

5. Nov. 2015

von gast

in Flüchtlinge

Kommentare (0)

Too much pressure. Germany seen from the perspective of a migrant seeking work



This is the eleventh article in our series on refugees. For more information on the series, please click [here](#).

by Rukaya K.

I came to Frankfurt four months ago. Before that, I had lived in Trentino, Italy, for 14 years. But with the European economic crisis, everything has become difficult; I finally lost my job and decided to go to Germany to give it a new try. Everybody knows that in Germany there are much better chances to get work because the economy doesn't have such **big problems** like in Italy, Greece and Spain.

As I am registered in Italy and **not here**, I don't have any right concerning accommodation or other social security benefits. A lot of people like me have to live on the streets, you can see them sleeping on the meadows of the river Main and under the bridges. **Project Shelter**, a local project organizing private rooms and apartments for homeless migrants that are ignored by the state, provided me a temporary room. As I could only stay there for a couple of weeks, I had to move to several other places during the last four months. Now, finally, they found a more permanent place for me and I am living with a German woman whose kids have moved out of the house already. Many others were not that lucky. Now, that winter is coming, it's getting even tougher to stay on the streets at night. If the project's claim for a self-administered center for migrants in Frankfurt keeps being ignored by the officials, people are going to freeze to death.

In Germany, the system is very tough and everything is very complicated. As you have no chance to manage all the administrative things by yourself, you are totally dependent on local people helping you voluntarily. Thankfully, I got to know a student working for the project „**Teachers on the Road**„, who accompanies me to my appointments at Ausländerbehörde, Jobcenter, etc., and acts as my interpreter.

Without knowing the language, you are like a blind person. The officials always tell me I'd have to learn German before I get a job. But they don't understand that it's a vicious circle: I already speak English, Italian and Twi (spoken in Ghana). To learn a new language, you need some quiet mind. Before you are able to do such mental work, you need to fulfil your basic needs. How can you concentrate on learning such a difficult language if you don't even have a fixed place to sleep and you don't know how to go on tomorrow? It's just too much pressure.

When you come to the **Ausländerbehörde**, you don't even get the chance to speak – they just tell you that they won't talk to you unless you come back with an interpreter: „Lady, go away and try to find someone who speaks German!“. That place is a foreign office dealing with foreigners all day – and they are not even willing to speak English! I don't expect them to speak to me in my mother tongue, it's just English and they probably know it all. They always know what I've said before my interpreter has even started to

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translate. But they just refuse to take notice of you if you come without an interpreter – just as a matter of principle.

But even if you have managed to get to know people and, maybe, join a project like Project Shelter, it's not easy to find someone who always has the time to join you in the waiting line. Sometimes you sit there for hours – and when they finally call you, it turns out that you have to return another day because some employee responsible is not there that day or has already left the office. I don't even think it's a matter of racism or something like that. It's just wickedness. When you go to the authorities, you can either be lucky and be attended by a friendly person, or you are unlucky and get the mean ones that just don't like strangers. These ones use the laws very arbitrarily, depending on whether they like you or not. I don't know how it is for other foreigners who have a refugee status, but I really have the feeling that they treat me like this because they don't want me to come here „just“ to find work and start a new life.

I also had some medical problems and needed a surgery on my knee. I went to two medical practices but after a while, they refused to treat me. They said that my **European Health Insurance** would have expired. But that wasn't true, you could even see it on my card. Once, when I came three minutes late for an appointment, they refused to talk to me – even though I was crying from pain and telling them that I didn't do it on purpose. The next time, I was in time but they let me wait for half an hour without even apologizing.

I finally found a hospital that agreed to medicate me and three weeks ago I finally got my knee operation. But that day the other practice sent me away, I regret that I have come to Germany. Is such a behavior just a matter of the employees' personal wickedness? Or is it rather a more general, strategical thing; a political directive from above that aims at making migrants want to leave?

I had to leave my son in Ghana, he's with my sister right now. Especially for women, the situation is really hard. I came to Germany because I wanted to get a chance to start a new life here and find decent work. As soon as I have a job and enough money to care for him, I will fly to Ghana and try to get my son here, so he can finally be by my side. Without Project Shelter, I would not know what to do and how to go on with my life. I'd give up and go back to Ghana. The whole system is just too tough. There's just too much pressure to take.

Rukaya K. was born in Ghana and lives in Frankfurt am Main. There, she is a member of **Project Shelter**, a voluntary initiative founded by students in early 2015. Its aim is to open a self-administered house to provide accommodation and social space for migrants, independently from their legal status. A petition calling for such a house provided by the city was signed by more than 8.500 people all over Germany – but there is still no help from the political officials.

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KATEGORIEN

[Außenpolitik \(64\)](#)

[Bürgerkriege \(24\)](#)

[Cyber Security \(52\)](#)

[Demokratisierung \(14\)](#)

[Drohnen \(15\)](#)

[Flüchtlinge \(17\)](#)

[Humanitäre Interventionen \(15\)](#)

[Innere Sicherheit \(32\)](#)

[Interviews \(10\)](#)

[Katastrophen \(4\)](#)

[Konferenz \(29\)](#)

[Militär \(31\)](#)

[Pandemien \(2\)](#)

[Podcast \(7\)](#)

[Popkultur \(22\)](#)

[Raketenabwehr \(1\)](#)

[Sanktionen \(8\)](#)

[Security Culture \(27\)](#)

[Sicherheits-Kommunikation \(15\)](#)

[Sicherheitskultur \(237\)](#)

[Sozialwissenschaft Online \(71\)](#)

[Stellenangebote \(55\)](#)

[Strategie \(12\)](#)

[Terrorismus \(60\)](#)

[Theorie \(5\)](#)

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WMD (10)

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