs that disenable breastfeeding at the Reception Stage, set against the promotion of breast feeding and that of the food pyramid by the Health Promotion Unit of the Health Board. The conclusion reached thus far, is that such promotions suit persons with effective purchasing power, persons with choice. At the Reception stage, persons seeking asylum are in receipt of weekly allowances of Euro 19.10c per adult and Euro 9.60c per child and have no control over the menu served.

Youths outside of parental care expressed concern over having one social worker assigned to three or more persons and the need for Mentors from within the Refugee Community to assist with decision making on academic and vocational choices. Also, transitioning to adulthood upon attaining the age of 18 and the subsequent transfer from full welfare allowances to the minimum for adults seeking asylum and the lack of choice in diet that results in such a move. It should be noted here that dissatisfaction was expressed by adults with regards to the 'unruly' behaviour of such youths, now residing in adult Reception hostels, resulting in the 'tightening' of house rules.

Community Leaders requested the need for information updates on policies and legislature in both the Republic and the EU and training in leadership skills to improve the quality of their input to the Community and that of a forum to serve as collective meeting point for National, Ethnic and Religious Leaders. There was a sense of 'single units' operating within the same Community, resulting in vulnerability to the press and public.

Entrepreneurs likewise, requested such updates and the need for Workshops with input from Customs and Excise Officials as their enterprises are constantly in jeopardy due to inadequate paperwork or meeting licensing requirements and obtaining health insurance certificates for ethnic food items. Note here that products such as 'Calabar Chalk' (identified by the Health Board as having high lead contents), are being sold and consumed by pregnant women to combat nausea and body cream containing hydroquinone (bleaching agent), banned by the Health Authorities because of their contributory factor to skin cancer. These are highly popular products within the Refugee Community and pose a dilemma for entrepreneurs.

Questionnaires are being designed for administering to host Health Care Providers such as General Practitioners, Public Health Doctors/Nurses and Pharmaceutical outlets.

Main focus for this is on the use and acceptance of Medical cards, availing of Screening Units (Voluntary), for infectious diseases and Post - Natal Care.

A pressing issue arising from this is that of circumcision for baby boys within the parameters of cultural and legal implications. Both Moslem and Christian cultural practises stipulate a certain period for circumcision after birth and this is now set against the waiting period in public hospitals and GP services. A death has already occurred in the Republic when a couple employed the medical services of an uncertified health practitioner to avoid delay and ensure observance of cultural practise. Participants admitted to going to the United Kingdom for this service as there are certified Health Officials who not only perform the surgery but also include the cultural ceremony.

Also, questionnaire to be administered to the Refugee Community on Health Care access, Community support networks and entrepreneurship.

### 3.2.2.3. Achievements/Problems Encountered

The Peer – Led approach has greatly enabled access to and participation from the Community. ARASI's new team has gone through the asylum process and this allows for openness and willingness in carrying out the research.

The main problem to date is access to Reception and Accommodation Centres as Managers of these Centres are very unwilling to allow persons not from the government into their facilities.

ARASI staff have therefore been holding consultations in rented facilities or relying on individual residents to publicize the meeting times. There is a lack of control over the information passed on as to the nature of the consultations.

Persons with Refugee Status and Community Leaders mostly reside outside of these Centres and access and control of information is made easy for the team.

## 3.3. Report: Hamburg

### 3.3.1. Ethnographic Field Study: Inland Waterway Sailors in Hamburg

*By Waltraud Kokot, Reimer Dohrn, University of Hamburg and Frank Engelbrecht, Flussschiffergemeinde*

#### 3.3.1.1. Research Background

This interim report is focussing on one of the fields of research: the situation of inland waterway sailors in the port of Hamburg. This port-related group is represented by the "Fluss-Schiffer-Kirche" (Inland Sailors' Church) as the NGO partner in this field.

This focus has been added quite recently to our project and has not been reported upon in the survey of phase I. Research on this project has been taking place since March 2004.

The second focus, research on homeless in Hamburg's Central Business District and a city walk guided by homeless persons is being put into practice since last year. These activities are being reviewed in a separate chapter.

#### 3.3.1.2. The Local Context

At the beginning of March 2004, the researchers visited the harbour with the verger and the minister of the church in order to make contact with active inland waterway sailors. After some initial difficulties they found that early afternoon on Sundays is the best time to visit the inland sailors. Regular visits have been made to find interview partners on inland waterway boats at the Hamburg port. The main purpose of this research was to find out more about the sailors' immediate needs, and how they manage to fulfil them. At the same time, this offered an opportunity to review church community's contacts with the inland sailors.

#### 3.3.1.3. First results: Active Inland Sailors

##### 3.3.1.3.1. Background Data

- Total tonnage moved on inland waterway ships in the FRG (2003): 238 million t
- Inland ships moving under the German flag(2003): 1,294 Units
-     with a load carrying capacity (2003): 1,629 million t
- Driving personnel employed on FRG inland ships (2001): 3,368 persons
-     of which owners (2001): 899 persons
- Tonnage handled by inland ships in Hamburg (2003): 9.0 million t
-     in inland ships(2003): 11,200 units
-     with a load-capacity of (2003): 12.7 million t

##### 3.3.1.3.2. Life and Work Conditions

Inland waterway navigation is a travelling trade. For most employees this means badly planned working hours with strongly varying times of absence from home. This is especially difficult for self-employed inland sailors, i.e. those with no steady

freighter supplying them with orders on a regular basis. Very often at the beginning of the week they don't know where they will be the following weekend.

As a rule, inland ships are driven by pairs. Often the boat operator is either self-employed or works as an employee, together with another employee or a member of the family (wife, son, etc.). Usually this co-driver does not have a masters' licence. This affects the legally permitted length of time that the ship can be driven: With two masters on board, the boat is allowed to operate 18 hours at a time, with only one licence, the ship has to return to land after 14 hours.

These work conditions have severe effects on the reality of life of the inland sailors. On the one hand (and above all for the self-employed sailors, who plan their schedules from one job to the next), there are only very irregular opportunities for social contact outside the confines of the ship and the areas for turnover of the goods. On the other hand, for these individuals it is very difficult to plan their weekend and vacations in advance, thus strongly affecting their family lives and social spheres. As a result, the social structures near the berths are of major importance for the lives of the inland sailors.

In Hamburg, the port is situated relatively close to the city, which thus becomes accessible for the inland sailors. There are berths which are free of charge - the so called *"Bundesliegestellen"* – from which one can access bars, taverns and shops by travelling either by foot or by bicycle. The berths in Rothenburgsort, Finkenwerder and in Harburg are therefore better than the e. g. newly built harbours on other rivers, which have no social facilities nearby. But also in Hamburg, some berths (Veddel, Peute and Moldauhafen) are being criticised for too large distances from the berth to the supply structures.

### 3.3.1.3.3.  Strategies for solution

For many of the problems and difficulties described above, inland sailors have found individual solutions. One of the most important solutions would be to increase the potential of mobility outside of the inland waterway boat. This would mean carrying bicycles or motorbikes on board enabling the inland sailors easier access to movement on land. In addition, trolleys for the transport of food would be useful. For larger distances the sailor's own car is his central means of transport, this applies especially for the self-employed and their travelling partners.

Car loading decks, such as the one which can be found in Hamburg-Entenwerder (Billwerder Bay) enable the loading and unloading of the vehicles when there is no loading crane available. The researcher witnessed a Dutch boat family unload their car on Sunday, so that the mother could drive their son to the boatmen´s children school on Monday and by the afternoon the mother was back in Hamburg. On Tuesday they reloaded the car so that the mother could pick up her son and bring him back on board from a different city on Friday.

### 3.3.1.3.4.  Economic Situation

In all discussions with inland sailors, the economic situation of both the individual as well as the industry as a whole always played an important role. This has changed particularly since the 1.1.1994 when the German freight rate was taken out of effect. This freight rate meant fixed prices with only 5% increase or 5% decrease in a set price could be made. Liberalisation has brought ruinous competition. The Germans complain about the dumping prices offered by the Polish, Czech and Dutch competitors. In turn, those countries (in particular Poland) complain that German

sailors are given preference for the more lucrative jobs. They all are united in their evaluation: In contrast to the train and truck business, the inland waterway sailors have no lobby. This problem is often compared sarcastically to the congestion charge, the sailors have little regard for this since they have always paid for the usage of the waterways.

### 3.3.1.3.5. Contact Between Inland Sailors and Different Nationalities

According to the data on German inland sailors there are few communication problems amongst the colleagues from other countries. Dutchmen, Poles and Czechs who work in Germany all speak sufficient German to communicate in simple sentences, however this is often not enough for discussions. This was heard as well from the Polish and Dutch inland sailors. The Dutchmen are often self-employed and travel with their families. If this is the case, they look for contact with other families and not with two-man crews. The German self-employed often travel with Polish sailors. These sailors earn less than the average wage in Germany but more than in Poland. On the Polish boats, because of the same reasons, Russian sailors tend to travel along.

More discussions and interviews with inland sailors will be needed to further examine these first results as well as to develop strategies for solutions for the problems of daily life in these areas.

### 3.3.1.4. The Inland Sailors' Church Community (Fluss-Schiffer-Kirche)

During the course of research church board meetings were visited, as well as community meetings and church services were attended and the researcher also participated in a community excursion at the end of June.

The church board of directors consists of approx. 10 people. This includes former inland sailors, a woman who works in a shipping company, a formal naval officer and a former harbour policeman. Only few members have or had direct experience with inland navigation. The verger is an exception, as he is also not only part of the community executive committee but also chairman of the board of the sailors' guild.

The members of this church community are characterised by a strong sense of belonging. Since the majority of church members are not active inland sailors, they were asked what connected them to the inland boats. The goal was to evaluate the resources of the community that attract and satisfy the needs of the inland sailors.

The church, which is located on a ship, is planned to be moved from the traditional inland waterways port (Rothenburgsort) to the former inner city port. There, it will be more accessible to general public and also to tourists, to whom the inner city quays are a major attraction. This move has led to heated discussions among community members regarding the identity of the church and their relations to the active inland sailors. So far it has shown that the church executive committee and other active members of the community are all interested first and foremost in drawing attention to the present situation of the German inland sailors. The move of the church can become an important asset in these activities.

At present, the Hamburg inland sailors' church is located at the berth of Billwerder Bay at Rothenburgsort directly beside two state berths with space for up to 12 inland boats. On the opposite side of the harbour (Kaltehofe) there are more berths, however they are used less frequently since their distance to the community infrastructure is too large. On the other side of the dam (Rothenburgsort) within calling distance is a

church based retirement home where former inland sailors, sailors and boat operators live.

After the planned move to Baumwall in the inner city port area, it will be situated near the sport boat marina. The community is hoping for attention above all from the many tourists visiting the port area. Even former boatmen endorse this move, even though it means less contact to the old people's home.

### 3.3.1.4.1. Community Life

An active community life includes not only regular church services but also community afternoons and meetings and a yearly excursion.

On the 20th of June this year the researcher took part in a community afternoon, the annual so-called *"Erdbeerkonvent"* or "strawberry convention". The annual sequence of events is as follows: At 3:00 there is a service at the inland sailors church after which tables and chairs are laid out and on one of the tables strawberries, strawberry cakes and ice cream are served. Musical entertainment was provided by a Russian accordion player. Altogether there were approx. 80 people present, of these approx. 50 adults over the age of 50. Only 7 were former inland sailors, all of which were between the ages of 70-96. Most of the younger people present were either relatives of the community representatives or community members.

The church serves as a meeting point for former inland sailors, with their organized afternoon tea and coffee meetings. However, these meetings are growing smaller since many former inland sailors have passed away. There are no new members as one of the former inland sailors informed us.

Apparently, the active members of the community identify strongly with the inland sailors' community and with the inland sailors' church. The latter is demonstrated by active participation in the community life as well as by attaching certain symbols to pieces of clothing or cars. On one community occasion alone, 23 pins were sold. Identification with the inland sailors also became apparent through the continuous glorification of earlier times and complaints about the present day situation.

According to a former boatman, the inland sailors' church had its hay-day in the 60's. Back then, there was a youth group with over 50 members, which met once a week at the church. But most of them did not take over their fathers businesses due to the worsening situation for the inland sailors, looking for jobs on land instead. According to his judgement, most of them don't have anything to do with boats anymore, although many do work in the periphery of the port. Since former times inland sailors and port sailors formed two different camps, who had little contact with each other. Therefore, only few former inland sailors took the step to become sailors on the open sea or found work in the seaport (the strong identification of the inland sailors here becomes apparent through the exclusion of other sailors).

Every Tuesday morning, except for adverse weather conditions, holidays or sickness, the verger, the chairman of the church board and the pastor visit the inland sailors on a small community owned vessel *"Johann Hinrich Wichern"*. On this early morning trip, the flag of the inland sailors' community church is raised on the mast, visible to all.

On these visits, community letters or Christmas trees are distributed and some conversations are held if the boat operators find the time in their busy morning schedules. Most contacts of the church members to active inland sailors take place throughout the early morning trip. Most inland sailors do not visit the church services

because they are either too busy or they travel to their families via car on their days off.

### 3.3.1.5.  Programme Development

Through their own experiences, the active inland sailors have come up with a large number of problem solving strategies. The inland sailors' church is hoping to develop these ideas and incorporate them into the project. The goal is to provide a structure enabling the sailors to communicate their individual solutions and to develop them into joint efforts. That is to say bringing together church structures and active inland sailors' needs.

The development of an action programme within the framework of this project must meet the primary concerns of the sailors. Through this action programme, the sailors' church community will better than before support the active sailors' needs and interests. In particular it will address their often repeated wish to create a lobby, their wish to identify with their community partners, and to have their particular concerns recognised by the community.

Therefore, the project will start with the implementation of several meetings, all dealing with the chances for development of inland navigation (the schedule of planned meetings can be found on the following pages). The church "building" on a boat then placed in Hamburg's inner city port, will provide an infrastructure readily accessible both to inland sailors and other groups related to the port, and to the interested public. This location, which is already quite popular as a characteristic site of Hamburg's maritime identity, will already in itself draw attention to the sailors' concerns.

The series of events and meetings will provide the impetus for establishing a permanent 'round-table' structure, which in regular meetings will help to solve long-term problems by bringing active inland sailors together with local support networks and decision makers to discuss their issues and concerns.

With this series, the inland sailors' church will represent itself as the place where inland sailors, contractors, authorities, associations and other interested parties can meet and communicate with each other, as *a place connecting the city and the river.*

The meetings will be scheduled for each third Sunday of every month in the afternoons and will become a regular event on the church calendar, since this has been regular time frame for community meetings. During this time, most of the active inland sailors are usually available. A first meeting is planned for October 2004.

As an immediate solution to the sailors´ practical needs for communication, the church community will install internet facilities on the communities´ boat *"Johann Hinrich Wichern"*. This action is a first step at improving the linking of inland sailor and contractors by creating an internet platform (eBusi-Net).

### 3.3.1.6.  Action Programme

The following meetings should help to establish a sailors' lobby in the inland sailors' church.

*Meetings and Information: Connecting the City and the River*

- Conditions and perspectives of the inland navigation in Germany
   *Prof. Dr. Dankwart Danckwerts (Duisburg)*

- Work and living situation of the inland sailors in Hamburg

  *Inland sailors and economic authorities discuss every day problems and solutions*
- Inland navigation in Germany from the view point of the Polish inland sailors

  *N.N. – association member and Pastor von Oppenkowski, St. Erich*
- Inland navigation in Germany from the view point of the Czech inland sailors

  *N.N. – association member from Hamburg*
- Infrastructural needs for the linking of inland sailor and contractors

  *Prof. Dr. Dankwart Danckwerts discussing with sailors and contractors*
- Work and living situation of sailors on sea-going vessels and their organisations

  *Sailors' deacon Jan Oltmanns, International Sailors' Club Duckdalben, Hamburg*
- The practice of ethnic loan-dumping in the building industry

  *Matthias Maurer, IG Bauen*
- Social security measures in inland navigation

  *Managing director of the GEK, Hamburg*
- Safety regulations for inland navigation

  *representatives of active inland sailors, representatives of "Save the Elbe" and the BSBG*

### 3.3.1.7. Further Research Projects

The following research projects related to this Programme will be going on in Hamburg:

- Homeless Men at the Gerhard-Hauptmann-Platz

  This spring and summer long-term field research on the situation of homeless people will be continued, further researching the changes in network structures. The results of the previous phases are summarised in: Waltraud Kokot (Hg.) 2004: *Kultur der Obdachlosigkeit in der Hamburger Innenstadt.* Hamburg: LINES, Bd.1. This research is closely connected to the action programme by Hinz und Kunzt as described in a separate chapter of this report.

- Exporting Recycling Economy

  Industrial districts near the port as Hamm and Billbrook are the base of a large number of used and salvaged car and scrap metal dealers, exporting vehicles and scrap metal to different countries in West Africa and the Middle East. This is a growing industry (alone the export of cars increased by 30 times in the last 10 years) At least some of these ethnic entrepreneurs are natives to the importing countries who tend to employ further people of their own nationality. Their networks and subsistence activities, and their connections to the port authorities and to the importing countries will be investigated in a field study planned for 2005.

### 3.3.2. Practice-Oriented Programme: Homeless People in Hamburg

*By Gabriele Koch, Hinz & Kunzt – Das Hamburger Straßenmagazin, Hamburg*

### 3.3.2.1. Hinz & Kunzt – the Project

Hamburg's street paper *Hinz & Kunzt* is the largest of its type in Germany. With a circulation of 65.000 papers per month this social project has an enormous outreach on the general public as well as on socially disadvantaged persons. Hinz & Kunzt is presently sold by 420 homeless vendors throughout Hamburg and the surrounding areas. Anybody without regular housing may apply for becoming a vendor. To start with ten newspapers free of charge are given in form of an initial capital to the new vendor. They are then free to decide how often and how long they will sell Hinz & Kunzt. After a while they are given a permanent selling place where it is possible to establish lasting relationships to regular clients.

Starting conditions are as easy as possible: Every homeless person should be able to make at least a try in becoming a street paper vendor. Not being drunk or under drugs and presenting a clean outfit are the rules while working.

A copy of Hinz & Kunzt is sold for 1,50 Euro, of which 80 cents is the direct earning of the vendor. He has to buy his copies at Hinz & Kunzt for 70 cents. Being a vendor means also making the first steps in small entrepreneurship, building up a personal capital stock.

The main goal of the project is to help homeless people to help themselves. The idea of enabling individuals without work and housing to earn their own money to satisfy at least their basic needs by offering a street paper to them, had been taken over from London's "Big Issue" as a model over ten years ago. Hinz & Kunzt has become established as an important voice on Hamburg's local media market with a mixture of social, cultural and Hamburg related topics. Besides the lobby work for socially excluded persons Hinz & Kunzt offers to the homeless vendors a broad range of help activities mass-tailored to the needs of each person: Search and organisation of housing, procuring of therapy in cooperation with other local help institutions, free legal advice, money administration etc.

Hinz & Kunzt, including social work, editorship and sales-department, is financed by 50 % by the sales of the paper and the proceeds of advertisement and by 50% by donations.

The number of vendors has been increasing constantly during the past years. Homelessness is part of Hamburg's society without being taken into serious consideration and measurements by officials. Our project has realised over 11 million contacts between homeless people and their "normal" clients - a big step in communication and bridge building. The social worker of Hinz & Kunzt is having about 2500 counselling talks a year, the sales department – where former homeless are employed – is having about 150 contacts to vendors daily.

Hinz & Kunzt plays an important role in practice and experience within the local help system.

### 3.3.2.2. Short Description of the Program

It takes a lot of courage and backbone to sell a product in the street and thus revealing one's social status as homeless. Not everybody is a vendor, therefore Hinz & Kunzt is

developing alternative working programs for homeless who are getting in touch with the organisation.

Since many of them have individual knowledge – either obtained by professional experience in former lifetime or gained while living in the streets – we want to lead this various expert knowledge into useful activities.

Against common stereotypical thinking, organising a day on public ground as a homeless needs a lot of abilities in planning, time scheduling, communication and orientation.

We have also met an impressive hunger and urge for knowledge in developing new skills and perspectives in people who are not constantly affected by the devastating effects of drug and alcohol abuse.

Taking into consideration all these factors Hinz & Kunzt has brought up an alternative city walk named *"Nebenschauplätze"*.



Illustration 8: Postcard disseminating the idea of *"Nebenschauplätze"*
an alternative city walk

The city of Hamburg is mainly known as a shopping and business area which after the closing hours is abandoned to a few inhabitants and to much more homeless. Their living and sleeping room is the inner city public ground, squares and entrances of buildings. Several social institutions are located at the edge of the city, out of sight from the general public.

Offering to Hamburgers as well as to tourists an insight impression of the unknown face of the town as well as the other side of the social reality is the goal of *"Nebenschauplätze"*. Neither pity nor voyeurism will be served, but nobody should come from the tour without being deeply touched.

### 3.3.2.3. Problems and Achievements

Nobody in the staff of Hinz & Kunzt had had former experience in developing a guided city tour.

First of all, a route was laid down, the stops were defined and a first text was drafted. Several time schedules were tried out by walking different tours. In this first phase our social worker who was in charge of the project was assisted by a student of social studies who did a one year work experience at Hinz & Kunzt.

The original idea was that a homeless (or former homeless) vendor of Hinz & Kunzt guided the city walk accompanied by the student who could help with complementary explications if necessary or assist when collecting the fee etc.

While developing a first scheme of the tour several vendors who were considered to be especially able to talk in front of a major public and who were estimated as good story tellers were contacted. They liked the idea of a city walk from perspective of Hinz & Kunzt very much, but only two of them were ready to start.

Together they walked the tour to refine the content, shaped the text passages and visited all the social institutions which are to be met along the route in order to invite them to cooperate and in order to help the vendors to adapt to their new role. While being a tour guide they are no longer user of these institutions but experts presenting the social system in Hamburg.

All steps were undertaken with great enthusiasm. The start of the city walk and its presentation to the public was part of a huge program of festivities and activities on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Hamburg's street magazine.

A postcard with a description of the Hinz & Kunzt city walk was produced and sent out along with large mailing activities.

Before the first walk both vendors dropped off and in a last minute action our social worker became the tour guide. We realized that our idea could not be implemented as quickly as we had thought.

Consequently we changed the concept of the city tour: The guide is now our social worker (due to the fact that the student was not longer available), he is the one presenting his view and impressions of homelessness and the work of the social institutions that are met during the tour. He is accompanied by one or two tour guide assistants (vendors of Hinz & Kunzt), depending on the number of visitors. They make additional comments and are ready to bring in their personal experience. The walk offers two perspectives which complement each other.

Until now 18 city walks had been taken place so far. 400 participants (between 10 and 15 per tour) had joined the tour, the age ranging from 17 to 75 years, mainly female. They paid an average price of 7 euros (the price scale ranges from 5 – 15 euros) for a

two hours walk. The vendor-guides are paid 10 Euros per hour for assisting the walk. The program starts at the office of Hinz & Kunzt, and at the end there is the possibility to go for a cup of coffee in the nearby church café, where additional questions may be answered.

Many people took the opportunity of the city walk to ask questions to the homeless vendors which they would not have dared to ask before. Meeting an "outlaw" who becomes expert of the street seems to produce a strong impression without being considered as "voyeuristic". People are grateful to get rid of their fears and prejudices.

Sometimes it has been difficult to leave the presentation of the social institutions entirely to the vendor-guides because many of the help offers are not mentioned if the vendors haven't used them.

Up to now local media (radio, TV and press) have reported on *"Nebenschauplätze"*.

Two tours were booked by closed groups:

- The Heinrich Böll Stiftung "Umdenken" offered an afternoon program concerning homelessness, the tour was part of it.
- A local branch of an international firm (BP) organized a day training for the staff of one of their departments at Hinz & Kunzt, the tour was also part of their program.

The members of the Hinz & Kunzt donors club (1200) have been invited to participate in the walk.

### 3.3.2.4. Target Groups

New guides were searched among the vendors of Hinz & Kunzt. By now there are two persons who are slowly getting used to their new function. Several candidates who were also interested could not be taken because of unsuitable behaviour in public.

### 3.3.2.5. Goals during the First Period of the Action Implementation

The city walk *"Nebenschauplätze"* has the following goals:

- Strengthening self-confidence and developing skills and abilities of persons who are no longer involved in normal work processes.
- Offering a small scale working possibility for homeless persons who could together form a self-organized team.
- Bringing homelessness and social exclusion into the minds of a broader public as well as to users of public space as part of Hinz & Kunzt general lobby activities.

### 3.3.2.6. Expected Results

A group of 4 – 6 Hinz & Kunzt city guides should build a team which is able to manage the city tours. They should keep the contents of the city tour vividly and up to date. The administration of the tour booking should be part of the self-organisation of the group as well as the payment.

A continuous cooperation with the public relation /fundraising-department of Hinz & Kunzt will also be part of the job in order to keep the tour in the public mind.

New city walk concepts should follow: the port area which is also close to Hinz & Kunzt activities would be very interesting.

### 3.3.2.7.  Cooperation

*At Hinz & Kunzt*

Our social worker is in a constant dialogue with the colleagues of fundraising and public relations in order to develop a successful marketing strategy.

*Social institutions*

- Drop Inn (drug users service)
- Herz As (food for the poor)
- Die Münze (for psychologically ill homeless)
- City service (work project for the longtime unemployed)
- KIDS (service for the street kids)
- Bahnhofsmission (social care for poor and homeless)
- Schließfächer Jakobikirchhof (luggage place for the homeless)

*Media*

A cooperation of exchange of advertisements has been undertaken with a local monthly event magazine "Szene Hamburg".

### 3.3.2.8.  Further Planning

*Staff*

As Hinz & Kunzt has only one social worker who has to be availabe for 420 vendors there is a serious staff problem. We expect a new part-time social worker to join us in autumn 2004 who should be able to take over the city tour, which will be funded in part by "EU Port Cities Project". The two vendors involved should get more training in self-confidence and in organising their role as city guides. We expect help from the intervention of the research team of the University of Hamburg, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, who will make interviews and research on motivation, fears and strategies of Hinz & Kunzt-tour guides. Out of these experiences we hope to get better knowledge in order to train more vendors.

*Publicity*

More and constant efforts have to be made in order to attract people to the tour. The postcard which is still valid can be located at several public spaces (bars, theatres, movies etc.).

The street-magazine itself will present *"Nebenschauplätze"* in one of the forthcoming issues.

Depending on our financial resources, TV and radio spots as well as posters or advertisements could be produced.

A cooperation with the local tourist board, the local city tour offices as well as and with one of the local newspapers is envisaged.

*Mass tailored city tours*

Our aim is to develop more tours for special groups: i.e. members of the local political administration, international foundations visiting Hamburg, teachers etc. The activity of the GLS-Bank (an ecological bank) could serve as an example. They will offer a project visit at Hinz & Kunzt to their local clients in October 2004 where the city walk *"Nebenschauplätze"* will give them a more insight understanding of the problem of urban poverty.

## 3.4. Report: London

### 3.4.1. Ethnographic Field Study: East London Docklands Area

A Port City in Transition – the London Royal Docks: Survival Strategies of Forced Migrants in a Zone of Stress

*By Maja Korac, Giorgia Donà and Christopher Gwyntopher, University of East London (UEL)*

#### 3.4.1.1. Short Description of the Research Background

Within the framework of the project *European Port Cities: Disadvantaged Urban Areas in Transition*, this ethnographic research focuses on processes of social inclusion and exclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in the East London Docklands area. Specifically, the research explores the role of social networks in the development of survival strategies of forced migrants settling in this urban area in transition.

#### 3.4.1.2. Local Context

London was the largest Port City of the British Empire in the 19th century. During this period, the Docklands area which extended east from Tower Bridge, on both sides of the river Thames experienced an explosion of industrial growth. Canning Town, in what is now the London Borough of Newham, was at the heart of this expansion. The



Illustration 9: Docklands Area, East London

area is situated five miles from the City of London. Most of the docks were built from the early to mid 1800s (e.g. Royal Victoria Dock 1855; Royal Albert Dock in 1880). They became the largest area of impounded water in the world (Bloch, 1995). The London docks were nationalised in 1909 to be run by the Port of London Authority. This is an early example of state intervention, development and control.

### 3.4.1.2.1. Labour and Migration

The Docks were intensively used, creating mainly casual jobs. Although dirty and dangerous, they were also better paid than other manual jobs at the time. Moreover, income from casual dock work was often supplemented by going "Dahn 'opping" in the clean air of Kent countryside, south of the Thames and east of London. This casual work to bring in the harvest of hops was a survival strategy of many dock workers, providing them with a small additional income and a free "holiday". Growing numbers of workers were housed in the area, in houses built to accommodate them.

The area became the manufacturing hub of southern England attracting immigrants from around the world (Bloch, 1995). In the 1920s, most of the shops along Barking Road, in Canning Town, were owned by Jews and Italians. However, an increasing number of people of Indian origin were also settling in the area, as well as immigrants from other parts of the world. By the 1930s, the area hosted the largest Black community in London.

This part of London was heavily bombed during the Second World War, but later rebuilt. As a result, the docks reached their peak in the 1960s with 100 ships a day using them. The beginning of the decline, however, started shortly afterwards.

### 3.4.1.2.2. Decline of the Docklands

In the late 1960s, due to a revolution in shipping technology and cargo handling, the techniques included containerisation and roll on roll off terminals, large numbers of dock workers were no longer necessary. Of the 30,000 dock workers once employed by the Port of London Authority, only 3,000 are now needed to cope with 50 millions tonnes of goods a year, concentrated at Tilbury docks (Al-Naib, 1998). Consequently, East India Dock closed in 1967, St. Katherine's in 1968, the London and Surrey in 1969 and West India in 1970. The Royal Docks finally closed in 1985. Currently the only functioning dock is located at Tilbury, on the Essex coast, about 27 kilometres east of Canning Town. The closure of the docks helped transform Newham into one of the most deprived in the UK. As a result, London Docklands residents have experienced some of the largest experiments in urban regeneration in the UK.

### 3.4.1.2.3. Regeneration of the Docklands

The area has been the subject of at least *8* Government Community Development and Regeneration Projects. The most prominent have been: the London Docklands Development Corporation, the Isle of Dogs Enterprise Zone, and the Thames Gateway housing and community development programme.

Despite these efforts, Newham is currently classified as one of the most deprived of the 33 London Boroughs and it is amongst the 88 most disadvantaged areas in Britain (Flatley and Bardsley, 1998). Canning Town, the primary site of our field research, is still the fourth most deprived area in the UK (Foster, 2003). Regeneration which was intended to reduce deprivation, led to processes of gentrification, Manhattanisation of working class neighbourhoods, but also to exclusion of local communities and immigrants.

### 3.4.1.2.4. Forced Migrants in the Docklands Area

Since the 1980s, the area has become home to new wave of immigrants, those escaping from conflicts and persecution. It is estimated that eight per cent of the highly multiethnic population of Newham are refugees (London Borough of Newham,

2002). The largest immigrant group in Canning Town are from Africa, 20 per cent, while only seven per cent are from Asia. This contrasts with Newham as a whole, where the largest ethnic minority groups, 53 per cent of the population, are from the Indian Sub-Continent alone. (Census, 2001).

This 'new wave' of forced migrants is in part due to the Borough's multiethnic character. It is an area of settlement where diverse ethnic groups have established their communities. Although affordable housing is increasingly becoming a scarce resource in Newham, it still has a high proportion of social housing. For example, in 2003, 70 per cent of housing in Canning Town was publicly owned and rented (Mumford and Power, 2003).

### 3.4.1.2.5.  Regeneration and Exclusion

Regeneration has meant that some of the most deprived neighbourhoods populated by some of the poorest residents of London are on the edge of the 'new' Docklands, areas affected by gentrification and Manhattanisation. The changing character of the area has resulted in competition among less skilled and lower income residents for employment and social resources such as housing, health and education.



The unemployment rate in the area is high. In Canning Town, for example, only 50 per cent of the population between 16 and 74 years of age were employed in 2001, compared to 61 per cent of the population of the same age in England and Wales.

The high unemployment rate has meant that many of the local residents are not able to rent privately owned accommodation in the area. Inflation in the London housing market has made private renting very expensive. Most landlords now say "no benefits" which, unlike "no Irish and no Blacks" is still legal in the UK.

Consequently, the main access to housing for low income residents, including recognised refugees, is social housing, which has become a very scarce resource. Those seeking asylum are not even entitled to social housing and are accommodated in temporary accommodation provided by National Asylum Support Service (NASS).

Illustration 10: Canning Town Park and Canary Wharf: Manhattanisation

### 3.4.1.2.6.  Social Consequences: Crime and Racial Incidents

Deprivation and social exclusion of low income residents have led to high rate of crime and racial incidents in the Borough. In 1997/1998, for example, Newham's crime rate was approximately 29 per cent higher than the London average (Mumford and Power, 2003). In Newham, police reported 2177 racial incidents in the 30 months to September 2000. This was the largest number (26 per cent) of all incidents reported in East London Boroughs. Canning Town is known by black and ethnic minority residents in the north of Newham as one with a high incidence of racist attacks.

Recently arrived refugees have been made scapegoats, as they are often blamed for unemployment, poor and insufficient housing, and overstretched services (e.g. health

and education). However, recent research indicates that at the informal network level, a sense of community survives and that there is an appreciation of living in multiethnic neighbourhoods (Mumford and Power, 2003).

### 3.4.1.3.   Short Reference to Survey

This ethnographic research is conducted in synergy with the NGOs partner, and it is based on participant observation, in-depth interviews with forced migrants, their hosts, and already settled local residents, as well as service providers in the area. Thus, the study is using qualitative research methods in exploring the guideline topics and questions set out below.

No accurate figures exist of the forced migrant population, both at national and local level. It is almost impossible to collect such figures on a population which has ill defined boundaries and which includes members who are frequently moving, some of whom will not wish to be counted. Given that our primary research site is Canning Town, we aim to interview, individually and in groups, at least one forced migrant of each gender from each of the main countries living in Canning Town. We have been already involved in participant observation of the broader area of Newham. Interviews will be based on open ended questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion. Initial access to interviewees will be secured through contacts established by our partner NGO, Renewal Refugee and Migrants Project (RAMP), particularly their 'Refugee mentor project', and their advice and advocacy initiative. Additional contacts with forced migrants settling in the area will be realised through our work on the refugee community organisation network, the action programme supported by this research project.

### 3.4.1.4.   Research Area: Locations and Actors

The primary ethnographic area of our research is Canning Town, situated in the London Borough of Newham, the area which is part of the regeneration initiatives of the Greater London Authority. The area was chosen because it illustrates tensions caused by the cooperation and competition in an urban area in transition, in which multiethnic relations and a sense of community co-exist along with the process of exclusion and stigmatisation.

Canning Town is less heavily researched than the neighbouring Borough of Tower Hamlets. Some recent studies on the area have focused on the social situation and perspective of primarily longer term residents (e.g. Mumford & Power, 2003; Cattell and Evans, 1999; Bloch, 1994). In contrast, this study is focusing on the perspective and survival strategies of forced migrant newcomers. Forced migrants include those seeking protection under the UN Convention on the status of refugees and the European Convention on Human Rights and people seeking the means of economic survival. The main focus will be on the former for whom the generic term refugee will be used. The main actors, therefore, are asylum seekers and refugees living in Canning Town. The research also aims to explore the social relations between forced migrants and other members of the communities in which they live, by examining the role of social networks they develop in shaping their survival strategies.

Consequently, the actors involved in this study include forced migrants from various, mainly African, countries, both individuals and families, more settled residents, and representatives of refugee community organisations. Additionally, service providers, both NGO and mainstream, such as local authority and national government agencies,

are also considered as important actors and as having an important impact on how forced migrants develop their survival strategies.

### 3.4.1.5. Preliminary Findings: Survival Strategies in a Zone of Stress

#### 3.4.1.5.1. *Forced Migrants as Social Actors: Conceptual Framework*

Our exploration of survival strategies of forced migrants settling in the Docklands area is embedded in an 'actor-oriented approach' to understanding refugee experiences and the process of their settlement. This approach is based on an understanding of agency as the 'capacity to process social experience and devise ways of coping with life' (Long, 1992: 22). Forced migrants, as social actors, have agency and, thus, are not powerlessly constrained by the larger structures within which they operate. This approach fits in with Giddens' account of 'duality of structures'. As he pointed out, social structures not only constrain behaviour and people's social lives, but also enable their actions (1984).

#### 3.4.1.5.2. *Expert Knowledge*

Survival strategies of forced migrants settling in the Docklands area are seen as a result of interaction of social actors struggling, negotiating and sharing their knowledge and information in order to further their own interest and wellbeing. In the process, which is usually characterised by hardship, some develop 'expert knowledge' of legal or policy issues, but also of economic, social and cultural activities needed for survival.

Some of the local NGOs working with forced migrants, such as RAMP, have become aware of this process and the importance of sharing and enhancing the development of this expert knowledge among individual migrants. As a result, they developed the 'Refugee Mentoring Project' that provides individual forced migrants with mentors, who are volunteer and often migrants themselves. These mentors provide help to individuals, tailored to his/her needs and act as bridges between formal and informal structures as well as 'cultural experts' of the local area and beyond. With respect to the latter, mentors provide invaluable support to newcomers by helping them to make sense of the 'rules' underpinning social structures and societal relations in the new society, thus, enabling their adjustment. This project represents a very good example of an actor-oriented programme tackling social exclusion, and a positive way of bridging the gap between formal, institutional, and informal structures involved in the process.

#### 3.4.1.5.3. *Transformation of Urban Spaces*

This research puts special emphasis on the exploration of public urban spaces as sites of informal, micro, social and cultural encounters between settled residents and newcomers, as well as among newcomers themselves. Semi-invisible micro-links of 'undeclared sociability', such as casual contacts between diverse groups of people in public urban spaces, help people 'rub along together, and develop a positive web of support (Amin 2002). The development of these semi-invisible micro-links, are particularly important in urban areas in which local communities are affected by high rates of crime, racial incidents and other forms of insecurity, because they help the development of informal relationships of trust and mutual support.

Illustration 11: Local market – ethnic enterprise

Our preliminary research has identified local markets, places of worship and local parks as potential sites of 'undeclared sociability'. Local markets in the area are one of the vibrant urban spaces within which both settled residents and newcomers develop creative economic and social activities, as customers and helpers. Places of worship are social spaces that provide newcomers with a sense of continuity, community and security. They are also points of entry into a web of support, and a way of overcoming anomie. Parks are also potentially public spaces of 'undeclared sociability', but increasingly undermined by insecurity, because of drug dealing and other criminal and disorderly behaviour (Mumford and Power, 2003).



Illustration 12: Park: public space of 'undeclared sociability'

### 3.4.1.5.4. Overcoming Homelessness

A strategy of 'hosting' newly arrived and of sharing private social space, i.e. housing, by relatively settled compatriots is one of the strategies addressing the acute need for

shelter and exclusion from public social housing. Temporary shelter provided by hosts, are becoming social spaces within which the 'ways of coping with life' are further developed and shared. Although hosting is temporary, refugees often find it necessary to move from host to host, the practice that often transforms this temporary solution into a longer-term survival strategy.

### 3.4.1.5.5. Connecting the Local and the Global

Neighbourhoods, in which refugees and other immigrants settle in the area, are characterised by a strong ethnic and multicultural 'flavour'. Ethnic shops, restaurants, small businesses, places of worship, advice and social centres, provide employment opportunities, sources of information and networking, as well as a feeling of belonging. As such, they are important 'ethno markers'. By the same token, they are markers of interconnectedness of cultures within which forced migrants negotiate and develop their survival strategies.



Illustration 13: Community links

Their survival strategies importantly involve keeping 'open lines of communication' with their places of origin. Multifunctional small business providing services such as money transfers, phone calls, copy centre, express parcels, and internet access, are becoming important nodes of such communication. They are social spaces in which local and transnational informations are exchanged, in which old links are maintained and new ones developed.

### 3.4.1.5.6. The Role of Local NGOs in Enhancing Survival Strategies of Forced Migrants

Newham has a large and diverse NGO sector. Many of the local NGOs are, however, in the north or centre of the Borough, including those specifically serving refugees. The Renewal Refugee and Migrants Project (RAMP), which is both a community development and an advice and advocacy agency, is based in Plaistow near Upton Park. Although not located in Canning Town, RAMP's mentoring scheme and other forms of support are reaching the area. RAMP also has an outreach session in Beckton's St. Marks Community Centre, which is ecumenical Christian in inspiration.

Other important NGOs serving refugees and active in the Borough of Newham include The Children's Society's Young Refugee Project, which has been based in Manor Park in the north east of the Borough, but is moving to Canning Town this summer (2004). Durning Hall in the north of Forest Gate hosts eight refugee community organisations. Breakthrough advice and advocacy project for Latin American refugees is based in Plaistow Christian Church on the Barking Road, about 2.5 kilometres away from Canning Town. The Community of Congolese Refugees in Great Britain is based in the Stephen Lawrence Centre, Greengate, about 2 kilometres away. The Rainbow Refugee Network is housed at the same centre. Both provide advice and social and educational activities.



Illustration 14: Anchor House – homeless hostel for single men

Canning Town has also a number of NGOs, providing a variety of social, educational and advice services but none of them is specifically targeting refugees. The Mansfield Centre, one of several public school or university settlements in east London founded in the 19th Century, is just north east of Canning Town on the Barking Road. It has a legal advice centre and has developed projects with young black docklands residents with mental health problems. In the middle of Canning Town, on the Barking Road, there is Community Links in the old Public Hall in the Barking Road. It is one of the best funded NGOs in Newham, as well as one of the pioneers of multiple private business sponsorship as a means of fund raising. A little further west down Barking Road is Anchor House homeless hostel for single men, attached to St. Margaret's Roman Catholic Church. Several forced migrants live here including mentors on the RAMP mentor scheme. Just south of the Barking Road is the Mayflower Centre an evangelical protestant initiative, hosting refugee social events.

### 3.4.1.5.7. Action Oriented Programme to Strengthen Survival Strategies of Forced Migrants

It has been argued that specifically refugee focused services create service ghettos and do not make mainstream services responsive to their needs. However, our project is embedded in an understanding that agencies run by and for refugees provide a necessary transitional advocacy role, and pioneer good practice. Consequently, this

project aims to make the work of mainstream and specialist NGO more supportive of the development of constructive and successful survival strategies of forced migrants in Newham Docklands area. It facilitates the development of a Newham Refugee Community Organisations Network project. Although Newham has a very diverse refugee population, there is currently not one forum for information sharing, mutual aid and advocacy for refugee needs and perspectives. Members of our research team have made contacts with leading refugee organisation members supporting the Network project initiative. We anticipate the following research and community development benefits and outcomes of this actor-oriented programme:

To identify ways in which local NGOs can support the development survival strategies of refugees in Canning Town.

To facilitate development of the advice and mentoring work of RAMP in Canning Town.

### 3.4.1.6.  Further Research Questions

Our further research in the Docklands area will focus on more in-depth understanding of the following issues:

the utilisation of social networks as a survival strategy;

the role and the use of private and public urban spaces in this particular zone of stress;

the more effective use of forced migrants' expert knowledge for improving survival strategies and social networks of newcomers.

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## 3.5. Report: Thessaloniki

### 3.5.1. Ethnographic Field Study: Transformations in Port Related Areas

*By Ourania Rapti and Eftichia Voutira, University of Macedonia - Thessaloniki*

#### 3.5.1.1. Research Background

Since 1997 a series of publications have put Thessaloniki in the spotlight and new areas of interest have been identified by researchers and local authorities as 'viable' development projects, aiming at improving the city's image. A common denominator among these projects is the area of 'Ladadika' and the city's port. An overview of this bibliography forms the starting point of this research which examines among other things, the assumptions of local authorities about the concept of 'culture' and the way this concept informed the funding proposals and their implementation during Thessaloniki's phase of 'Cultural Capital of Europe' in 1997 (Agelopoulos 2003).

This research proposal follows from the Phase I survey on Thessaloniki, undertaken by Salinia Stroux, that had identified four different research areas in the city. Two out of those areas are studied in depth for this research: the old port quarter 'Ladadika' that has been transformed into an entertainment area (number 2 on the map) and Vardaris, the downgraded port-related area between the port and the railway station (number 4 on the map).



Illustration 15: Waterfront of Thessaloniki with research areas

#### 3.5.1.2. The Local Context

What has formed the starting point of this research is the space transformation processes under way in the city of Thessaloniki and especially in the port area. Global economic transformations[6] and the spatial expansion of the port's activities, have led to the traditional port-related activities being moved out of the old port district (Limani, 'Ladadika') to the area of Vardaris.

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[6] These transformations include the move of trade and transport activities to the west of the city, changes in shipping technology, the new regime of transportation within the European Union and dynamic development of passengers' transportation (N. Papamihos 2000).

This area (Vardaris) is what seems to have become 'the backyard' of the city: all 'unwanted', 'unsafe' and 'dirty' activities have been moved here, while the old port area has been renovated and hosts new, 'entertaining' facilities for the city dwellers.

### 3.5.1.3. Processes of Gentrification

During the 80s the cityscape of Thessaloniki began to change through renovation of 'old' buildings and gentrification of some areas that were considered as most visible and 'representative' of the city's image. The targeted areas were mainly Ano Poli, the citadel in the upper part of the city, and 'Ladadika', the port district. Not surprisingly, both areas had preserved the 'old flavour' of the city's past[7], with old buildings, narrow cobblestone streets and remaining traditional urban activities (tailor shops, broom makers, wholesalers, retailers, copper shops). These areas were then characterised as 'preserved historical places' and it was therefore not allowed to alter the buildings without the licence of the Ministry of Culture that had the overall responsibility.

There is an interesting similarity between the contemporary promotion of the port area and the late Ottoman attempts to upgrade the image of the city in an 'occidentalist' fashion. Renovating and upgrading the port area was part of the broader project of improving the image of the city for western eyes. Being one of the most important commercial harbours of the Empire, the sultans wanted Thessaloniki to become 'westernised' so as to make a good impression to the foreign diplomats coming from Europe. Significantly, the priority was to renovate the area close to the port, so that 'the diplomats coming in the city from the sea will watch from the boat a beautiful scenery ahead of them' (Yerolympos 1994).

The concern for the city's (and in particular the port area's) image, with the pursued beautification for western eyes is common between the Ottoman and the contemporary gentrification projects. One important difference may be that while for the Ottomans beauty had to be made to fit western criteria of modernity, today's policy makers want to make it look 'traditional', and to 'bring out the flavour of the city's (Ottoman) past'. This is quite telling for the city's search for identity.

### 3.5.1.4. Research Area: Locations and Actors

#### 3.5.1.4.1. The Old Port Quarter 'Ladadika'

Our target area initially was 'Ladadika', because of its proximity and relevance to the port. 'Ladadika', or the 'oil district' (because of the numerous oil warehouses in the area) used to host all port-related activities: shipping companies, merchant shops with nautical equipment, wholesale and retail shops stores with edible goods, and at night, the area was transformed to a red-light district. During the morning hours, it was a busy commercial part of the town, where people from Thessaloniki and from other cities of Northern Greece would come to shop for foods, oil, soap, spices, and other goods. At night, 'it was not goods but flesh that was being sold' as one of the interviewees put it. Prostitutes and transvestites in brothels or on the street would cruise along the areas' streets for work. From the standpoint of middle-class codes of propriety, it was considered dangerous, quite unwise and improper for anyone to go

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[7] ''Ladadika'' was one of the few city areas not destroyed by the 'Great Fire' of 1917. The old buildings and warehouses were thus preserved as they were during the Ottoman times, while the rest of the urban space came increasingly under plans of modernisation.

through 'Ladadika' at night, where 'prostitutes and pimps reigned' according to the same interviewee.

Today, only very few of the commercial shops remain in the area, while all brothels have been closed down or transferred to Vardaris. In the beginning of the 90s, businessmen and architectures undertook the long-lasting project of renovating the wider area of 'Ladadika'. The purpose was to 'save' the area and buildings from destruction and give the area back its old character.

In an interesting account of the original 'Ladadika' gentrification proposal, the specific goals, rationale and logic of implementation are presented, as well as an evaluation and assessment of their implementation. The article, entitled characteristically: "Ladadika': from desertion to salvation', provides the main textual evidence for the government (Ministry of Culture) perspective and rhetoric. The original proposal had, among others, an explicit goal: to 'clear off the streets of the marginalized social groups and eliminate their ghetto' (Mavromatis 1996: 30). And so they did. Prices in the area started to rise as the word went around that the area would become an entertainment district and almost all the shopkeepers were forced to leave the area, as they couldn't afford the rent any more. Those who didn't, especially the businessmen that owned the estates, renovated the buildings and converted them to clubs, cafes and restaurants. Today's 'Ladadika' do not resemble anything of what the area used to be. Only a couple of small shops remain, but their owners will move out of the area in the immediate future.

Despite common misperceptions that the gentrification process began with the 'Cultural Capital of Europe' activities, it is evident that the original plan was conceived at least ten years earlier. The target group for this large-scale renovation was not the shopkeepers but the real estate owners. Follow up research in this area has interest in its own right in terms of assessing the gentrification project and its impact on local society. Nevertheless, from the standpoint of this research, which involves an understanding of the emerging dynamics and mobility patterns of the 'impure', dangerous and dispossessed groups, we will follow the radius of their relocation, i.e. the pattern of their displacement.

### 3.5.1.4.2. 'Vardaris' – A Downgraded Port-Related Area

The area of displacement is Vardaris, which is the other focus of the research. It is a non-resident district of the town, close to 'Ladadika', and between the port and the railway station. It is here that all the port-related activities have been transferred, such as the commercial activity, with legal and 'illegal' retail shops, some shipping companies as well as the red-light district activities. One can name it a 'transit' area, because being on the borders of the city it used to serve after World War II those coming into town from the provinces, as a 'dormitory' section, packed as it was with small hotels and hostels. Today, it is a very busy area with its commercial shops and the Court House situated there, while by the afternoon and night, its streets empty and it is considered a 'dirty' area for the middle class city dwellers and rather dangerous to cross, because of all the 'illegal' activities that supposedly take place there (drug dealing, prostitution etc). In the last 2 years, Aisopou Street has become the Chinese wholesale distribution point and the centre for illegal goods to be bought by street vendors and others, and given the 'foreign' identity of this newcomer trading population, the area has come to be a location of xenophobic apprehensions. For example, one month ago, there was a demonstration organised by Greek shopkeepers, protesting the Chinese presence, which they perceived as a threat. It can be quite

evident from the above that the area of Vardaris presents today the image that used to be characteristic of 'Ladadika' before their gentrification.

### 3.5.1.5. Preliminary Findings

It is in this area that the country's first National Shelter for Trafficking Victims will be situated. This selection of space is what is most interesting for this research. We have seen how, in the last two decades and through inclusion and exclusion processes, a new space for the 'disadvantaged' has been created in the city's border area of Vardaris. According to the Ministry spokesman, this was the only area where the locals did not object to the shelter, while in other areas, residents strongly objected to the idea of the shelter in their vicinity, as they considered that it would 'downgrade' their neighbourhood and pose future dangers for them and their children. The fact that it was relatively easy to set up the shelter in Vardaris comes as no surprise if we consider that it is not a residence area and its space is already used by all sorts of 'disadvantaged' groups for their activities.

In an attempt to 'care for the victims and the marginalized groups', the Ministry of Macedonia and Thrace has led an ambitious project of setting up a shelter for the victims of trafficking, both women and children, in Thessaloniki. For this purpose, the Ministry has cooperated with two of the leading NGOs in the city that have significant experience in working with trafficking victims: ARSIS (Association for the Social Support of Youth) that has been working with children victims of trafficking and will be responsible for the children section of the Shelter, and CRTV (Rehabilitation Centre for Victims of Torture and Other Forms of Abuse) that has been working with women victims of trafficking and will be responsible for the women section of the Shelter.

Part of the research to date was to follow up the logic behind these emerging policy responses of the state to provide for the socially excluded and to focus on the interconnections between the international, national and local actors engaged in this project. Specifically, the research project will identify these interconnections by focusing on: the USA country reports on trafficking, the Greek state's incorporation of them in the legal system and their local implementation.

The underlying assumption of this new institution is the notion that Thessaloniki is the 'hub of the Balkans' as far as trafficking is concerned. This idea is ubiquitous in the policy papers produced by the Ministry and the policy makers' interviews in newspapers. What is being promoted is the idea of Thessaloniki as the leader of the Balkans and South Eastern Europe and its role as a 'metropolis' in the area that will export technical knowledge and social politics. What has been so far a solely economic role of Greece, with continuous investments in the ex-socialist countries of the Balkans, is now been converted to a 'social and political role of the country' and the creation of the Shelter is seen by the policy makers to implement this strategy. It is intended to act as a centre for the trafficking victims of the Balkans and a strategic point for their return to their countries of origin.

### 3.5.1.6. Further Research Questions

Further questions of this research will entail the following up of the mode of implementation of the Shelter (that is expected to start operating by September this year), and the assessment of the shelter project in the making. The 'space politics' of managing the urban environment and its uses will be further explored in relation to the transformations of the socially excluded groups' life patterns and their

location/dislocation. The 'new area for the disadvantaged' that is being created in the city's border area of Vardaris can be used as a case study for the gentrification processes that take place in contemporary European port-cities.

Enlarging on the concept of the dispossessed, another research project, which will be carried out by Despina Dimitriadou, in the context of the port-cities research framework, will target asylum-seeking women's survival/livelihood strategies, including 'illicit'/legal activities. This target group is posted in the Social Solidarity Centre, the only reception centre for refugees and asylum seekers in Thessaloniki.

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## 3.5.2. Ethnographic Field Study: Informal Immigrant Street Vending

Asylum Seekers in the Centre of Thessaloniki: The Profession of Street Vending

*By Salinia Stroux, University of Hamburg*

### 3.5.2.1. Research Background

This report is the result of a first field study conducted in March, April and July of the year 2004 in Thessaloniki, Greece concentrating on the subject of *informal immigrant street vending* – a typical subsistence niche in southern European underground economies (Baldwin-Edwards 1999). The focus was on the *every day practices and strategies of asylum seekers from Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq living in Thessaloniki* and their *engagement in the informal economy*.

For a closer look at one particular group of street vendors, defined the category of "central Asian" vendors – people from Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq – is defined as one because of similarities in their working and living conditions[8]. Today's ethnographies question the idea of well-defined edges and boundaries of communities and subcultures and stress hybrids and blurred transitions instead. Although there are common features that members of the "central Asian" vendors share[9], it should be pointed out here, that in every day life this group does not constitute a closed entity[10]. Due to the importance of widening research in the field of immigrant economies by focussing also on cross-cultural aspects of informal entrepreneurship, other street vendors groups like Nigerian CD vendors or Senegalese bag hawkers were included for a broader perspective on the street vendors system as a whole (Brand 2001).

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[8] The use of regionalisms in defining research entities draws back to a certain degree of shared social capital and should be seen as tool in order to study the differences but also similarities between and within the mentioned groups and the cross-cultural relations between them. The author is aware of the simplistic character of these definitions and does not have the aim to emphasise group boundaries. Even between nationally defined groups like the Afghans there are differences and in the end each vendor has his individual character.

[9] The people from Iran and Afghanistan speak almost the same language and have long experiences in being neighbours. Being from neighbouring countries creates a larger closeness than coming from different continents.

[10] Diverse problems exist within them, e.g. because the people from Iran know the Afghans as refugees in their country and continue to treat them as inferior.

Looking at other involved actors like the police, the government and established small-scale traders etc.[11] was thought to help complete the picture of the hawker's working conditions. As Gigengack and Gelder (2000) put it in their introductory article on contemporary street ethnography "the street cannot any more be approached as cut off from wider social systems" (ibid. 11). Street locales must be studied in a larger context with an additional focus on their social interactions with "agents of street-level intervention and with other non-street people" (ibid.).

A second part of research concentrated on the lives of one particular group within the "central Asian" asylum seekers, namely the Afghans. Research was based on tracing the socio-economic background of the community members as well as the working and living conditions in Greece that may or may not lead to a decision for street vending as an income resource. Furthermore, the social relations within this group and to other groups were examined to look at other everyday strategies except street vending as main focus. To survive in the host country immigrants have to acquire expert knowledge of the place, of the networks of support and the available help. They become specialists in locating the offices of NGOs, Western Union branches and cheap markets, in housing newcomers who lack of income, providing them with information etc. Social networks themselves become strategic social capital.

### 3.5.2.2. Reference to Survey and Changes since then

The preliminary survey, carried out in March, April and July 2003, concluded that street vendors in Thessaloniki recreate the picture of the port city by seaside trade, contributing thus to the picturesque port image. On the other hand they build up a group, that is negatively affected by gentrification processes, expulsion from public space and illegalisation. Looking at the economic niche of street vendors it was assumed that by being part of the Greek "shadow" economy and of street-life in Thessaloniki they become victims of the planned "sterile" urban landscape as both street vendors and as asylum seekers. But as social agents they develop strategies to cope with the difficulties they face.

More than ever these worsening processes of change can be witnessed now under the pressure of the Olympic Games. Controls have been strengthened and laws enforced by the new conservative government that took over power in March 2004. Also new co-operation forms between the national police and the municipal police called *Dimotiki* emerged that allow the arresting of the hawkers and the law has prescribed updated fines. Another opposition consisting of professional shop owners and representatives of small-scale trade started complaining about the informal street economy and the import of sub standard goods from China. In public protests they burned t-shirts, shoes and other goods, pointing to the fact that the price pressure put on them by cheap goods and the activities of illegal vendors destroy the market for local professionals. So restrictive spatial practices and the heavy pressure of public discourse enforced the expulsion of street vendors from public space.

The street as an urban public space becomes contested also in another way. Chinese hawkers "invade" the market. Parallel to that the group of Afghan street vendors has declined, as some transitory professionals found better job opportunities and police controls became harsher and now take place several times a day. But intensifying the pressure on the street vendors brought up more creative professional strategies.

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[11] Others that could be named here are suppliers, customers, trainers, creditors and accountants, market organisers and actors of the same neighbourhood as well as from other parts of their social lives.

The crucial situation as described above shows more and more that the (remaining) Afghan street vendors either have no other job choice or reached a degree of professionalism that doesn't allow them a change into one of the less profitable and more insecure employment situations.

### 3.5.2.3. Research Area: Locations and Actors

#### *3.5.2.3.1. Locations*

The main research area is defined by the working space of the "central Asian" street vendors, which is the "street", that again is used as location of their "shop". Of less importance but also connected to the street business are the areas, where the suppliers and the wholesale trade concentrate. Most of the vendors sell on a fix place in the main business and shopping area. They concentrate around *Tsimski* Street, *Ag. Sofia* church, *Aristotelous* Square and *Egnatia* Street.

Furthermore, there is a second group of important locations connected to the street as a workplace, namely the weekly markets in different areas of the city. And from an even wider perspective, looking on the actors group of asylum seekers in general, the research area consists also of other frequently used spaces. For example; rented flats and other accommodation forms. The wider centre of Thessaloniki, marked by the old city walls as the historic centre, offers the most attractive area for accommodation because of its closeness to important facilities, friends, lucrative street vending areas etc. Other examples are places of leisure time, of recreation, of sports, of helping and assisting NGOs, municipal offices, markets and other shopping areas, places of communication and for sending remittances, meeting and information exchange points etc. All of them again located within the old city walls. Especially for people passing through the refugee reception centre as first accommodation in Thessaloniki, it seems that their world is arranged around this place.

#### *3.5.2.3.2. Actors*

There are four groups central to this study with different degrees of importance. Until now, the research subject was approached by two groups of actors. The first consists of the Afghan community, and the second of the "central Asian" street vendors. Additional groups of actors are defined in the model shown below as level 3 and 4. The following simplistic model may explain the decision to look at different but intermingling groups of actors:

***Level 1: Asylum Seekers***

        ***Level 2: Asylum Seekers as Street Vendors***

                ***Level 3: Other Street Vendors***

                        ***Level 4: Other Actors***

| **1**<br><br>**The Afghan Community** | **2**<br><br>**"Central Asian" Street Vendors** | **3**<br><br>- Senegalese<br>- Chinese<br>- Greek<br>- Former Eastern Block<br>- Greek Roma etc. | **4**<br><br>- **Greek Police and Municipal Police**<br>- **Social Workers**<br>- Small-Scale Business etc. |
|---|---|---|---|
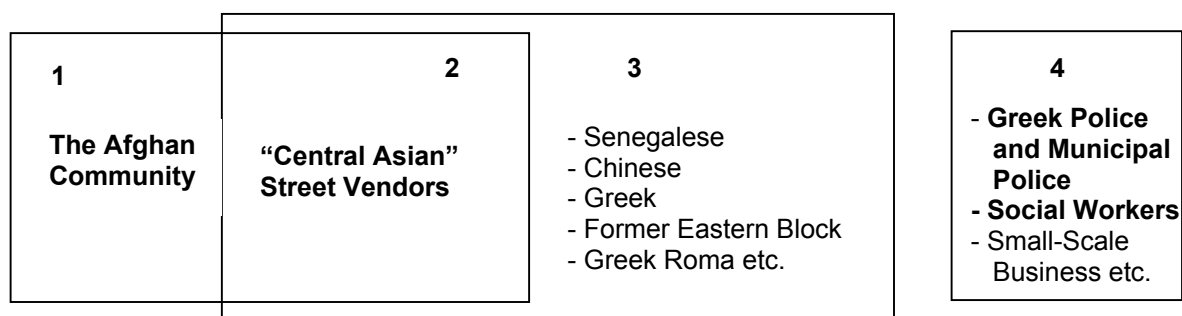
*The groups marked by thick letters show the groups of actors that have already been under study*

*Level 1*: The rate of Asylum applications with a positive answer has fallen dramatically in Greece since 1997. In 2003, only 0,3% of the political refugees became refugee status compared to 5,5% in 1997 and 11,2% which was the peak in 2000 and 2001. In numbers of persons this means that in 2002, 9,278 applications were negative, 36 immigrants were accepted as political refugees and 64 received humanitarian status. In the same year, no Afghan received political asylum in Greece while the Afghan community built up the second largest refugee group (21,86% / 1238 applications) after the Iraqis (45,32%). The third biggest group were refugees from Iran (7,26%) (UNHCR Greece). Following the United States of America, Austria and Germany Greece was hosting the fourth largest group of Afghan applicants in 2002. But still, Afghans are a new refugee group to Greece. Only since 1998 their number has grown over more than 1% of the applicants for political asylum. This is partly due to the European immigration politics and the implementation of the *Schengen Treaty* that played a significant role in changing Greece from a transit to a host country in the last years and to changing migration strategies of the groups. The social networks of the Afghans show that many of them have ties to friends and/or family in northern Europe, who in some cases passed through Greece earlier.

As national statistics on the refugee population are not analysed on urban levels by cities, no official numbers for asylum seekers in Thessaloniki exist. The only accessible numbers consist of the statistics of the refugee camp run by the *Social Solidarity* NGO. With some little exceptions every Afghan refugee has passed through that institution. Analysing the numbers, one can observe that since 2000 Afghans, Persians and Iraqis together have made up almost half of the camps population with the group of Afghans being the largest.

The total number of Afghans in Thessaloniki ranges today to approx. 59 persons of both sex and all ages. The community consists mainly of single men from 20 to 35 years and around 7 families with children. Some of the single men are engaged to women in Afghanistan despite their physical absence but with their approval. The others are singles. This social structure appears again in the group of street vendors, which is predominantly male.

*Level 2:* Asylum seekers working in street vending constitute the regional focus group of "central Asians". Greek street vending in its historical sense was, like the Greek *Periptera* (kiosks) initially thought as a profession for the disadvantaged parts of the population. But it is today a profession restricted in its legal form exclusively to parts of the native population – only few persons enjoy the advantage of an official permit. Street vending has become a niche for informal sector workers and most of the vendors are immigrants with different legal status working illegally. According to different estimates the biggest group within the street vendors are probably the Nigerian CD vendors. One other group working under similar conditions and having private ties to each other to a certain degree are the asylum seekers from Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran living in Thessaloniki. Together they form a group of around 21 street vendors, mostly male but of different ages (9-45 years). Other street vendor groups also point to the fact that informal street trade is a gendered part of the underground economy with predominantly male workers.

### 3.5.2.4.  Preliminary Findings and Conclusions

#### 3.5.2.4.1.  Processes of Transition and Key Events

Today one major process influencing the situation of *asylum seekers* is the changing EU policy towards immigrants and refugees. The policies described by the key concept "Fortress Europe" like the *Schengen Treaty[12]* as one central action had a large impact and played a role in a decrease of the official migratory flows passing through Greece as transit and orienting towards Northern Europe. For certain population groups it was as if a one way wall was built against most Third World countries. This is how fingerprints bind you to another destiny. But simultaneously refugees' strategies have changed and adjusted to the new situation.

Arriving in Greece asylum seekers encounter an economy with specific socio-economic characteristics: the persistence of a large informal economy parallel to the formal economy; the fragmentation of the economy into small mainly family-run enterprises; the seasonality and labour intensity in sectors like e.g. construction; the rejection of low-paid, low-status jobs by natives due to higher education levels, higher socio-economic aspirations and the delayed labour market entry of the young and of women (Iosifides, King 1999). There is a big demand for unskilled low-wage labour and this attracts and binds immigrants to Greece. Today, Greek families and households can afford immigrant workers for home-based tasks and self-employed Greeks of small-scale business as well.

One major process taking impact specifically on the life of the *street vendors* is the expansion of the Chinese economy and immigration of Chinese nationals to Greece, who then establish wholesale trade or work as street hawkers. This migration probably owes to the Greek market demand. On a local level the Olympic Games and other major future events like the EXPO 2008 have become central factors for gentrification processes in the public space. The upgrading of the city centre is going on. New plans affect e.g. Wednesday's weekly market at *Rotonda* and the area around. Another place that will undergo processes of change is, within others, the central market area.

#### 3.5.2.4.2.  Living Conditions and Insecurity of Afghan, Persian and Iraqi Asylum Seekers and Especially of Street Vendors

The insecurity asylum seekers encounter in Greece is diverse. But the biggest problem is their insecure and unforeseeable *legal situation*. Most asylum seekers in Thessaloniki have a Pink Card. With this temporary identification document for asylum seekers they have a residence permit limited to six months and the right to apply for a temporary work permit issued for the same period plus 30 days. Usually the first asylum application is negative and an appeal against the decision must be send to the Ministry of Public Order within 30 days. The majority of Afghan, Persian and Iraqi asylum seekers are in the state of waiting for their appeal to be answered. They have come to Thessaloniki within the past three years and they still wait – some of them for more than two years. So people live in a state of liminality as their future depends on the outcomes of the asylum procedure. Two Afghans have received a second negative answer on their applications and one of them has already left.

A second factor of instability is the economic situation. With little exceptions people arrive to Greece without any belongings. Although Greece has around twelve reception centres and refugee camps or hostels in different locations *accommodation*

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[12] Greece became a full signatory on 26 March 2000.

is a major problem to refugees as soon as they have to find some rented space. In Thessaloniki there is only one refugee camp run by the *Social Solidarity* NGO. The building is situated in the centre of the city and has the capacity to host around 110 persons at a time. But officially this accommodation is only a temporary solution. After some months people have to rent their own rooms or flats outside the camp. Most foreigners in Thessaloniki concentrate in the centre and the distribution of their flats show a vertical differentiation or even segregation. Asylum seekers often live in the basements while other immigrant groups and Greek people live in the upper floors. It should be added here, that there are no social benefits for asylum seekers from the Greek government, so people have to finance themselves. Therefore, at the latest after leaving the camp they have to generate some income, that is to say, they have to find a job.

The *job market* and access to the Greek job market constitute additional difficulties, the limited Greek language knowledge creates a major hindrance to the majority of jobs. The following features play a significant role in finding a job: educational background, and / or experience, age, length of stay and legal status. But assisting programmes provide some help for learning Greek language, the development of skills and competencies in seeking employment or the conciliation with the wider community, the economic and administrative Greek reality, professional training to meet the new challenges in the work area together with exiting competencies and skills. In Thessaloniki the institutions supporting refugees in matters of employment and work are the *Social Solidarity* NGO, the local Manpower Organisation OAED (Organisation for Employment and Workforce Resources), Association of Exporters of Northern Greece (SEBE), Macedonian Labour Institute (MAKINE), ANATOLIKI and the *Centre of Tortured Victims* NGO. Living conditions in Afghanistan or as Afghan refugees in host countries have usually not permitted higher education. Though the Afghans have mostly visited school up to 10 years, former employment has occurred in low skilled professions like tailoring, mechanics, working at gas stations, in hotels, trade, carpet-weaving, as carpenter or factory labourer. Unemployment rates are very low, but the working conditions are insecure (frequent change of professions), unsteady (short period of employment) and the quality of jobs are low too[13]. Predominating sectors occupied by Afghans are construction, factory work, small firms, gardening, oriental carpet trade and care, and *street hawking*. They work as unskilled labour force and have function as flexible helpers and assistants. Average income is around 25 Euro for eight hours of work. Often they face hard working conditions like a high degree of danger, the demand to live in (at gardening professions or while working at a riding stable) and following loneliness, no insurance, overtime without payment, the disobedience of basic rights etc. Social networks (e.g. of "friends" – co-nationals and cross-cultural or social workers) function as employment agencies. To find a job people usually activate their contacts. They ask friends, go to the specialised institutions but they also consult newspapers or use the "Piazza", an open market for day labourers. The longer people live in Greece and the more experiences and knowledge they have the higher are their expectations and the better are the jobs they find.

Within the street hawkers there are few enjoying their job. But they constitute of the professional and ambitious section and they work "voluntarily" as street vendors, because of preferring the working conditions and thinking of the profits. Another

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[13] Iosefides and King describe similar conditions for the Albanian work force (1999)

factor contributing to their effectiveness in work is the long period of experiences as self-employed businessmen. The other vendors just don't see other possibilities to earn a living. Either they have health problems and cannot afford the "normal" jobs, or they are too young to get an official working permit, which employers demand, or they just do not find other jobs for a certain period, so they temporarily choose this profession. This group seems to be excluded from the social welfare system of Greece. Street vending becomes a survival strategy in these cases, and social networks function as transmitters of the specific (professional) knowledge. But whoever has a better choice turns his back to the street.

### 3.5.2.4.3.  Characteristic Modes of Subsistence and Social Networks

Until now, three major forms of survival have appeared to be characteristic for asylum seekers in Thessaloniki. They are all based on social networks and a shared cultural knowledge of "how to survive" under these conditions in this specific place to that specific time.

First of all the refugees have a wide-ranging network of family members and friends in different countries. Their families live in Iran, Turkey, Afghanistan, Canada, the United States and different countries of Europe. Family ties become stronger or develop newly when the refugees engage with women of their own family or of others in other countries. The Afghans conduct frequent contacts by phone calls and/or letters or even by e-mail. As their future in Greece is uncertain they have to be up to date about legal matters and the refugee situation in Europe and outside but also of the changes taking place in their home countries. So communication with people in other parts of Greece and in other countries becomes a daily routine. The ones who have the possibility send money. These networks can support financially and inform about the legal situations and ways to travel for other countries. They are symbolic for the transitory character of Afghan street vendors' lives in Thessaloniki and function as mutual international insurance.

Certainly the question of housing plays a major role too. Afghans and other asylum seekers face accommodation difficulties due to their insecure working conditions and the lack of an effective state support system. They have to arrange creative forms of housing and share their private social space. So they normally live together in rented flats, where people with different jobs and a different level of income stability help each other. There is always a person with a more secure income being the main tenant while the others are subtenants. Usually there is a high degree of movement between a hand full of flats, where people arrange to stay together as long as the accommodation doesn't become overcrowded and the lodgers stay friends. This way of living could be described as survival strategy adjusted to their specific life situation, but it also seems to be a copy of home experiences, where usually many people live together as extended families. Many times while talking the Afghans expressed that they felt very sorry for me, because the researcher was living on her own. But a strict cultural explanation isn't satisfactory. Another reason for the preference of staying together, except of pragmatic and cultural reasons may be the fact that loneliness and isolation would not be easy to face especially as the refugees have grown up with the experience of co-living also on their way to Greece. Living together offers also a variety of advantages like frequent exchange of information and other services. After being in a disadvantaged position, where others helped by offering a place to sleep in their home, an obligation to reciprocate the service develops. This is the way, how a whole system of support grows. But some Afghans in Athens have created even a

business out of this situation and opened "hotels", where people can live together for little money.

An other strategy typical for different marginalised groups in Greece and focus of this research is the informal street vending. Now how do asylum seekers in Thessaloniki working as street vendors use social capital in the cross-cultural economy of street vending? There are residentially based networks, ethnic networks, language networks, networks of shared experiences like the flight to Greece, networks of support, help and of work which all cannot be viewed separate from each other. When refugees arrive in the refugee camp of Thessaloniki they enter immediately a social network that regards street vending as one possible survival strategy.

Following Nederveen Pieterse (2003) in his critics of the "ethnic economies" approach, where the foci are only on ethnic boundaries and notions of enclavement, also other street vendors groups were included to the research. Namely a second focus was put on "African" street vendors[14], actually the biggest street vendors group with the status of asylum seekers, to compare their situation to the Afghans.[15] Pieterse demands a shift of emphasis to "cross-cultural enterprises" and points to the fact that immigrant economies are often embedded within cross-cultural economies and to the hybrid character of business groups. In Thessaloniki the intermingling of different street vendors groups within each other and also to other actors are significant in aspects of co-operation, communication and mutual assistance. Beginning with the mutual exchange of light or electricity to the neighbouring vendor, warning each other if police approach, small talk, exchanging information on prices, profitable events and can reach the affords of social workers to apply for legal street vendors permits in the name of an immigrant.

The concept of social capital is underlying the idea of "ethnic economies". It includes a variety of social relations, which Pieterse describes as threefold while he speaks of bonding, bridging and linking social capital. Bonding social capital or close ties, may be culturally embedded while bridging loose ties at the same socio-economic level and linking ties with others at higher socio-economic levels may be culturally embedded and/ or cross-cultural (ibid. 45). The street vending business in Greece is a service sector for cross-cultural consumers. Following the idea of bonding social capital the closest ties persist within groups of same nationality or at least same language vendors, but in the end all street vendors feel some kind of relationship to each other independent of origin and nationality or status. The "Central Asian" hawkers group who exchange knowledge on irregular events that offer good possibilities for profit are exemplary for this. Friendships cross those differences and conflicts occur also within small groups. When an Afghan vendor has loose contacts to his neighbouring Chinese vendor e.g. by talking about their suppliers we speak of bridging social capital. Other cross-cultural economies in the Greek underground

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[14] The African street vendors group is dominated by Nigerian nationals, but in the end they form a heterogeneous group from many countries of Africa, although mainly anglophone. The African francophone group of Senegalese hawkers should be distinguished because of different legal backgrounds and separate organisation.
[15] Difficulties of the concept as described by *Pieterse* are confirmed in the case study of Thessaloniki. Ethnic means cultural embeddedness, but in an ethnocentric sense it can be used symbolically for the distance from European or western Culture. And the definition of ethnic as co-ethnic labour is too narrow because it doesn't include all the cross-cultural relations. The concept of ethnicity is therefore of no need for this research and should not be applied here.

economy are African and Asian hairdressers (mostly women) and Albanian or Filipino housekeepers and nurses etc.

### 3.5.2.4.4. Conflicts Faced by Street Vendors

Conflicts arise on different levels: within close and culturally embedded social networks like the Afghan street vendors, and in wider loosely knit networks, e.g. between the different street vendors groups or between them and their suppliers. Typically the competition leads to some fights about the better position and provocative competitive action. The latter can occur between a street vendor and a neighbouring shop with similar goods, when the informal vendor starts selling the same goods for (much) lower prices. Another form of conflicts arises between the street vendors and official representatives like police officers, border controls or the *Dimotiki*, when the presence of the street hawkers in public space has to fear the danger of expulsion. Also there is a quite high public pressure organised around professional associations and representatives of small and middle-scale commerce and formal market vendors. And last politicians like the vice-mayor of Thessaloniki try to combat illegal street vending – as he said in an interview: "I will not let this city turn into a big bazaar!"

### 3.5.2.4.5. Areas of Expert Knowledge

Looking at the group of Afghan asylum seekers various forms of expert knowledge can be found. There is e.g. knowledge of legal or policy issues, economic, social and cultural activities. The refugees evolve this expertise out of their required flexibility, through former experiences and by processes of sharing information, interacting and struggling. Considering the transitory character of their refugee life in Greece, it is a matter of life or death to know certain things. As described above their legal situation leaves them with an unknown future - much more than other people face it. It becomes therefore a question of survival to develop certain networks of support and help.

Within the group of "central Asian" street vendors there are different areas of specific cultural knowledge. Most important are three categories: knowledge of the market and the economy, the spatial knowledge connected to this profession and strategies to deal with the police and other opposition. Within them there are different degrees of cultural knowledge, with the highest expertise at the professional vendors. A small network keeps the vendors updated. But some face exclusion processes or participate in including themselves.

Market analysis and knowing what is hip: Looking at the Afghan street vendors in different seasons of the year will show that their goods change according to the weather and occasions. In Christmas time they sell Santa Claus caps, in cold days they have scarves and gloves, in summer sunglasses etc. Cheap costume jewellery is one of the goods that sell all year round. Still there are differences of course. At the moment natural stones boom in the market of bracelets, necklaces and earrings and multicoloured plastic stones too. The vendors seem to have a feeling for their customers needs, they observe them day by day and they see what people buy. The motto is "different goods for different people and different occasions". The weekly markets should offer a larger variety while the pedestrians of big shopping streets prefer looking in a hurry on specific wares.

Spatial knowledge of markets, profitable places and events: Which day, which market? What time, which shopping street? When are the people walking at the

seaside promenade, which festival takes place today and where, is there a new private market and where is the next *Panigiri*? The street vendors have an immense knowledge of places, the times when they are frequented by consumers or by the police and of occasions and events that attract people even to places three hours outside of Thessaloniki by car. In the city of Thessaloniki Afghans hawkers don't use maps for orientation, they know many market areas and they remember where they are according to the weekly market that is located in a street or square. Following one Afghan professional to *Chalkidiki* the researcher participated to his first inspections of possible new work places for the summer and his considerations. In the end, he decided that the closer beaches e.g. in *Ag. Triada*, which can be reached by public transport offer better markets than the distant beautiful beaches of the "first finger". The close villages attract Albanians, Georgians and other inhabitants of Thessaloniki who don't have a car and who are better customers than the tourists from Germany are.

Strategies to deal with the Police and the *Dimotiki*: The Vendors groups all follow some spatial strategies they develop by time and they also teach them to each other. On the other hand, the police and the *Dimotiki* officers develop strategies to oppose the spatial use of the street hawkers. So both groups of actors try to foresee the strategies of the others and they react according to their supposition. Many hawkers have one fix working place, which they chose according to different characteristics that assign it to be profitable[16]. Additionally they have at least a second place in reserve in case that something or somebody hinders them to work in workplace number one. Simultaneously, they also sell on weekly markets and events that attract many people (like the Greek *Panigiria*). The peak of professionalism was reached by a hawker, who found a booklet of the Orthodox Church, which contains all the religious festivities. In summertime the informal traders move by car to *Chalkidiki* to follow their clientele. If they encounter police or *Dimotiki* forces different reactions can follow. Everyone has his own strategy being more or less self-confident and experienced. Some persons just hand over their goods to the officers knowing that they will not decide to take them back because of the high fees. Others use different excuses. To summarise, the situation depends on the relation between hawker and officer, if they know each other or not. In the end the best strategy from the side of the illegalised businessmen is prevention by escape. But if the goods are confiscated again different strategies are used. Starting by the reaction of ignoring the fact that a big part of capital has just entered the dark storerooms in the districts offices, more courageous vendors try to free their belongings by arguments.

The police and the *Dimotiki* have also developed strategies to combat street vending. Their principle lies in preferring prevention instead of punishment. In near future the *Dimotiki* task forces will be enlarged from 47 to 300 persons and they already have started a co-operation with the Greek police, which means that they have the ability now to arrest people.

### 3.5.2.5.  Suggestions for Programme Development

In the Thessaloniki case study, first there should be a description of the programmes that already have started supporting asylum seekers and street vendors and secondly additional ideas will be considered. In co-operation with the *Centre for Tortured*

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[16] a. Being high frequented, b. having good neighbours who agree with their presence, c. not too much competition, d. closeness to other hawkers for security reasons, e. not too many police controls etc.

*Victims* NGO of Thessaloniki Greek and English language classes have started helping the asylum seekers on the one hand integrate themselves to Greece and the Greek labour market and on the other hand preparing them for their future, wherever that might be. Second the new branch of the same NGO in Rhodos Island is intensifying their support for the newly arriving refugees. Rhodos functions together with other eastern islands and border regions as an entry port for refugees coming through Turkey to Greece. The NGO sends refugees that face certain difficulties, for example if they come with families, if they are unaccompanied minors, if they have specific health problems or if they are victims of torture, preferably to Thessaloniki. So after arriving at the borders which function like a channel to the urban centres of Greece, the refugees can find very basic support according to their primary needs there.

Street vending is a transitory survival strategy for asylum seekers in Greece although some hawkers have developed a professional and to a certain degree profitable way of work and would not consider other jobs as better alternative anymore. The specific cultural knowledge they acquire makes them experts of urban public space and especially of public market spaces. As experienced vendors they could offer their workforce to the production sector and start selling special goods. Also they could offer guided tours for people interested in the markets of the town. That seems even more attractive considering the fact that Thessaloniki has only a few guided tours. Furthermore, discussions with some vendors and representatives of the *Social Solidarity* NGO took place and the idea of a small information booklet was born. This "Street Vendors Guide" will contain basic information on the profession itself, on working conditions for asylum seekers in Greece and the procedures of receiving work permits, information on where to find jobs, assistance in matters of employment AND a small dictionary with the basic language skills for street vending. It will be directed to the vendors themselves and other asylum seekers who are looking for various job opportunities.

### 3.5.2.6.  Further Research

Further research will provide:

- A second focus on the group of Nigerian vendors (also asylum seekers)
- A deeper insight into the perception of living and working conditions in Greece for asylum seekers
- Further examination of the street vending economy, through a view on competition and / or co-operation forms
- A follow up of the history of street vending within the group of the "central Asian" hawkers
- Data on details of the profession by a questionnaire
- Maps of spatial knowledge of street vendors and studying their environment by go-alongs (Kusenbach 2003)
- Film material of street vendors: production of documentary

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### 3.5.3. Practice-Oriented Programme: Homeless People in Thessaloniki

*By Photis Tegos and Vassiliki Agathidou, Association for the Social Support of Youth (ARSIS), Thessaloniki*

#### 3.5.3.1. Description of the Programme and Summary of the Action

Arsis program has been developing in parallel with the work that has been implemented since 1998, when the issue of homelessness became a new field of Arsis interventions.

After an initial assessment period, which involved the evaluation of the status of being homeless (in particular rough sleepers) and communication with involved organizations and services, Arsis adopted the methodology of street work and referral to Arsis offices. More specifically, a group of volunteers street workers try to find homeless people on the streets, establish a trusting relation with them and finally refer them to Arsis support services. There, a social worker examines their exact needs and when possible deals with them, or refers them to other services that could assist.

Our initial assessment results indicate that rough sleepers have lost their contact with their family and most of them have a history of drug or alcohol abuse and/ or psychiatric problems.

This work continues until today with the following actions:

- Street work

- Provision of material goods (Food and clothes)

- Social and psychological support and referral to other social services

- Sensitization of the local community through public events

- Networking

From now on our strategic planning consists of the following actions:

- *Assessment of the profile of homeless people in Thessaloniki*

  Report on the profile of homeless people in Thessaloniki, according to the data that have been collected in Arsis since 2000. This data will be enriched with an "anthropological dimension", via the observation that will be done by a group of students from the University of Macedonia and by a student from the University of Hamburg that has already worked in Hamburg with an organization for homeless people (Hinz und Kunzt).

- *Research on local services*

  A standard questionnaire will be addressed to local services that deal with homeless people in Thessaloniki. This questionnaire will eventually point out the different aspects of the problem, the special needs of the homeless (health, safety, drug or alcohol abuse, violence, housing, etc.) and the extended social exclusion they face. In addition, out of these interviews, a guide for the homeless people will be produced, aiming to inform them about the services that they could address to for support.

- *Social Services Guide for homeless*

  This guide will include all services that could provide support to homeless, such as: health, substances' abuse, housing, food and clothing supplies, bathing, safety e.t.c. For the included services, the address, the telephone number, the provided

services will be given. There will also be a map, where the services will be marked upon, so as to facilitate the homeless to find them.

- *Leaflet for the issue of being homeless*

A leaflet for the homelessness will be produced, which will be addressed to the local community in order to explain and give the different dimensions of the phenomenon as well as sensitize and mobilize people to act (what people can do).

- *Networking*

Through the research that will be conducted about the existing services, a network between the registering services will be developed in a stable working cooperation for the benefit of homeless people. In addition, this network will be connected with the greater network of services that has been formed last month in Athens (between Greek services and FEANTSA). A further target goal of the network will be to proceed with lobbying in the local and national authorities on the issue of homelessness. Some actions of the network are going to be publicized in the press, especially with the occasion of the Olympic Games (defending homeless' rights).

- *Public Conference*

By the end of 2004, a conference will be held on the issue of homelessness, provoking an open dialogue through involved services, local authorities and the local community.

### 3.5.3.2. Problems and/or Achievements

The project started its first phase of testing on May 2004. As far as the achievements are concerned the following should be noted:

- Concerning the assessment of the profile of homeless people, a first draft of the collected data has already been standardized.

Until 2000 Arsis has collected data through a standard form for most of the people that live on the streets, in Thessaloniki. This means that around 150 persons (30 of them have been registered in 2004) that live, or have lived, in Thessaloniki and spent their time on the streets, answered the following questions:

Personal details (Name, Sex, Age, country of origin, family conditions and relations), educational level, professional skills, work experience and work conditions, period living on the streets, reasons for living on the streets, health conditions, use of drugs or alcohol substances, legal situation, personal networks, places where he/she eats, social services to which he/she has been addressed to, his/her priorities.

These data are going to be added to the data that volunteers are going to collect from the two shelters that exist in Thessaloniki and from the police stations where a lot of homeless people are led to, and by this way give the most possibly complete registration of this social phenomenon.

The above action will be further enriched with the following: The research of the University of Macedonia concerning social exclusion in Thessaloniki along with the cooperation of a group of University's students that through observation will study rough sleepers on the streets. The students for the observation work will be accompanied and supported by Arsis volunteers, who have a lot of street work experience.

- Concerning the leaflet for the homelessness:

The leaflet has already been produced. As aforementioned, it is being addressed to the local community in order to explain and give the different dimensions of the phenomenon as well as to sensitize and mobilize people in order to act. The leaflet is already being distributed to the public during various events and it will also be sent to all relative Services in Thessaloniki.

- Concerning Networking

Arsis of Athens and Thessaloniki held an initiative on networking, in Athens. This initiative has led to the formation of a network with the participation of around 25 organizations and services that are active in Athens. On the 18th of May 2004 the constitution of the network was accepted by all participant organisations and also a preliminary agreement concerning common action was developed for one year, from May 2004 until April 2005.

Regarding the problems and difficulties, the following should be mentioned:

- So far, there are difficulties in the procedure of networking in Thessaloniki, mainly because of the refusal of the local authorities to look in to the problem. However, we believe that through the questionnaire addressed to the services as well as through the guide for the homeless, we will have an opportunity to talk in person and discuss with all the services/organizations, overcome the obstacles and form a stable cooperation (this cooperation in an unofficial level already exists with NGOs).

- Difficulties also arise in the issue of street work. It seems that so far we have met most of the persons that are living on the streets. A high percentage of them are drug or alcohol addicts or/and have psychiatric problems. Our volunteers have difficulties to deal with these cases as they are not qualified or trained. To overcome this, we plan to form groups of street workers with the participation of drug abuse and health professionals, deriving from the network of Thessaloniki.

Also we have to take into account issues of the forthcoming summer that will postpone our schedule from July to the first days of September. This will occur mainly for three reasons:

- Firstly, during the summer, most of the rough sleepers move from one place to another continuously, as the city's population has its holidays and chances of earning some money are less.

- Secondly, a large number of our volunteers that are University students are going back to their homes for their vacations and thus street work is being postponed for the summer.

- And finally, the upcoming event of the Olympic Games in Greece is going to affect the rough sleepers as the Greek government is taking measures in order to "clear the streets" from "any unnecessary presence". This issue is going to have our attention mostly through Athens offices along with the local network cooperation.

### 3.5.3.3. Target Groups

The target groups of our intervention are:

- rough sleepers through addressing services to them
- local community through awareness campaigns

- local organizations and services through networking
- local authorities through lobbying
- national authorities through lobbying and
- E.U. through FEANTSA's consulting role

### 3.5.3.4. Goals and Objectives during the First Period of the Action

Our main point of view concerning this social phenomenon is the fact that the state of being homeless is a temporal one and arises from other serious problems that homeless people face (unemployment, health problems, disrupted personal and family relations, lack of opportunities etc). Our aim is on the one hand to try to reduce the period of time that somebody is spending on the streets and on the other to provide all the necessary elements in order for a homeless person to find his/her way back to a stable work and housing conditions. Furthermore, try to bring into the surface the positive sides those people have, that could contribute with their way to the local community. Finally, rise community's awareness towards housing problems.

The main goals of the program's implementation during this first period are:

- The provision of stable services according to the living conditions of the homeless
- The prevention of long time living on the streets
- The mobilization of authorities towards the benefit of homeless and
- The mobilization of public opinion in favorite of the homeless

The objectives are:

- Useful management of the data that have been collected so far

  As previously mentioned, data will be collected regarding the profile of homeless people. This data could be used so as to better understand the phenomenon of homelessness and by this way try to prevent the state of becoming homeless or being socially excluded. Finally, an attempt will be made to understand what social services and community have to do in order to assist homeless people to reintegrate into society.

- Evaluation of the work that has already been done

  This is a very important issue as it is the first time that we have the opportunity to use the knowledge of anthropology as a theoretical framework in our work as well as target this knowledge to every day social actions.

- Re approach concerning the beneficiaries and the work of volunteers

  With this project we have the chance to take a step back and evaluate our work according to the needs of people that come to Arsis asking for support but also according to the work that volunteers are doing in an NGO. This action will focus our general strategy and make the organization more affective.

- Enriching the work with dimensions from other organizations and anthropological perspectives

  Through the project, Arsis will benefit from the knowledge and the good practice that other organizations implement in their work with homeless people. As an example, the experience of the German organization "Hinz und Kunzt" can provide good practice orientation, (of course, by taking into consideration the differences between the two states, Greece – Germany). In addition, the

Universities' reports can enlighten parameters that NGOs had not taken into consideration, especially on how social exclusion is functioning and is being reproduced.

- Sensitization and mobilization of local actors (public, authorities)

Although it is very common to talk about the awareness of the local community on social issues, we have to mention that weak social relations could be seen as one of the reasons that lead to housing problems. More over, the extensive Greek family does not work against homelessness to the same extent as previously.

- Networking – lobbying (Collective work with organizations with similar activities)

Through networking, we will try to understand the different dimensions of homelessness, a social phenomenon which is not yet fully examined in Greece. Up to the present, the Greek government does not acknowledge the existence of the problem and as a result, no action is being taken against it. Thus, it is of major importance to work with other organizations and services and combine our efforts towards a central action planning.

- Further networking

### 3.5.3.5. Implementation

The actions that have already been implemented are the following:

- Collection of the data regarding homeless and first attempt to edit
- Provision of continuing services to homeless, such as: Street work, food and clothes provision, bathing, social and psychological support and further referral to other services, legal support
- Sensitization of the local community through public events and volunteer participation
- Networking

As aforementioned, on the 18th of May 2004, in Athens, a network for the support of homeless people was formed. The constitution of the network was confirmed by all participant organisations (25) and also a preliminary agreement was accepted with one year planning (from May 2004 till April 2005). Furthermore, common actions are going to be implemented for the occasion of the Olympic Games in August and September.

- Leaflet for the issue of homelessness.

A leaflet for the issue of homeless people was produced, addressed to the local community. Its aim is firstly to point out the different dimensions of the issue and secondly, to sensitize for any volunteer, professional or personal contribution (what people can do, how they can act). This leaflet will be sent to all relevant social services in Thessaloniki and distributed at any public event that Arsis organizes or participates.

- First draft of the guide for the homeless people.
- Collection of material goods that homeless people can use (clothes, sleeping bags, food, etc.).

### 3.5.3.6.  Expected Results

The expected results of the project can be focused on:

- Overall report on the housing problems in Thessaloniki
- Combined and affective approach on the needs of homeless
- Mobilization of the homeless themselves towards their integration
- Contribution of theoretical knowledge of anthropology on the practice of NGOs
- Networking
- Acknowledgement of the housing problem
- Sensitization of authorities to confront the problem
- Public awareness

### 3.5.3.7.  Cooperation (e.g. External Partners)

Except the partners that participate in the project, Arsis will cooperate with a wide range of organization and services in Greece.

More specifically, in Thessaloniki the following are going to be involved:

- social services of the city of Thessaloniki
- other NGOs (Medicines without Frontiers, Medicines of the World, etc.)
- Public services (Directorate of Social Services)
- Police Stations
- Drug rehabilitation organizations / centers / programs
- Services of the Church
- Social Services of Hospitals
- Psychiatric Services etc.

Also a variety of organizations and services from Athens are going to be involved through networking and FEANTSA as Arsis is a member, representing Greece.

### 3.5.3.8.  Further Planning

An attempt will be made to continue the actions for homeless people after the completion of this program. This could be done with the volunteers' contribution (street work, provision of material goods), with Arsis funding (organize events) and through a campaign for raising funds for homeless people.

## 3.5.4.  Practice-Oriented Programme: Refugees in Thessaloniki

*By Pavlina Lazaridou, Nada Rohani and Timothy Hill, Rehabilitation Centre for Victims of Torture and Other Forms of Abuse (CRTV), Thessaloniki*

The "Rehabilitation Centre for Victims of Torture and other forms of abuse" ( CRTV) decided to undertake four activities under the *EU Transnational Exchange Programme to Combat Social Exclusion* denominated "European Port Cities in Transition: Disadvantaged Urban Areas", Phase II.

First comes the reception of potential asylum seekers on Rhodes Island. Rhodes is one of the main entry points for refugees. There, the team of CRTV tries to provide the

basics for their first steps. They arrange for the necessary legal counselling and actions, for translation services, for supply of first aid necessities, and for their mental and physical well-being.

The next three activities then follow in the town of Thessaloniki, which aims to resolve the most intense problem of the refugees, their problem of "understanding". It's not only the very serious need to communicate with the people of Greece, but mostly to understand this new society they have arrived in and are going to spend the following years in.

The Greek and English classes that have taken place during the past 6 months are trying to create communication paths between the natives and the asylum seekers. The main goal is to introduce the newcomers to the Greek culture, in order to make their stay more functional and less stressful.

The fourth activity is addressed towards women asylum seekers. This sensitive group seems to need extra support, and an activity to help them integrate better is being worked out.

The three activities that have already been taking place as well as the fourth that is likely to start all aim to combat social exclusion and to make the asylum seekers' acquaintance with the Greek reality as smooth as possible. Nevertheless, it is made clear to these newcomers that the degree of their integration depends upon them, and that CRTV only wishes to introduce them to Greek society and to enable them to understand it and be a part of it if they wish to.

### 3.5.4.1. First Activity: Reception of Refugees on Rhodes Island

The department of the Centre of Rehabilitation for Torture Victims (CRTV) in Rhodes, an island on the borderline with Turkey and at a very short distance from it, is an entry point for many asylum seekers arriving mostly from Afghanistan, Iran, Sudan, Palestine, as well as from Iraq, Somalia, Sri Lanka, India, Russia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Congo, and Kurds and others. Quite often, families and unescorted underage youth are amongst the asylum seekers.

From January 2004 to June 2004 102 people have arrived (in 4 groups) from Palestine, Iraq, Sudan, Eritrea, Nigeria, Ivory Coast, Congo, and they have been detained for three months due to illegal entrance into Greek territory.

The department's first task is to record the group's members personal data such as name, age, nationality, etc. Then, the team of volunteers responsible for covering the asylum seekers' needs provides the asylum seekers with basic necessities: soaps, shampoos, toothpastes, toothbrushes, clothes, shoes, towels, sheets, blankets. For babies and young children the team provides milk and children's food. Often, the asylum seekers ask for cleaning products.

At the same time, the lawyer and the CRTV's Legal Service inform the asylum seekers on their rights and on the asylum application process. Better communication with the asylum seekers is achieved with the help of the Translations Team, which is responsible for translating from/into English, French, Turkish, Persian, Russian and Arabic, thus further enabling communication and understanding better the asylum seekers' problems.

During the three-month detainment, the Teaching Team holds classes on Greek language in separate groups for men, women and children, as well as in a kindergarten

for younger ages, so that the asylum seekers will adjust more smoothly to Greek society.

The Activities Team is responsible for creative activities that aim to support the mental health of the detainees.

### 3.5.4.1.1. Problems and/or Achievements

CRTV faces many problems. The asylum seekers are kept in buildings unsuitable for providing shelter (the current detainment center is an old radio station called "The Voice of America" *(Foni tis Amerikis),* especially to such a large number of people. Despite promises from local authorities, very little has been done towards finding a solution for a better establishment.

Furthermore, the camp does not have a doctor and asylum seekers with medical problems are often, though not always, transferred to hospital. CRTV often provides the camp with medicine in order to deal with basic medical problems.

When the three-month detainment is over, the asylum seekers are transferred to the port of Rhodes (in order to be transferred to Athens and from there to a refugee camp) where CRTV informs them of the procedures they need to follow, of the problems that they might face, and of the specific steps they need to take.

CRTV arranges for cheaper tickets for the asylum seekers, though often some of them haven't got the money to buy their tickets so CRTV arranges either for the shipping company to provide free tickets or finds sponsors to take care of the cost of the obligatory transfer (donors like itself, or the municipality).

CRTV, department of Rhodes, collaborates with Amnesty International-Greek Section / Rhodes group, the Hellenic Red Cross (Rhodes) and the Volunteer Samaritans Corps of the Hellenic Red Cross, the Greek Helsinki Monitor, the Greek Council for the Refugees and the UNHCR.

### 3.5.4.2.   Second Activity: Greek Language Class in Thessaloniki

The course for teaching Greek to asylum seekers and refugees started in the beginning of 2004. There are two classes, one for beginners and one for advanced, each held two times per week and lasting for two hours every lesson. The number of the students has not been steady all these months. Now there are 10 students, all men; most of which (8) attend the advanced class.

All of the students are asylum seekers from Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and Nigeria. Most of them have already been in Greece for one year or more, rent their own houses and have a job. These people where the main target group of the project, and when they were asked which was the most intense need that they are facing, even the ones who had arranged for a house and job, answered that the need to learn the language of the natives only becomes more and more necessary.

The classes are also attended by asylum seekers who still live in the Refugee Camp, and consider learning the native language of Greece to be very much in need for future social inclusion and integration.

### 3.5.4.2.1. Problems and/or Achievements

The main problem in the beginning of the lessons, was to make a time schedule convenient for all participants. And that, because most of the students work many hours a day – sometimes until late in the evening- and they don't have a steady schedule. Also, often they have to take care of time consuming things that are

obligatory for their stay in Greece (applications, paperwork for permissions etc). The result is that many times they cannot attend the lesson.

There were also some students who had to stop the lessons, because they had to move outside the town, in order to find work. But all of them try to attend, even when their time is limited or they are too tired and have to come straight from work.

Another problem was to understand each other. The students don't speak all the same language and most of them don't speak English. Fortunately, most of them could already speak some Greek, and when it can not be avoided, some translate for the others. All the class cooperates trying to explain, when someone cannot understand something. This helps everyone to get more involved and creates a friendly atmosphere in class. But it is still difficult for someone to learn when there is no intermediate language; he has to be very willing, so that he won't get easily disappointed.

Also a problem is the very wide differences in the educational and cultural background of the students.

For starting the lessons, the thought was to help refugees socialize and feel more confident. So, the intention was to focus not on grammar so much but on things that would make everyday life easier and more functional for refugees – help them to cope with situations like using public transportation in the city, cope with a health problem etc. It turned out that most of the students –since they could already speak some Greek- were also interested in learning to speak and write the language properly. So, the lessons are a combination of the two, grammar and coping with situations.

The problem is that for the second there is a lack of teaching material. There is only one book specially designed for teaching Greek to refugees and immigrants. Fortunately, all of the students were provided this book and a CD with dialogues in Greek. So, having this as a basis, we complement with other things like games with maps and photographs trying to find places in the city, forming and playing dialogues (e.g. a job interview, shopping in the super market), using the newspaper to find a house or a job, using the telephone book etc.

All these are still in progress, and they are constantly formed depending on the needs of the students. For the next period the plan is to learn how to cope with a health problem (find a pharmacy, a hospital, a doctor) and with the services they have to visit for their papers. All these, along with the necessary grammar and vocabulary.

There are many more ideas which will probably be put into practice in the following months, but the form of these depends on the needs and the dynamics of the students.

### 3.5.4.3. Third Activity: English Language Class in Thessaloniki

The activity "English as a Second Language Classes" consists of a class which began in December 2003. This has involved one 2-hour class each week, offered free of charge to all adult asylum seekers and refugees interested in learning English.

Although open to anyone that hears about the class and wants to attend, the class is geared mainly toward refugees/asylum seekers. The aim has been to provide ESL classes for marginalized groups, such as the target group of this project.

Some women attended the class when it was held at the Refugee Camp of Thessaloniki, but since switching to a different location, only one woman (of African origin) has attended.

The goals for the ESL class fall into two categories. One, the more obvious, is to help a group of refugees learn to function in the English language within an easygoing, non-threatening atmosphere. The other category is more complex and less quantifiable, and it consists of providing an experience of social interaction where students are treated with dignity regardless of who they are or what their current situation is--i.e. being foreigners, not having certain papers, being Muslim, being unemployed, being women, being uneducated, all things that are often held against them and that obviously compound the difficulties of their already stressful lives.

Also, another aim is to provide a measure of cultural understanding regarding their host country, Greece; to offer a stable and safe environment in which to learn; and to push them to connect with other people they perhaps normally wouldn't associate with (primarily their fellow students). An attempt is made to develop non-abusive relationships with the students, with the intent of valuing who they are and what they are about, and of possibly assisting them in all ways possible, such as providing contacts, music lessons, answering questions, helping with translations, counseling etc.

### 3.5.4.3.1. Problems and Achievements

Although theoretically it sounds quite nice and neat, in practice there are a number of difficulties encountered. Some of them relate to the students: inconsistency in attendance (often due to shifting or late job schedules and work related weariness); lack of motivation to work on English during the week (it's not a language they are forced to function in on a daily basis, and having one lesson a week doesn't provide enough saturation to allow the material to sink in).

Another problem is the lack of appropriate materials to teach this specific population with, and lack of specialized training of how to teach this special target group. Also difficult is the fact that students are at a variety of levels in their knowledge or English, so the pace often moves too slowly for some and too quickly for others.

Despite these difficulties and the continuous fluctuation in attendance, the sense is that the class is generally well-liked and helpful to most, and many of the students appreciate the teaching methods, music, humor, and relaxed nature of the classes and emphasize their desire to continue attending and learn English.

### 3.5.4.4. External Cooperation

Groups we have cooperated with include a University Student Group in the Biology Department at Aristotle University. They generally house progressive organizations/groups and were happy to provide a roof to hold the weekly classes.

More recently the English class moved to a teaching room within the Social Centre of Thessaloniki, which hosts many groups and serves as a meeting place for immigrants and refugees.

Other than providing space for ESL education, there has not been formal involvement with other groups.

### 3.5.4.5. Further Planning

For the future it is planned to invest into the research of more effective teaching materials. It is being considered breaking the class into two groups and placing students according to their English experience, thus having classes two times per

week, and probably arranging for an extra activity of walks in the town of Thessaloniki where they will be able to practice their speaking skills.

It is also planned to expand the class to include more than just men. In order for women to participate, a class might start exclusively for women (and co-taught with a woman teacher).