Romanian street beggars in Stockholm

A conflict between global city aspirations and informal livelihoods

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Abstract

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This thesis is looking into the issue of Romanian street beggars in Stockholm, Sweden. In the last couple of years there was an increase in the number of beggars in the Swedish capital, while most of them seem to come from Romania. This lead quickly to a national debate. The aim of the paper is to shed some light on this issue and see why it is a problem and for whom, looking at three main stakeholders: the state, the activists and the beggars. The theoretical framework for this project is mainly based on the concept of the conflict of rationalities, with Stockholm as an aspiring global city and those which are begging as livelihood strategy. The data is collected mainly through semi-structured interviews, informal interviews and personal observations. Also, the literature review provides context and brings similar examples for a better grasp of the situation in Sweden. The results show that Stockholm sends a branded image of itself to the world, while the new type of migrant is in conflict with this view. The activists try to make the life better for the beggars which are virtually not doing anything illegal. The Swedish state opened discussions with the Romanian state, but did nothing to integrate the newcomers. In this case, the beggars share similar experience in the city.

Key words: begging, livelihoods, global city, conflict, rationalities, Stockholm, Roma, Romanian.

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1. Introduction

2004. Dagens Nyheter, one of the main Swedish newspapers, is writing about a new type of beggar never seen before in the subway stations in Stockholm, namely a migrant beggar. The topic is discussed by the reporter with a police officer. He argues that the new migrants are coming from Eastern Europe and seem to be hungry and poor (Hellberg 2004).

This discussion become common in Sweden in the later years, as the research will show. The marginalized Roma minority in Romania embraced the joining of the European Union in 2007 by Romania and traveled thorough Europe for a better living. It quickly encountered discrimination, racism and violence. When Stockholm considered banning begging, it was not the first European country do to so. Why is the Swedish case getting so much attention then? What brought around 4.000 migrant beggars to Sweden in a couple of years? This emerging debate became a national subject both in Sweden and in Romania, especially through press articles, but also through governmental interaction or social action. The newly-discovered problem seems to exist because for some people street beggars, as representatives of the informal society, do not fit into the global city imaginary, while for other people the existence of the right of free movement, the right to the city, the ethnic discrimination and the still legal status of the begging activity, put the beggars in the situation of being wronged by the others.

In Romania begging is a historical activity and it is often connected to the Roma minority (Mihalache et. al 2013). After Romania joined the E.U. and its population benefited from the right of free movement within the Union, the case of Romanian Roma population begging in Europe emerged. At first Italy, France or Spain presented cases of Roma people coming from Romania involved in begging and illegal settlements and activities (Jansson 2010). But recently Scandinavia became a new destination for those who see begging as a livelihood strategy (ProTV 2015). The previous countries involved in this subject proposed various solutions, but none of them seem to be very successful.

Now, with the increasing number of Roma beggars on the streets of Norway, Finland and Sweden, a new debate emerges. For the poor Romanians appears the idea of begging as a livelihood, while for the Scandinavian governments appears the new challenge of dealing with street begging. Depending on the asked actor involved in this subject, "the problem", "the solution", "the rights" and "the responsible" have very different definitions.

I consider this topic relevant because it is quite new, being addressed very often in the Swedish society. Also, everything is happening in a period when far-left parties seem to gain more and more attention in Europe. So, here I am trying to shed some light on this discussion, looking at various stakeholders and their view on the subject. I do hope that this study will provide at least a new perspective on the issue of street begging in Europe, especially in the Swedish case. And by this the idea of collaboration between stakeholders, underlined here through the different world views, will provide better future solutions for everyone.

2. Motivation, Aim, Research Questions and Structure

2.1. Motivation

The academic motivation for the present thesis is driven mainly by the fact that there seems to be a lack of research in the field of street begging with the focus on Stockholm or Sweden. There are analyses of begging, in general, as it is for example Kate Swanson's (2010) *Begging as a Path to Progress: Indigenous Women and Children and the Struggle for Ecuador's Urban Spaces* or texts on the issue of Roma (and often involving begging too), as it is for example Braham and Braham's (2000) article on Romani migrations and EU enlargement. Even so, Staples (2007b, p. 163) do argues that there is little research in general on the perspective of those who beg. On one hand, there are few views on the case of Romanian-speaking beggars in the Stockholm area. Not to mention conducted by a native Romanian. On the other hand, there is a lack of studies looking into the issue of Stockholm's ambitions of global city colliding with the new type of migrant, which came here to beg for a better life.

This thesis is therefore bringing some light on the issue of begging in Stockholm in general, contributing to the developing public discussion, but on the other hand it also helps through telling the experiences of a migrant beggar in the global city. In many ways these areas can have a bit of novelty and as I go along, the findings can be unique. Without a doubt, a research conducted by a Romanian can a benefit the subject through a better grasp of the general context.

With this in mind is worth mentioning that my motivation for this thesis is driven too by the fact that I myself am from Romania and during the last years, as can be understood by now, one can see a growing number of street beggars in the Swedish towns. It was easily discovered that most of the new international beggars came from Romania. This quickly led to a national debate in both Romania and Sweden, involving various stakeholders from the governments to NGOs. From the beginning of the debate I was interested in this subject, even outside the academia. The fact that I am able to speak Romanian led to the idea of researching further the issue of street begging in Stockholm. Being already here and with most of the beggars coming from Romania I though is worth going deeper into this subject.

I have always been interested in how cultures differ and influence each other in the same time, adding this to my academic background in economics plus the subject of the current master programme, I feel that by researching the issue of street beggars in Stockholm originating from Romania would benefit this research area and would represent a personal challenge for me. Therefore, the motivation for this project was, if not always there, easy to find and pursue.

2.2. Aim

Following the motivation part of this thesis I can say that the main aim of the paper is to cast some light on the debate of street begging in Sweden and its implications. To be more precise, I want to focus on how begging as a livelihood strategy interacts with the global city imaginary

in Stockholm, how the city is changed by this clash. And in this sense I will look at for whom represents begging a problem or why it is a debate on this subject.

Therefore, I will analyze the involved stakeholders, their views and their solutions to this debate. When I am talking about stakeholders I am referring to: the governmental representatives and politicians of Romania and Sweden, the involved NGOs and other associations and the street beggars themselves.

For a better grasp of the subject I will focus also on the beggars' experience in Stockholm. Namely, I will try to find out how their day-to-day life is going on while begging in Sweden, what the reasons behind their move to Stockholm are and what their aspirations are. Here is the point where the thesis can truly benefit from my Romanian background and get insights on real experiences of the international street beggars.

By choosing this approach, I am therefore gathering perspectives on the street begging issue from three ways: the state, the activists and the beggars. This will also represent the further division of the analysis chapters later on. An approach like this I believe will ensure a more educated view on the issue of begging in Stockholm and will account for a fuller report on the current context.

So, in the end the thesis will represent an analysis of street begging issue in Stockholm, with perspectives from the three main stakeholders mentioned above, based on literature review on the subject followed by interviews and observations in the field.

Finally, I hope this to be a relevant report on what is the life of a street beggar in Stockholm originating from Romania. What were the reasons behind migration, how is the reality compared to the initial plans and what are the hopes regarding the future, all this in a context of global city ambitions of Stockholm.

2.3. Research questions

Following the previous pages on introduction to the issue of street begging in Stockholm, motivation for choosing the subject and the aim of the current thesis, these are the pursued research questions:

- *How does street begging as a livelihood interacts with the global city imaginary in Stockholm? How do the government authorities, non-governmental organizations and the beggars themselves view begging and what solutions do they consider?*
- *How do beggars originating from Romania experience begging as a livelihood in Stockholm? What are their aspirations?*

2.4. Structure

The current thesis is structured in ten main chapters. Frist, there is the Introduction chapter broadly setting the context for the subject of the thesis. Then, it's followed by this current chapter, which goes through the issues of motivation, aim and research questions, all looking at how this current research emerged and what is its main purpose. The third chapter deals with the theoretical aspects, laying the concepts necessary for the final analysis and including the literature review. Further, comes the methodology, looking into clarifications regarding the methods, the cases, the ethical issues or limitations.

At the middle there is the Context chapter, the fifth one, which goes a bit deeper into setting the current tone of the discussion regarding street begging in Sweden and Stockholm. This is a chapter of transition in the thesis from the chapters regarding the groundwork to the chapters actually analyzing the subject.

The following three chapters – The State, The Activists, The Beggars – look at the position of these stakeholders in the subject of street begging in Sweden. They provide actual answers to how is street begging seen, dealt with and experienced in the Swedish capital and present the main points of this study. These three chapters are the representation of Watson's (2009a) conflict of rationalities. The State, showing the view of the authorities, the Activists, being the middle man between the futuristic view of the state and the beggars, followed the Beggars, showing the experience of those in need leaving the homeland for a better life on the Europe's streets.

The final part of the thesis starts with the ninth chapter, Discussion and Results, focusing on presenting and discussing the findings of the study in relation with the selected theoretical framework. This will be followed by the Conclusions which will wrap up the thesis by underlining the answers to the selected research questions, what the case of Stockholm brings up and possible further analysis on the subject.

3. Theoretical Framework

As it was presented in the previous pages, the subject of street begging in Stockholm can pose complex questions with implications in various fields of study and social layers. The transnational debate which emerged was generated by an activity which is still legal in Sweden – begging. In this case, the whole issue has ramifications in migration, livelihoods, citizenship, nationalist movements, urban planning and so on.

This being said, in order to comprehend the complexity of this issue and to be able to look for answers to the pursued research questions, this chapter will set the theoretical framework of the thesis. Following the structure of the research questions, the chapter will be divided into three parts: the global city imaginary, migration for begging as an informal livelihood strategy and the conflict of rationalities and the critical urban theory. The chapter will end with a short summary, before moving into the methodology.

3.1. The global city imaginary

I argue that the issue of street begging in Stockholm is in strong connection with the image Stockholm wants to present about itself. Therefore, I think it is proper to discuss the concepts of global city and imaginary/place branding.

The concept of "world city" or global city was presented by John Friedmann and Goetz Wolff (1982) further debated by John Friedmann again in 1986. In simple terms they argue that the post-World War II societies in the capitalist system developed global processes which allowed the emergence of the global cities. The main argument is that the global cities are situated in core countries. The core countries are defined as countries which specialize in core production, using capital intensive technology and skilled and highly paid labor, according to Babones (2005, p. 32), quoting Christopher Chase-Dunn.

Fridmann (1986) recognizes that in Europe the classification gets a bit more complex. And the existing discussion about the classification and definition of a global city is confirmed by Block (2005, p. 43) too. Nevertheless, Fridmann sees in a global city, in the first place, a financial center (1), host of international institutions (2), which has a rapid growth of business service sector (3), is a major transportation node (4) and has an important population size (5). To these, he defines the world city as being a major site for the accumulation of international capital (6), a destination for a large number of domestic and international migrants (7), a city where there is spatial and class polarization (8), where the growth of the world city generates social costs that tend to exceed the fiscal capacity of the state (9) and as a place of global control functions (10).

On the other hand, Block (2005) talks about the global city and the issue of migration and multilingualism. He notes that there are more and more writings on global cities and summarize a definition of a world city given by Friedmann and Wolf in 1982 as: a city in the principal urban and core regions, where there is a concentration of world's capital, which a role in the

capitalist undertaking, a banking and financial center and so on. He goes on and argues that the initial definition, given here by Friedmann and Wolff, is too narrow and a global city has more characteristics than these, acknowledging that there is still a debate on the issue of definition of a global city. He says that a global city is more than what was understood in the 1980's, is a site of migration and a place where culture is created. Through migration these cities are sites of international culture. He gives an example saying that because of this London is not *really* England (Block 2005, p. 43-44). In his opinion a global city is a center of command in world economy, with high-powered service industries, a center of international finance, a site and market for development and innovation (11), a site of culture, with massive migration and ethnical, racial, religious, culinary and cultural diversity (12), with more than 10 million inhabitants and de-nationalized in terms of lifestyle (Block 2005, p. 45). According to him the cities that fit these descriptions can be London, Paris or New York, for example.

The discussion above lets the reader to understand that the global/world city-status is something desirable. And that can be understandable. At a simple view one can comprehend that besides awareness, permanent and temporary capital from the tourist industry, for example, will be generated. Following this line of thinking cities around the world are designed and reinterpreted to fit into the desired status.

For the formation of a global city I consider the discussion on place branding through imaginary brought up by Johansson (2012) as very relevant. I argue that in order for the cities to attract the capital necessary to allow them to develop into an interesting site for migrants and for international institutions, presented above as part of what defines a global city, they need to, and many are, use place branding. As Johansson (2012, pp. 3612-3613) presents, this is done through an imaginary – *"a projected image which is socially mediated through discourse and narration"*. Based on this Johansson argues that place branding has as the main aim the presentation of a sanitized and appealing image of the place in order to attract potential visitors or investors. This leads, in to the inevitable *"disregarding or erasing other elements"* which do not fit into the imaginary. As examples for place branding here are the regeneration projects.

Johansson (2012, p. 3623-24) also argues that branding needs to be viewed as politically constructed, representing the interests of an actor or group of actors. She further states that city marketing is in connection with the desire of a distinctive city and is defined, among other elements, by iconic architecture, landmark structures and hosting of events. She also mentions the space for symbolic consumption as one of the results from city branding. In the case she argues, the author sees the conflict between the promoted social equality and the *"marked-based based discourses of growth and competition"*. Finally, she touches upon the issue of living the brand, which comes with the fulfilment of the imaginary.

On a connected topic, Neil Smith (2001) talks about urban revanchism, as a set of urban policies implemented in New York by the police chief William Bratton and the Mayor Rudy Giuliani, starting from the idea of "zero tolerance". Smith (2001, p. 69) calls it a social cleansing strategy, while Mayor Giuliani called it *"Reclaiming the Public Spaces of New York"* and referred to it as *"cleaning the city"* of the *"scum"*. On this issue Kate Swanson (2010, p. 5) talks about an

era of revanchism. She says that in Northern American and European cities the municipalities are redefining what is acceptable and what is not in the public space. She quotes Neil Smith on this portraying the *revanchist city* as "*a vicious reaction against minorities, the working class, homeless people, the unemployed, women, gays and lesbians and immigrants*". She adds that this reaction is vengeful and coming from the right-wing and that the beggars are a target of the projects for urban revitalization and landscape aesthetics. In her example of Ecuador, Swanson argues that street begging intersects with "*urban revitalization and the push for global tourism*". She narrates how the municipal campaigns are seeing the beggars as offensive to the image of the city. She (Swanson 2010, p. 98-99) talks about antibegging campaigns in Ecuador, pointing out the idea which encouraged people not to give money to the beggars. As an example of the successfulness of the new urban projects and shift in the urban environment, Ecuador got to host the Miss Universe Pageant. A clear example of what can be discussed in connection with *festivalisation*, a concept which I will approach in the following paragraphs. The Miss Universe Pageant showed Ecuador to the world through the new and revitalized urban projects. In this image the street workers and the informality are perceived as a threat to the international tourism and the imagined urban ideal of a global city. She (Swanson 2010, p. 101) goes on an attacks the idea of revanchist urbanism, quoting Neil Smith saying that the model of urbanism from New York could become a *"template for global, postliberal revanchism that may exact revenge against different social groups in different places, doing so with differing intensities and taking quite different forms"*.

Further Swanson (2010, p. 102) acknowledges that the state is excluding the minority through a "fabricated vision". Here she does mention similar cases of exclusion in North America and Europe, where *"beggars, street children, and informal workers are not being displaced to build luxury condominiums for the middle and upper classes; rather, they are removed to make way for the global tourist class. (…) revanchism is driven by a reorientation of the city to the tourist economy."*. Also relevant, she (Swanson 2010, p. 103-104) talks about how the beggars and street vendors are seen in Ecuador as a threat to the "proper" meaning of urban space and how the situation is being dealt by the authorities through cleaning of "*the shame of the city*". For this she argues that the image of the city *"is at the heart of these exclusionary strategies"*.

With this in mind the discussion can be continued with the hypothesis of *festivalisation of urban policy*, developed by Häußermann and Siebel, quoted by Malte Steinbrink, Christoph Haferburg and Astrid Ley in their study on South Africa and the 2010 FIFA World Cup (Steinbrink et al 2011). They refer to the hypothesis as describing *"the instrumentalisation of large-scale cultural and sport events to support image building and catalyse urban development in European cities"* (Steinbrink et. al 2011, p. 16). The theory is refering to the metropolitan scale in general, but Steinbrink et al. showed how in the case of South Africa a festival *"further intensified the fragmentation and marginalisation of already disadvantaged groups"*. There were developments on infrastructure, but not aiming integration, similarly the mega event contributed to displacement, segregation and shortages in the housing sector. Their study was confirmed by others too (Benit-Gbaffou 2010, Czegledy 2009, Fleischer et. al 2013, Lindell, Hedman & Nathan-Verboomen 2010). More than that, similar research and

conclusions were achieved in the case of Brazil and its organizing of the 2014 FIFA World Cup and 2016 Summer Olympic Games (Schausteck de Almeida et al 2015).

So, the existence of the idea of a global city is clear, and with place branding, revanchist polices and festivalisation we saw how some aspiring global cities are brushing up their image in order to be perceived as desirable by tourists and companies. I argue that this is representative for the case of Stockholm, and it represents one part of the conflict of rationalities. Now, I am shifting the focus to the second part of this conflict.

3.2. Migration for begging as an informal livelihood strategy

In a place which aspires to attract global interest, Stockholm many types of people. Migration is a given for the global cities and I argue that this includes not only high-skilled workers. In this thesis I am looking also at those who have migration for begging as their livelihood strategy. First, let's look at what is considered a livelihood and what is the informal sector.

Rakodi (2002, p. 3-4, 7) starts his discussion on livelihoods by pointing out that households or individuals are considered poor when *"the resources they command are insufficient to enable them to consume sufficient goods and services to achieve a reasonable minimum level of welfare"*. He also quotes Chambers and Conway on livelihood saying that is defined *"as comprising the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living"*. Another definition of livelihoods points out that the concept is a recognition of the multiple activities in which the households are engaging in order to ensure their survival and a better welfare. On this the household is defined as *"a person or co-resident group of people who contribute to and/or benefit from a joint economy in either cash or domestic labour – that is, a group of people who live and eat together"*.

Considering these definitions Rakodi acknowledges that the poorest households are the most vulnerable ones and they are forced to adopt strategies which allow them to survive, not to improve their welfare. The author defines the livelihood assets as including: natural capital, human capital, social capital, physical capital and financial capital. The livelihood strategies are designed based on these assets and are influenced by a given context, leading to the livelihood opportunities (Rakodi 2002, p. 4, 9).

Lourenco-Lindell (2002, p. 22) also writes on livelihoods framework pointing out that its components *"consists of people's capabilities (such as physical health and education), tangible assets (stores and material resources) and intangible assets"*. Similarly, Staples (2007a, p. 9, 12) says about livelihoods that represent *"what people do to get by – both in terms of fulfilling biological needs and giving meaning to their existence"* or being more than the means of making a living, being a way of living for some, too.

Continuing the discussion about livelihoods and making an important point for Meikle (2002, p. 38-39) says that the poor need to survive the city. And often do it by joining the informal sector. Semi-legal activity such as begging, waste picking and prostitution.

Moving here the discussion to the informal sector and begging, Lindell (2010, p. 5) argues that the concept of informality was coined by Hart in 1973. She says that the main argument of the concept refers to *"economic activities that lie beyond or circumvent state regulation".* She also points out that the line between formal and informal economy is blurred, being impossible to split them in to different sectors. Also, she says that the definition needs to be adapted to each context and that if the activity is outside state regulation in informality, does not mean that is not regulated!

International Labor Organization (ILO 2002b, p. 12) argues that the informal economy is formed from informal employment (without secure contracts, worker benefits, or social protection). This applies to both employment in and outside the informal enterprises. Elsewhere (ILO 2013, p. 4) the ILO talks about informal economy as being broader than the informal sector, better capturing the diversity in reality. Here they define the informal economy as: *"all activities that are, in law or practice, not covered or insufficiently covered by formal arrangements"*, with an emphasis on the non-regulatory aspect of the concept. Also elsewhere (ILO 2002a, p. 2) ILO states that "informal economy" is used to describe an expanding group of workers and enterprises in urban and rural environment operating informally. Their activities are very divers and can include "*street vendors, shoeshiners, garbage collectors and scrap- and rag-pickers, paid domestic workers employed by households, homeworkers and workers in sweatshops"* etc. The focus of ILO on this definition is the diversity of activities incorporated in the informal economy.

Lourenco-Lindell (2002, p. 11-12) points out the conditions of those living in informality, stating that there is an increasing social exclusion, poverty and economic polarization in the African cities, in her study. As discussed previously in this paper she observes that this environment has often marginalized people, especially the international migrants. For her study, and relevant to the current one too, she chooses the following definition for informal activities: *"those activities that evade at least one aspect of state legisled regulations (such as lacking a licenses, evading the payment of taxes and fees or not complying with labour laws) or that are entirely regulated by rules other than legal ones enforceable by state institutions".* (Lourenco-Lindell 2002, p. 21).

Brown et. al (2010) approach the issue of informality arguing that the informal activity grows with the rising of urbanization. What can be interesting for our study is the concept of *street economy*, defined by Brown et. al (2010) as embracing economic activity which depends on its existence on access to the street or other publicly accessible spaces. The same source points out that people involved in the informal economy are often seen as "outsiders" by the rest of the society. Continuing this idea of undesirable people Watson (2009b, p. 153) argues that urban planning leads usually to social exclusion an anti-poor measures. This leads to an increasing informal sector. She also argues that in these conditions the new planning needs to acknowledge informal economy.

And just as a note, before looking into begging I want to point out to ILO (2002a, p. 19), who mentions that a study conducted in Romania showed that 46% of the unemployed population

is engaged in some sort of informal activity. In the rural part of the country people were engaging in informal activities "*for reasons of survival*".

Even if we saw that the definition of informal economy can be ambiguous, I argue that street begging is part of the informal economy. Mainly because of the non-state direct implication in this economic activity. And as we are going to see further, this activity in Stockholm is often joined by garbage collection or/and street vending, all part of informality.

Kate Swanson (2010) writes extensively on the issue of street begging in Ecuador. In her book she looks at the begging as a path to progress for the indigenous women and children living outside the urban spaces in the South American country. Her discussion is very relevant to my study.

She argues that the people in the small communities of Ecuador are begging and practice street vending because of the limited employment options. If begging was a survival strategy it emerged into a way to be "*included in the consumer culture*". She points out that begging can be seen as a clever activity, which creates opportunities like never before (Swanson 2010, p. 1, 10-11). She also says that those who resort to begging are the representatives of the social unevenness and the result of a history of racism, social exclusion and economic marginalization. These people have shifted to informal street work in order to improve their economic positions, therefore begging being one of the street-level subsistence activities (Swanson 2010, p. 2-4, 14). In these conditions those part of the indigenous communities of Ecuador are left behind and in order to move forward they have to migrate to beg in the big cities or even in other countries, ironically. This happens because there is no other option. Nevertheless, when they are migrating to beg, the beggars are often told to *"go back where they came from"* (Swanson 2010, p. 28, 50, 109).

Swanson (2010, p. 74, 77-78) states that the beggar was always seen as a problematic part of the society. She points out to a discussion about deserving and undeserving poor in Britain as early as 1600s. The author also acknowledges that the beggars are accused of exchanging misery for money, and for being "lazy" and unwilling to work. The beggars are often accused by the neighbors for begging only to buy bigger houses and trucks.

On this, Swanson (2010, p. 91-92) says that if begging is seen as the best alternative, we need to imagine then the oppression they are suffering. Which is not related only to discrimination, but also to resisting the renewal projects aiming to attract tourists. Swanson (2010, p. 111, 117) is ending her analysis stating that begging is helping the beggars, especially the youth, to go ahead, both educationally and materially. She also argues that in the case of begging one should go beyond the stereotypes, beyond seeing those begging as "lazy", "drunk", "bad parents" etc., in order to see why is this happening and what can be changed. On this, Staples also argues that begging is seen as a social problem that needs to be tackled. A constructed problem, a problem for both the population and for the image of the city (Stapes 2007b, p. 180-181).

Mihalache et. al (2013) look at the begging phenomenon in Bucharest, Romania's capital. They acknowledge that begging is a common practice in Romania and there are evidences of people trying to ban begging even in 1652. The article argues that the Romanian beggars make up for most of the beggars in Europe, while acknowledging that only some European countries have rules against begging. The article talks about panhandling, defined as *"the activity carried out by an able bodied individual, of repeatedly begging and asking for the mercy of the public"*. This activity is prohibited in Romania and punished with 1 month to 3 years in prison, but never fully enforced (Mihalache et. al 2013, p. 63).

In the case of Romania, the authors state that Bucharest has the largest number of beggars, being the most developed city of the country. In the communist times many went to jail for begging, but this is not happening anymore. Also, the authors notice a decline in the begging population in Romania after 2007, since most of them went to the western Europe. The article also touches upon the idea of organized begging. It is often unclear if this is the case of not, but from the interviews carried out in Romania most people seem to say there is a case of organized begging. The issue of begging and religion is again brought up in this article, there being a connection between those who beg in Romania and the choosing of churches for this activity. Finally, the article ends by arguing that the civil society together with the religious institutions are involved in solving this issue in Romania, but their efforts are not backed up by governmental programs.

We saw, therefore, that begging fits into the informal economy and it's often seen as a problem for the image of the city, being tackled with hate, bans and so on. This seem to be a common mix when it comes to begging all over the world. The discussion gets even more interesting when the component of migration is added. Migration is a central concept to the debate of street begging in Stockholm. Because almost all those involved in begging are not Swedish citizens. More than that, as the previous chapter presented, many of them are Romanian citizens. A fact which I can confirm through my own personal observations during my stay in Sweden. This was confirmed indirectly by the Swedish authorities by starting discussions on the issue with the Romanian state. So, migration is clearly an important factor here.

On the theory of migration Samers (2010, p. 325) acknowledges that there is no clear definition of a migrant, but argues that most international institutions see the migrants as *"individuals who reside in another country for more than three months"*. He (Samers 2010, p. 16-17) also recognizes the importance of work in the migrants' livelihoods and that many migrants get to work in the informal sector. Samers (2010, p. 16-17) talks also about the fact that there are many causes for migration and the research showed a connection between the cause of migration and the consequences of migration in the country of emigration. On this he points out an example relevant to our case in which in the richer countries the low-skilled and low-income migration from poorer countries is often seen as a bad thing by the governments. Samers (2010, p. 15) defines the low-skilled migrants as *"those who generally lack secondary or post-secondary education, or who lack the requisite professional qualifications to obtain 'highly paid' jobs"*. On this he also acknowledges that the low-skilled and low-income migrants might be 'forced' to migrate by the available economic options. Also important to

this study I think it is Samers' discussion of social networks. He (Samers 2010, p. 86) argues that social networks are more than 'migration chains'. He defines them as *"the ties that bind migrants, previous migrants, and non-migrants within and between the countries of origin and destination"*. If they are based on kin and friendship through villages are called 'strong ties', but if they are based on common cultures or ethnicities are 'weak ties'.

Considering these theoretical concepts and statements, I would think it is safe to say that migration for begging can be a new category in migration. It is not considered a formal profession, but yet is treated like one by those who practices it. And in consequences the street beggars of Romania do travel abroad to 'work' for a better living, being placed on the low-skilled and low-income category of migrant, a fact which makes them seen as "the others" and undesirable by some.

3.3. The conflict of rationalities and the critical urban theory

As I see it, there are two world colliding. On one hand, there is the city of Stockholm, which, through its representatives, wants to project a certain image of itself to the world, while aspiring to be global, voluntarily or not. On the other hand, there are the migrants who are attracted too by this status, the migrants who made out of their livelihood strategy begging in a foreign city. I argue that this fits into the conflict of rationalities, presented by Watson (2009a).

Watson (2009a, p. 2260, 2267) argues that the conflict of rationalities exists *"between, on the one hand, current techno-managerial and marketised systems of government administration and service provision and, on the other hand, marginalised and impoverished urban populations surviving largely under conditions of informality"*. Also, she states that the modern visions of the governments do little to help the poor, while underling that there is a conflict of rationalities between "*state and market and survival efforts of the poor and marginalized*".

Watson (2009a, p. 2261) also talks about the "good city" in the 20th century, hinting at the vision of Le Corbusier, and saying that this vision was used to prevent "*the invasion of less desirable low-income residents, ethnic minorities and traders*". She underlines that the master plan, zoning and urban modernism visions were used to promote this "good city" and this is still the norm in many parts of the world. "Urban slums" are defined by Watson (2009a, p. 2263-2264) as *"physically and environmentally unacceptable living conditions in informal settlements and in older inner-city and residential areas"*. Also on this, she points out that both in the Global South and Global North there has been an increasing societal division, caused in a great extent by the international migration streams and the growing number of ethnic minority groups in the cities and these are all effects of an urbanized and globalized world. She quotes Porter saying that the planners are in a constant conflict of rationalities, *"between the logic of governing and the logic of survival"*. She also points out that in this case those living in informality, outside the "proper urban environment" are just resisting the governmental rationality (Watson 2009a, p. 2268).

Similarly, Harvey (2008, p. 39) calls the 'point of collision' the conflict between the mobilizations of the deprived, the disconnected and the dispossessed, on the one side, and on the other, the ruling class strategies to instrumentalize, control and colonize social and natural resources, including the right to the city itself, for the benefit of the few. And this, together with what Watson calls the 'conflict of rationalities' represents a focal point in this study, putting face to face the state and the beggars with the activists in the middle ground.

This thinking fits into the critical urban theory, which according to Brenner (2009, p. 198) is made out of writings of leftists or radical urban scholars post 1968. His examples include Henri Lefebvre, David Harvey, Peter Marcuse or Manuel Castells. Regarding its characteristics, Brenner says that critical urban theory rejects the urban knowledge part of the statist, technocratic, market-driven and market-oriented perspectives. He argues that those who adhere to critical urban theory are seeing the urban space as in *"continual (re)construction as a site, medium and outcome of historically specific relations of social power".* He further states that critical urban theory has an antagonistic relationship with both the inherited urban knowledge and the urban formations. He also points out that critical urban theory involves the *"critique of power, inequality, injustice and exploitation, at once within and among cities".* Through this theory there exists the possibility of a more democratic, socially just and sustainable form urbanization, which is oppressed by dominant institutional agreements, practices and ideologies.

Elsewhere Brenner, Marcuse and Margit (2009, p. 176, 178) point out that the neoliberal forms of urbanization are being protested everywhere in the world by youthful activists. Based on this they call for a *"city for people, not for profit".* These ideas started already in the 1970's with names stated in the begging of the subchapter. It was suggested that the capitalist cities became themselves commodified, not only an arena where commodification occurs. Everything is constructed in order to promote the profit-making capacities of the capital, *"from buildings and the built environment to land-use systems, networks of production and exchange, and metropolitan-wide infrastructural arrangements".* They also underline that under capitalism urban space is continuously changing and is *"shaped and reshaped through a relentless clash of opposed social forces oriented, respectively, towards the exchange-value (profit-oriented) and use-value (everyday life) dimensions of urban sociospatial configurations"*, acknowledging also what Watson called the conflict of rationalities.

Similarly, on this, and directly connected to the topic of this study, Steinert (2009, p. 280) writes on the struggle over who "owns" the city, who can feel at "home" in it and who appropriates it. He argues that there are other uses of the city, besides those specific to the *"small number of players who can afford the stakes demanded on this level".* He says that temporary appropriations involving other classes can be poor people coming to the inner city *"to offer services, to beg and to just hang out".* Steinert (2009, p. 280, 289) goes further and says that *"cities are domination built in stone"*, underling that there is a physical domination, represented by buildings and streets showing where and how people can move in space and there is a domination in telling the citizens who they are, in relation to the powers that be. In this sense he says that city environment represents the dominant powers and they represent the

powerless, either indirectly or by omission. He underlines that the civic architecture has given way to architecture for entertainment and the cities have become 'fortress' for the rich and abandonment for the poor, being characterized by segregation and exclusion.

A concept which fights against this type of city is the right to the city, presented by Lefebvre in 1968. Lefebvre (1996, p. 158-159) famously described the right to the city as a cry and a demand, as a right for all *"of those who inhabit"*. He describes it as a right for the suburban dweller, for those who stay in residential ghettos, taking the train and having the same routine every day in the city. He says (Lefebvre 1996, p. 179) that the right to the city is not a right to the ancient city, *"but to urban life, to renewed centrality, to places of encounter and exchange, to life rhythms and time uses, enabling the full and complete unsafe of these moments and places"*. He (Lefebvre 1996, p. 195) also argues that the right to the city legitimates the refusal to allow oneself to be removed from urban reality by a discriminatory and segregative organization. He states that is the right of the citizen in an inevitable crisis of city centers based on segregation: centers of decision-making, wealth, power, of information and knowledge. The right to the city is a right for gathering together instead of fragmentation. It is a right to meetings and gatherings. The right to the city is a superior form of rights, it represents the right to freedom, the right to individualization in socialization, to habitat and to inhabit (Lefebvre 1996, p. 173-174). It is a right to participation and appropriation.

Lefebvre (1996, p. 85) points out that there is a global strategy which will put in practice a directed consumer strategy. He says that the planners will develop commercial centers and centers of privileged consumption under the name of *the renewed city*. The vision is involved in *"an ideology of happiness through consumption"*. He hits at a society in which the norm will be a programmed and computerized consumption. This places people in the role of producers, consumers of products and consumers of space. Lefebvre (1996, p. 109) says that the modern city intensifies by organizing the exploitation of the whole society. It is not a passive place of production or the concentration of capital. Lefebvre (1996, p. 148) feels that *"the city historically constructed is no longer lived and is no longer understood practically. It is only an object of cultural consumption for tourists, for an estheticism, avid for spectacles and alienated actuality, as kernel and virulality."*

David Harvey (2008, p. 23) talks about the right to the city too. He sees it as more than individual liberty to access urban resources. He points out that is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. He argues that is more of *"a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization"*. He sees it as being one of the most precious human rights and yet neglected. Harvey (2008, p. 24, 31) argues that urbanization is the result of the continuous fight of capitalism for finding *"profitable terrains for capital-surplus production"*. Harvey says that *"in a world where consumerism, tourism, cultural and knowledge-based industries have become major aspects of the urban political economy"* the *"quality of urban life has become a commodity, as has the city itself"*. He states that the shopping malls, multiplexes or the fast-foods have installed what Sharon Zukin called the pacification by cappuccino. He (Harvey 2008, p. 32-34) continues saying that under these conditions the citizenship and belonging have become harder to sustain. The working class is being removed from the city center and there is

an ongoing accumulation by dispossession laying *"at the core of urbanization under capitalism"*. In these conditions he (Harvey 2008, p. 37) acknowledges a global peri-urban social movement of opposition. He suggests that those adhering to this movement should ask for greater democratic control over the *"production and utilization of the surplus"*, getting therefore back the control of the right to the city. He argues that the right to the city should be both the working slogan and the political ideal.

Connecting the critical urban theory to the right to the city Marcuse (2009) states that the ultimate purpose of the critical urban theory is the implementation of a demand for the Right to the City. He says that the cry mentioned by Lefebvre comes from those marginalized, while the demand comes from those oppressed. The capitalism is the common enemy and the right to the city is the common cause. He also goes on and says that he is not concerned for everyone's right to the city, because some already have it and running it. "They" in this care are the financial powers, the real estate owners, the key political hierarchy of state power, the owners of the media (Marcuse 2009, p. 191).

On this, Don Mitchell (2003, p. 2, 4) says that the city is being transformed because of the fear of inappropriate users. He says that the civil liberties and the right to public space are already limited for homeless people, for example, in what is a pursue of enhancing the quality of urban life. He (Mitchell 2003, p. 6) also argues that the right to the city must be at the heart of any vision of a progressive, democratic and just world, opposing to what it is today. He (Mitchell 2003, p. 18-19) states that the city is today a site of exploitation by a dominant class, the space is produces for us, not by us. He quotes Lefebvre saying that the current geographical spaces need to be radically transformed. Mitchell (2003, p. 139-140, 152) also talks about 'disneyfying' space and place referring to it as creating landscapes in which every interaction is carefully planned. He points out that through the 'disneyfication' of the public space shout out both marginalized people and political movements. He (Mitchell 2003, p. 164, 166) also refers to revanchism as a powerful set of trends shopping urban areas, trends that are organized under the capacious banner of "globalization". In this world he argues that the image becomes everything, connecting this discussion to what was presented in the previous chapter. Mitchell (2003, p. 171) thinks that we are now creating a world where a class of people cannot be, no place to be. He (Mitchell 2003, p. 190, 229) thinks that the right to the city is a negotiation, like the public space itself and states that when all is controlled there is no right to the city, unless is you the one controlling your right.

Van Eijk (2010) joins the discussion and argues that the urban policies in the Western countries have become harsher towards the marginalized groups. She says that this is based on boundaries between the privileged groups, on one hand, and the marginalized, deprived, and sometimes ethnic groups on the other. On this she points out also to Smith's idea of urban revanchism, already discussed in this study. Based on this she argues that exclusionary policies are driven by economic insecurities and motives to accumulate capital through tourism and gentrification. This is driven also by national unity and identity. Also quoting Smith, she says that there is a *"criminalization of the everyday life of homeless people"* (Van Eijk 2010, p. 821, 825, 830).

Finally, Brown and Kristiansen (2009, p. 30) point out that there is an increasing of 'urbanization of migration' as a consequence and a cause of the growth of the cities, while they become crucibles of people, cultures and traditions. These cities are providing the best chances to create livelihoods, among others. The government offers little help to the migrants in finding accommodation and they therefore rely on their social networks. On this they point out at an important issue, namely the right to the city and migration. They argue that the right to the city is also the right of the migrants, their right to access the benefits that the city has to offer, and how best to promote awareness, representation and rights for transient population (Brown and Kristiansen 2009, p. 31).

3.4. Summary

The theoretical framework presented here is useful in the coming analysis of the data from Stockholm. I argue that the concepts presented here are central to this study. I believe that the Swedish authorities and the beggars are finding themselves in a conflict of rationalities. I think that the first ones are aiming to brand the city in order to be attractive for investors and tourists, while the later ones just represent part of the migrants which are usually attracted by this kind of city. Also, they choose this road as being their only option of international migration and informality out of poorness in their home country.

When these two world meet, the image of the city has to suffer, while a group of people is excluded from society through various projects of marketing the city. These, nevertheless, are in contradiction with what the critical urban theory sees as a right to the city for all who inhabit it, a concept especially interesting and important in a country which developed the welfare state, an inclusive state.

This discussion is relevant here because gives a fuller perspective on the issue of street begging in Stockholm and lays the concepts for the coming discussion. Underling the rationality clash and understanding city branding and informal livelihoods, gives ways for answers to the selected research questions. With this in mind, I am moving to presenting issues regarding methodology.

4. Methodology

4.1. Description of methods

Before going into the used methods I think I should restate the focus of this study, namely the study of the relationship between street begging as a livelihood strategy and the global city imaginary in Stockholm. This looks into who is bothered by begging, why it is a problem and who is involved in the whole issue. Nevertheless, I focus also on the beggars' experiences in Stockholm and their position in the street begging activity: reasons, expectations and reality.

In order to answer the research questions and to fulfil the purpose of the paper I use the following methods during the research process to gather empirical data, namely: semi-structured interviews, informal interviews and observations and literature review. Even if Warshawsky (2014) shows the value added to a study by using mixed methods, I think in the present study it would not be necessary to use more than intensive research methods because I believe that the current case study focuses mainly on the stories, experiences and relationships developed by international migration and street begging.

All the interviews are conducted mainly following the theoretical perspectives debated by Atkinson (1998) in *The life story interview*, by Berg (2001) in the chapter *Watching, Listening and Learning* and by Valentine (2005) in the chapter *Tell me about…using interviews as a research methodology*.

Also, the general research design is constructed based on guidelines by Clifford, French, and Valentine (2010) in *Key Methods in Geography* and by Ritchie and Lewis (2013) in *Qualitative research practice. A guide for social science students and researchers*. Both books are considered to offer valuable advice in methodology, used here especially for cases selection, ethical issues and limitations, besides completing the theory on research methods.

Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interviews are one important part of data collected for this study. They are mainly focusing on the beggars originating from Romania and living in the county of Stockholm. In this case, the purpose of these interviews is to capture the beggar's experience in Stockholm, the aspiring global city as well as their livelihood in general.

Also, semi-structured interviews were used when the two associations described in The Activists chapter were used. The purpose of the interviews in this case was to show how street begging is seen by those working with the issue.

Plus, the semi-structured interviews lead to information regarding the interaction between the street beggars and the NGOs and governmental representatives. In this way the semi-structured interviews offer data for answering both the primary and the secondary research questions, representing part of the main empirical material for this study.

Informal interviews and observations

The semi-structured interviews were completed with informal interviews. Living in Stockholm for more than two years at the moment of this study, and speaking Romanian myself, I encountered many begging in Sweden and talked with them about their situation. The informal interviews are relevant because offer empirical material for cases when the beggars cannot or do not want to join a formal setting. In this way, I could get answers and views on begging from different types of people, not being involved with HEM, for example. Therefore, the casual discussions with the beggars offered important information regarding their experience, as Warshawsky (2014) showed on his study in South Africa.

Similarly, personal observations and tracking in the field, were used for the thesis, since the study is conducted in the city in which I am living every day. This method did not only provide information on habits and interaction between beggars and the locals, but also helped with confirming information gathered through the interviews, semi-structured and informal, an important issue in research, pointed out by Berg (2010), for example.

Literature review

In order to get a wide context and deeper perspective on the issues brought up by the research questions I conducted a literature review on the selected books and journal articles. This already presented review offers possible answers for the relationship between begging and livelihood and global city imaginaries in Stockholm, but it also offers insights on the issue of street begging and the discussions connected to it.

Therefore, the literature review does not only deal with the primary research question, but it completes the interviews and observations with the theoretical framework and case studies from other parts of the world needed in the process of answering all the established research questions.

Under this method one can include the analysis of secondary sources or grey literature. This data which is outside the researcher's control is considered in this study especially for its ability to provide a valuable context for the thesis (White 2010, p. 75). So, newspapers alongside with local and national governmental reports or statements were used in order to widen the perspective on the Swedish context, and this material is mainly to be found in the Context chapter.

The search of the archive of Dagnes Nyheter, Svenska Dagbladet or The Local, provided some answers regarding when the debate about migrant beggars in Sweden started and how it developed. The articles are also valuable through their recent publication date, brining therefore a present-day feeling to the study. I believe that this is truly important for the thesis because is offering a strong background necessary to understand the future developments.

I have chosen to look at the archive of Dagens Nyheter and Svenska Dagbladet because they represent two major daily morning newspapers with historic significance and large circulation. The Local, on the other hand, is an online newspaper and maybe the most important English-language newspaper in Sweden. It's worth mentioning that I have used the articles of these newspapers only to point out dates and the existence of certain events regarding begging and, most importantly, governmental reactions regarding the issue. I have stayed away from using the newspapers' views on the subject.

4.2. Selection of cases

The interviewees for the study are in part recruited through gatekeepers. Their position in NGOs or other various organizations grant access to and trust with the interviewees. More than that, snowballing provided other interviewees by getting new contacts through the already interviewed people. This method as well creates a trusting relationship between the interviewer and the interviewees. These two methods of selection can add real value to the methodology as Berg (2001), Valentine (2005) and Warshawsky (2014) all showed.

These being considered, I underline that four in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted through the HEM: Hemlösa EU-Migranter association in Stockholm. The association provided both the context for analysis of the activity of NGOs in the issue of street begging in Stockholm and the framework for interviewing the Romanian-speaking beggars. The interviews designed together with the HEM team were conducted in Romanian, by me, joined by two of HEM's volunteers at Cyklopen in Högdalen, where the beggars came on Sundays to attend the free Swedish class given by the association. The interviews represent also research material for the organization since were conducted within their project "Documentation of violence against homeless EU-migrants".

Otherwise, there are the informal interviews conducted on my own. I can name here around ten valuable interviews which went further than a couple of questions. The areas where I conducted interviews were selected by considering that less populated spaces, which offered a better talking environment and also less people, making it feel that I am not interrupting the beggars while they work. Therefore, I chose to do interviews at subways stations placed at the end of the lines, for example. This can be referred to as 'on-site recruiting', according to Longhurst (2010, p. 109).

Also, in three other occasions I participated in interviews as part of the translation team. The questions asked were similar to my questions, looking into the experience of begging in Stockholm. In this way I could get yet another testimony on the life of a beggar in the city. I have applied these combined methods because I believe one needs to pay attention and diversify the sources in order not to get cases from the same social environment so in the end there will be more reliable results.

Finally, the interviews with Crossroads and HEM were conducted after realizing that the two organizations are the closest to the issue of street begging in Stockholm. HEM appeared at

various times in the Swedish media and was talked about in the academic environment, clearly focusing on the street beggars in Stockholm, while Crossroads is the division of the partly state-founded Stadsmissionen, dealing with poor migrants coming from Europe and third world countries, the closest the state got to the subject through an association.

4.3. Ethical considerations and positionality

Even if common background can facilitate interaction in research, I think that one of the important ethical issues here is represented by the fact that I myself I am a Romanian and not part of the Roma minority and this could have influenced the way in which Romanian-speaking beggars answered my interviews or my plan to approach them in general (Valentine 2015, p. 113).

More, the fact that I am a student conducting a research project could have influenced the power relations between me and the interviewees. Also, most of the street beggars in Stockholm are women and this could have contributed to the unbalanced power relations and their willingness to participate in my study (Valentine 2015, p. 113). An issue picked up in the following subchapter. Otherwise, all the interviews were conducted in Romanian language, without the help of a translator, and the anonymity of the interviewees was assured, in order to protect their identities.

Finally, being Romanian myself could have been a challenge itself, especially in terms of own assumptions. But on the other hand, if I acknowledged this issue and had it in control, the common language and the knowledge of the Romanian society were an advantage in interviewing the beggars originating from Romania.

4.4. Limitations

In terms of limitations, one problem with the current paper might be the fact that there are not too many previous studies done on the issue of street begging in Sweden, as I stated in the previous chapters, so one approach like this could be considered somehow too ambitious. The growing number of street beggars in Stockholm and Scandinavia is only in recent years debated in academia. But, nevertheless, the subject itself poses a lot of questions, so there are many different available approaches to this new problem which is making space in the research field.

Otherwise, most of the people approached for interviews refused to answer any questions, even if there was a safe and familiar context. Even if one can see many people begging around Stockholm, in this case was rather hard to get them doing an interview. The main reasons for this was that they are fed up with interviews, the Swedish media comes to them from time to time, while some people interviewed do get some money, but in the end nothing changes for them. One lady told me on this: "So we are going to talk for nothing?", implying no change for her life and also no remuneration.

The state officials were not considered for interviewing, because it would have been difficult to get in contact with relevant decision-makers. Therefore, I have chosen to see their position through the media articles picking up press conferences and interviews, where they explicitly talked about the subject of street begging in Sweden.

Nevertheless, I believe that courses like Urbanization and Environment, Migration and Social Change – A Life Course Perspective, Theory and Method, Swedish Geography and Master Thesis in Geography, all taken at the Stockholm University in the last years will offered the theoretical framework and research skills necessary for the successful development of this master thesis.

4.5. Research agenda

The planning of the thesis started towards the end of the Globalization, Environment and Social Change master programme in January 2015 with the beginning of the Master thesis in Geography course within the Human Geography department. Among others, the course established the topic and theme, motivation, aim, methods, preliminary research questions, the possible theoretical framework together with the list of references for this thesis. Also, the project proposal was sent and some context-gathering interviews were conducted.

Because of personal reasons the work on the thesis stopped in May 2015 and was resumed with varying intensity in September 2015 with reading of academic literature and secondary sources. Starting with the middle of October 2015 I began the part of writing of the theoretical framework from the literature review. Afterwards, the research work paused again until February 2016, when data collection, namely the semi-structured interviews and observations were conducted, followed by analysis of data, writing and editing before the preliminary submission to supervisor in the mid-May 2016.

5. Context: A national debate on street begging

Following the chapters which laid the groundwork for the current paper, I am continuing my study by analyzing the street begging issue in Stockholm on three levels – the state, the activists and the beggars. I believe that the general discussion will benefit from this delimitation because it allows the debate to go deeper on each of the stated levels, covering a wider part of the public debate and offering hopefully even more complete answers to the research questions.

The state is, without a doubt, an important stakeholder in the issue of street begging in Stockholm. By state I am referring from here to the local, regional, national government and politicians holding a public position in general. Mainly on the Swedish side. But the state in this debate is represented by the Romanian politicians and representatives as well. I think this delimitation is important because, as I said, I believe that the state is an important element in the whole issue of street begging. All the figures in the stated categories represent the official power in the debate and have the actual means to change the laws which may have an effect on the issue.

As presented in the starting chapters of the current thesis, I think that is interesting to study the way in which the state interacts with the studied subject, how the officials define, approach and act on the issue of street begging in Sweden and, especially, in Stockholm. What does Sweden's official perceive as "solutions" in this case and how does these "solutions" differ from other similar cases in Europe? This study aids the research question in establishing the "official" perspective on street begging in the debate which opposes, I argue, the perspective of some of the activists and the beggars.

Before going into the analysis of the state's position in the issue of street begging in Stockholm and Sweden I will set the context for the discussion. And I am doing this by studying the emergence of the public and national debate in Sweden regarding street begging. I go here in a chronological analysis of newspaper articles following the discussion, in order to get a better grasp of the evolution and the current situation of the issue in Sweden.

In a space where is taking place what I believe to be a conflict of rationalities, term used by Watson (2009a), Stockholm and Sweden became the stage for an ample discussion on street begging. With this chapter I plan to follow the development of this discussion and pick up on the official stances from the government representatives and the political parties, in order to better define their side of the conflict, the one coming from the state.

I believe that there is no doubt that there is an ongoing public debate on street begging in Sweden, if not the whole Scandinavia. It is hard to exactly point the moment when the public debate on street begging emerged in the Swedish case. Nevertheless, one article from 2003 in Svenska Dagbladet (2003), one major Swedish newspaper, points out that the end of the 90s brought up an increase in the number of beggars on the streets of Stockholm. The articles talk about 166 active beggars in 1999, with begging being legal. The same article underlines that from 45 cases of Romanian asylum seekers in 1999, the number reached 475 cases in July

2003. Most of the asylum seekers are part of the Roma community and declare that are harassed by the authorities, a reason not good enough for receiving the asylum in Sweden.

Another important Swedish publication, Dagens Nyheter (Hellberg 2004) wrote on the subject in 2004. Their article pointed out that there seems to be a new kind of beggar in Stockholm, coming from Eastern Europe and showing dramatic messages in the subway. The beggar was usually accompanied by other family members – often involved in playing music in the public transport. The police representative debating the issue said that none of the people they saw begging seem to be poor or hungry. The article showed that the persons in case came to Sweden with traveler's visa and were not doing anything illegal, as far as the police or SL representatives were concerned.

Comparing to what was to come in the present day, this was one rather rare article in the period, being from the same year most of the Eastern European countries joined the European Union, but still three years before Bulgaria and Romania joined the Union (European Commission 2015).

Continuing the search on the archives of the Dagens Nyheter one can see that the issue of begging in the subway system in Stockholm comes up again two times: once in 2005 (Torp 2005) and once in 2009 (Andren 2009). Both articles underline that there is no policy against begging in the subway. The topic is touched also by Svenska Dagbladet (2007) in 2007.

Stockholm News, a website presenting English news in Sweden, no longer updated, noticed in May 2010 that there is an increasing number of EU citizens begging in Sweden (Jonasson 2010). Thord Modin, the head of the intelligence division at the National Criminal Police is quoted saying that the reason for the increasing number of beggars is *"because we have new EU member countries where these people come from. It is about marginalised people living in difficult conditions"*. The article underlines that despite begging was not illegal in Sweden, people were deported to their Eastern European countries in about 30 persons/per year with 50 persons already deported in the middle of 2010. The reason why the beggars were deported in 2010 was said to be the fact that they cannot support themselves.

Nevertheless, this reasoning was attacked even at the time, on the point that there is no real reason behind deporting them (Ullman 2010). On deportation and antiziganism was speaking Maria Leissner too in 2010. She was part of the Delegation for Roma Issues and said that the Roma coming to beg in Sweden are being evacuated and deported on a false and even racist basis, not respecting the EU-laws on free movement (Stiernstedt 2010).

February 2011 brings up in Dagens Nyheter debate category an article on yet again a new vulnerable group in Stockholm, namely the homeless EU citizens. There seemed to be a new group forming in the Swedish capital, a group represented by poor Eastern European persons coming to Sweden for a better living (Byström 2011). The same year Stadsmissionen opened a center for these persons, named Crossroads. An extended interview and analysis of activity will be presented in the Activists chapter of this paper.

One of the first entries dealing with begging on thelocal.se, one of the main online newspapers for English-speakers in Sweden nowadays, was posted in January 2012. The articles underlines that the National Police Board of Sweden stated an increasing number of people involved in *"organized begging, forced labor and forced participation in thefts"*. (The Local 2012a). Related to this, the discussion forum of the same website shows entries from 2012 debating for the first time the issue of *"Homelessness and poverty on the streets of Stockholm"* (The Local 2012b). Just as a side note for the whole the Swedish case, the beginning of the same year brings up articles on Romanian and Bulgarian beggars in Finland (Yle 2012).

By 2012 begging started to become a popular subject in the Swedish media. These lines were just to briefly show how the actual debate was created. Of course, the picked examples are not the only ones for the period selected. But they are shown as relevant to the discussion of this chapter. Quickly people took sides on whether the begging should be banned or not or on whether these people should be helped in Sweden or just deported to their country of origin. Between 2012 and 2014 was a period of no action from the Swedish state. Besides the occasional deportations and the creation of Crossroads in 2011, there was not a specific action on begging. Even so, the number of street beggars continued to rise, a fact confirmed later on.

The debate really took of between 2014 and 2015, when the media reported that the number of street beggars in Sweden doubled in one year – from 2000 to around 4000. The survey was conducted by SVT, the Swedish Public Television, but the results can be rather confirmed by most people living in Stockholm, at least (The Local 2015a). And this statement is easy to support even with the huge number of media articles in Sweden on begging and connected issues. Searches of keywords like "begging", "beggars" or "tiggeri" (Swedish for begging) on the archives of Dagens Nyheter, Svenska Dagbladet or The Local, show tens, even hundreds of articles starting with 2014.

Since then the media covers from attacks on the beggars (The Local 2015b, 2015c, 2015d, 2015e), demonstrations "pro" and anti-beggars (Bergman and Andersson 2015, Ek 2015, The Local 2015f), discussions on banning begging (The Local 2015g, The Local 2015h) to the help given by various organizations to those begging (Andersson A. 2015, Carlen 2015, Gustafsson, I. 2015, Gustafsson, T. 2015, Liljedahl 2014).

In my opinion the debate peaked in the summer of 2015 when SL, the company administrating the public transport in Stockholm, approved for display in the metro stations the message of Swedish Democrats Party. The message said in English: *"Sorry about the mess here in Sweden. We have a serious problem with forced begging! International gangs profit from people's desperation. Our gover(n)ment won't do what's needed"*. The message was aimed at the tourists visiting the city, according to Henrik Vinge, the press officer of the Party, while SL stated that the message it does not break any law (Andersson C. 2015b, The Local 2015i). Quite violent protests quickly emerged and the messages were soon taken off by the protesters and were not put up again by SL (Aktuellt Fokus 2015).

By mid-2015 the Romanian media caught on the subject too. One of the main Romanian TV stations, PRO TV (2015), started in September 2015 a campaign called *România Scandinavă* (The Romanian Scandinavia) *"analyzing the Romanians living in the paradises of the Scandinavian countries, Sweden, Finland, Norway and Denmark and how these countries represent a magnet for Europe's migrants".* In several episodes the campaign looks at both "successful" Romanians and at those begging, tackling, among others, the ideas of organized and non-organized begging. Similarly, another major TV station, Antena 3 (2015), released a documentary on Romanian beggars in Sweden, called *Paradis pierdut, ofer recompensă (Lost paradise, offer reward).* Also, towards the end of 2015 Expressen from Sweden and Libertatea from Romania started a series of reports on the issue of begging in Sweden, called *Why the beggars come...* (Expressen 2015). The project looks at stories from Sweden and Romania and aims to go deeper in the subject.

So even one can feel a calmer period in this debate towards the end of 2015, mainly because, I argue, of another debate, namely on the refugee crisis which was quite relevant for Sweden (The Local 2015j), the subject of street begging got the media attention for quite some time.

To the media portretization of the subject I will get back in the next chapter when I will discuss the measures taken by the two states. But until then, now that the context is set, the new chapter can start to present the general state perspective on the issue starting with the theoretical concepts of global city, place branding, imaginary, revanchism and festivalisation applied to the case of Stockholm.

6. The State

This chapter aims to present the state's position regarding the issue of street begging in Sweden and with a focus on Stockholm. This analysis will offer the means to understand what the Romanian and Swedish representatives of the state understand through "solutions", what they see as problems and how Stockholm handles street begging on its aspirations of a global city.

The state's reaction to the subject is documented mainly through newspapers articles, official statements and interviews, connected the relevant literature. This is important because through media articles the paper gets current information on the state's position on the issue.

The following analysis is presented on several subchapters. With the discussion on the world city and the place branding, imaginary, revanchism and festivalisation being made, this chapter jumps right in to the case of Stockholm, connecting the theoretical concepts with real-life official practices. After this, the chapter will be completed by a look at the official stances and actions taken by the Swedish authorities related to the issue of street begging.

6.1. Global city imaginary in Stockholm

Is Stockholm a global city?

I argue that even if Stockholm not might be considered a global city, it surely fits parts of the definition and, definitely uses place branding, imaginary, festivalisation and one might say even revanchism to better its chances to get there. If it's not for the global city status, it's for the tourist industry and economy, which are blending in the same final imagined city picture.

I start my argumentation here by looking into the possible global city status of Stockholm. This will be followed by a presentation of local aims and imaginary. Festivalisation and revanchism will be considered in the case of Stockholm and the discussion will set the tone for the state's position on the issue of street begging.

So, considering the definitions of the global city detailed before I can say that one can easily understand that Stockholm is not a major financial center (1) in the world, nevertheless the Global Financial Centres Index (Financial Centre Futures 2015) places the Swedish capital on the 32rd place globally and growing. When it comes to hosting international institutions (2), Stockholm is the host of The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, an "*international organization that supports sustainable democracy worldwide*" (IDEA) and host of other independent international institutes like The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute or The Stockholm Environment Institute. The growth of business service sector (3) is internationally known (Davidson 2015, Munford 2016). Also, in terms of transportation (4), Stockholm has in Arlanda Airport an important transportation hub, with over 23 million passengers in 2015 out of which more than 18 million internationally (Transport Styrelsen 2015). The city is also connected to the rest of Europe by roads and train tracks, but also through its three major ports – Frihamnen, Nynäshamn and Stadsgården. Stockholm's

population (5) is estimated at around 897.000 people in 2014 and at more than 2.1 million including the metropolitan area (World Population Review 2016). And is estimated to be growing at more than 2.5 million in the following eight years (The Local 2015a).

If we consider international capital (6) as represented through current account balance as the sum of net exports of goods and services, net primary income, and net secondary income, then Sweden is in top 10 countries in the world in 2013, according to the data of the World Bank (2013), while Stockholm is the *"Home of global headquarters in Scandinavia"*, with 23 multinational companies from Forbes 2000 having their headquarters in the capital of Sweden in 2014 (Stockholm IT Region 2014). Further, in terms of migration (7) Sweden has one of the highest net migration rate (migrants/1,000 population) in the world with 5 migrants per 1.000 people in 2014, being placed 16th in the world (Index Mundi 2014) .   Also,   Stockholm   is considered by the International Organization of Migration (IOM 2015) as a medium-size city, but with a rate of 23% of foreign-born population out of total, being placed 14th in the world, close behind Paris for example. More, spatial and class polarization in Stockholm is a topic already discussed in the literature (Hårsman 2006).

Because of the problems in calculating proper numbers regarding the social costs and the fiscal capacity of the state (9) I will leave aside this point of the definition of the global city and I will move to the next one. The global control functions (10), according to Friedmann (1986, p. 73) can be referred to: major importance attaches to corporate headquarters, global transport and communications and high level business services, such as advertising, accounting, insurance or legal. I believe that these were approached by the previous points already.

Anyway, Stockholm is known for its innovation (11), and as we will see further on, it builds its image on it. In 2006 Stockholm was named *"the top region of Europe in innovation performance"* and it's a familiar topic for the Swedish city (Nordregio). Finally, for the last point of the above definitions of the global city I can argue that the ethnical, racial, religious, culinary and cultural diversity (12) are truly guaranteed in Stockholm by the high rate of foreign-born population and the national number of international migrants.

In the end of this subchapter I want to note that even if Stockholm might not completely fit all the points of the definition of a global city, and needs to have a higher population, for example, or to be a more important transport hub, it's surely not very far from it. What can be argued here is that if Stockholm is not yet a global city, is on its way to be one. It surely has what I can call "symptoms" of a global city and as we will see, it has the global city ambitions.

Imaginary in Stockholm

Following the discussion of Stockholm's status as a global city, I can state that the imaginary and place branding definitely exist in the Swedish capital. According to Visit Sweden, a company part-owned by the Swedish state, Stockholm is the self-proclaimed *Capital of Scandinavia* (Visit Sweden). So right from the start one can see the ambitions set in the Swedish capital, while Stockholm develops its global image on this motto, especially in the tourism-

related environments. An example of the commercialization of this perspective is the newly-opened *Mall of Scandinavia* in Solna Municipality. Further, another example of the global city ambitions in Stockholm is Kista, or locally-known as *the Silicon Valley of Sweden*, defined as an *"IT Mecca of Sweden"* (The Local 2016a).

The idea of festivalisation is present in Stockholm too. We can start here even so early as talking about the two Summer Olympic Games hosted by the Swedish capital in 1912 and 1956 (shared hosting). Further, Stockholm sent a bid for hosting a new edition of the Summer Olympic Games for 2004, but lost to Athens, Greece. The city was also considered in the race for hosting the 2022 Winter Olympics, but the bid was dropped in the end (The Local 2014a).

Further on this, Stockholm was hosting on Råsunda Stadium some games at the 1958 FIFA World Cup, UEFA Euro 1992 and 1995 FIFA Women's World Cup. More recently, through Friends Arena, the city was part of the Swedish cities hosting UEFA Women's Euro 2013 and was considered to be part of the hosting of UEFA Euro 2020. The same stadium will be organizing the final of the 2016-2017 UEFA Europa League. And all this only in football. But Stockholm is often host for other major events in Handball, Hockey, for example. As well as for the music industry with yearly concerts parts of the global tours done by major global artists.

With the previous paragraph I want to argue that Stockholm, through its representatives, has always had the festivalisation spirit, the idea to sell itself to the world, to be present a proper, modern, clean image of itself, so it can be in the center of attention. This was done also through regeneration projects, named by Johansson (2012, p. 3612-3613) as examples of *"erasing other elements"* not fit into the imaginary. A concept which can be connected to Smith's (2001) idea of revanchism. And getting back to the case of Stockholm, one can easily say many attempts at remodernizing the city, at cleaning the not proper places through urban redevelopment projects. In a very official and nicely-wrapped way Lindström and Lundström (2008) present parts of these ideas and imaginaries in Sweden, where the government aims for sustainability. To name a few urban redevelopment projects in Stockholm there is the already completed Hammarby Sjöstad and the future Kvarnholmen or Stockholm Royal Sea Port. Often projects like these were attacked by the public, as for example in the case of New Slussen (Ole settergren 2014*).* The main arguments are that the new development projects are either destroying the local cultural heritage or promoting a commercial space leading to exclusion.

To wrap up this subchapter I want to state that Stockholm is maybe not seen as a global city yet. Nevertheless, is often appearing in the debate of global cities. Babones (2005) places Sweden among the core countries, while Pacione (2009, p. 297) puts Stockholm on the Roaster of World Cities as a third-rank world city. Also, Brenner and Kell (2005, p. 328) declare Stockholm a beta world media city. And besides the literature, the examples above show how the Swedish capital already fits in parts of the definition of a global city. More than that, it is aiming to have this status, looking only at the official touristic campaigns conducted by the local government. The imaginary is there, the place branding truly exists, festivalisation is in place and revanchist urban policies can be seen through the urban redevelopment projects.

Stahre (2004, p. 69-70, 81-82) also picks up on the idea of global city and argues that *"for some decades there has been a conscious effort to give the city of Stockholm a more prominent place on the European and, to some extent, also the global map"*. On this he says that Stockholm is often not included on the list of the global city, but the more important question is to see how the globalization process is influencing the city. He says that the neoliberal urban policies are often put into practice and the dark side of this development is *"begging, criminality, poverty and homelessness"*. He points out that there are people with less money forced to move out from the central areas, a lot of immigrants living in the suburbs, while the old areas or harbors are restructured. Of course, he points out that a stronger service sector is developing and the shortage in the housing sector is real. He also acknowledges the change in the image of the city. He does argue that *"Stockholm has many of the typical features that can be seen in today's global cities even if it cannot be called 'a global city'"*.

Then, considering all this discussion, and this being the main point of the current thesis, I believe than that the emerging street begging issue in the town is nothing but a conflict of rationalities between the image Stockholm wants to send of itself and the urban livelihoods, a conflict which can be argued that comes with the status of the global city.

I presented so far the theoretical perspectives, with examples applied to Stockholm. I continue this chapter by looking at concrete actions and declarations of the Swedish government and official representatives of the state regarding the issue of street begging. I think it is worth mentioning that one needs to always have in the back of the mind the previously presented attitudes regarding the image of the city and Sweden. I believe that the following discussion benefits the thesis by presenting one side of the conflict.

6.2. The state's position on the issue of street begging

Going back to the main point of this part of the thesis, I believe that excluding the early 2000s cases of deportation, the Swedish state did not react in any way to the begging question by 2014. Then, the increasing number of beggars in the town seem to conflict with the visions Stockholm had for itself. Here I think one can distinguish three main "actions" taken or presented by the state in solving this problem: 1) Evictions and deportations, 2) Banning begging and 3) Official discussions.

Evictions and deportation

Around 100 migrants were evicted from a camp in Stockholm in February 2014 and given a free bus ticket to Romania. The eviction at Högdalen in Stockholm was carried out by The Swedish Enforcement Agency (*Kronofogden*). The migrants told the Swedish media that they do plan to come back. This was not the sole action (The Local 2014b).

Columbus (2015) writes in Södra Sidan, a local paper in Stockholm, about the negative effects of evictions on the health status of the evictees. The article written in October notes that evictions are more and more often this time. The Local writes in two occasions (2015b, 2015c)

at the beginning of 2015 about fifty then twenty beggars being evicted from the central part of Stockholm. The beggars were told that the area has become "too dirty". Towe Hägg, spokesperson for Stockholm Police said that this was a commercial area and sleeping there violated the Swedish Public Order Act. It's worth mentioning that the beggars were informed about alternatives for sleeping in town and that Elisabeth Ånestad, Deputy Police Area Manager for Stockholm City recognizing exactly the discussion picked up by this paper, namely that is difficult to help the very vulnerable people and to keep the streets safe and secure for others. Also, Maria Emanuelsson, lawyer for Swedish Police, said that the decision for eviction was made by the police, pointing out that the local government's authority is limited, needing the approval of the Swedish Enforcement Authority (*Kronofogden).*

An eviction which caught the attention of the media was conducted in Malmö at a "huge shanty town", home to around 200 people. The camp was considered to be a health risk by the Malmö city council's environmental committee. The person owning the place allowed the migrants to be there for about six months before filing a trespassing case with the police. The events happened in September 2015 and were followed by protests (The Local 2015d). On the now homeless again beggars from Malmö the Swedish Prime Minister, Stefan Löfven, said that they are not Sweden's responsibility (The Local 2015e).

Some beggars were also "helped" to go back to Romania in the beginning of 2015 (The Local 2015f). The action regarded approximately 60 beggars from Blekinge with the help of aid organizations, individual campaigners and the Romanian embassy. The beggars were promised accommodation and paid utilities in Romania together with vocational training. Evictions continued in Stockholm in 2016 too (Pålsson 2016).

Banning begging

This was also one of the measures considered by the representatives of the Swedish political system. In February 2015 the Swedish national coordinator for vulnerable EU-citizens, Martin Valfridsson encouraged people not to give money to the beggars on the streets, but rather to organizations in the home country (The Local 2015g). A survey conducted in the following month by Aftonbladet, concluded that 49% percent of the respondents considered that is a good idea to ban begging, showing "a dramatic increase in six months", according to The Local (2015h). Nevertheless, the Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Löfven said that his government is not considering such a measure.

Norway discussed a new law for banning begging in the beginning of 2015, but it quickly backed down after Swedish and global criticism (The Local 2015i). Nevertheless, In April 2015 the Moderate Party in Sweden opened the discussions on banning organized bagging, without clearly defining what organized and non-organized begging was (The Local 2015j). Even if the idea seemed interesting for some, it did not materialize. But still, the Swedish Justice and Migration Minister, Morgan Johansson said in June 2015 that the government is looking at a law which will address profiting from people who beg. He also pointed out that was not illegal to beg in Sweden, but the state will not accept three things: *"If the people begging are being*

used or exploited, if hundreds of spontaneous camps spring up on public, private or municipal land and if there is harassment or violence towards those who are asking for money" (The Local 2015k). Following this, on September 2015 Johansson stated that the state is looking into a law which will allow the landowners to evict beggars easier (Marmorstein 2015).

This discussion was not stopped here. In October 2015 the same Moderate Party asked for more power for municipalities in the begging issue. The Party said is looking for a revised Public Order Act (The Local 2015l). Also, in March 2016 Göran Persson, the former Prime Minister of Sweden between 1996 and 2006 and member of the Social Democrat Party which is leading the government, stated that a ban on begging should be introduced and that *"There is no freedom for a man to kneel on the street and beg"* (Eriksson 2016).

So the discussion about banning begging, organized or non-organized, is still alive at the moment of the writing of this paper. Otherwise, there are examples of studies saying the beggars in Northern Europe are not organized by crime groups (The Local 2015m) and cases of people forced to beg or jailed for organized begging (Wiken 2015, The Local 2016b)

Official discussions

A first hint at discussions between the representatives of the two political environments from Romania and Sweden was released in April 2014, when the Swedish EU Minister Birgitta Ohlsson said that the two governments were discussing the issue for months behind closed doors, but the talks failed. She said that Romania is not using properly the EU founds for integrating its minorities and pointing out that Sweden has *"a more empathic view of these people"* than Romania (The Local 2014c).

This subject came up again in January 2015 after the talks between the Minister for Social Security, Annika Strandhäll, the Minister for Children, the Elderly and Gender Equality. Åsa Regner and Rovana Plubm, the Minister for Labour, Family, Social Protection and Elderly from Romania. The practical result of the discussions was: *"a framework for how we will share experiences on successful measures".* Also, they stated that the local authorities in both countries will cooperate and have projects together in order to achieve the common goals *"for employment and social welfare"* in both countries (The Local 2015o).

Following this discussion, a Swedish delegation visited Romania in April 2015. The new talks set the subjects for cooperation between the two countries: children's rights, education and social welfare in general. The delegates pointed out that the cooperation aims to be a knowledge and expertise exchange, while Romania is interested to learn about the Swedish welfare. The agreement was aimed to be formally created during the summer. Martin Valfridsson accompanied the Swedish delegation which visited Bulgaria too (Metro 2015).

On 5th of June 2015 in Bucharest, Romania the two Ministers Åsa Regner (Sweden) and Rovana Plubm (Romania) signed a joined declaration on social policy. The declaration involves the vulnerable groups and deals with *"exchanging knowledge, experience, good*

practices and future projects" (Government Offices of Sweden 2015). This was the first agreement of its kind in the issue of street begging between the two countries. Nevertheless, it was quickly attacked on the fact that it does not involve the civil society, and the Roma NGOs (Svenska Dagbladet 2015). I would argue that this is a fair point, especially considering not so much of a change between the situation pre-agreement and the current state of the subject.

The next official meeting picked up by the media was in September 2015, when the representatives of the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL) visited Romania in order to find viable solutions for the repatriation of beggars and for helping them in finding a workplace in Romania (Stancu 2015).

Finally, on this, the Swedish Prime Minister, Stefan Löfven said in September 2015 that the cooperation of the two countries is heading in a good way, since the Swedish government made the first step and now there is a signed agreement between the two actors. He also pointed out that he hopes Sweden can help Romania in better accessing the EU founds dealing with this issue and that Romania should take care of its citizens, so they do not have to beg (Svensson 2015).

I want to finish this chapter by summarizing its content. I presented here what is understood through global city, place branding, imaginary, festivalisation and revanchism. I applied these concepts on the case of Stockholm and I showed that the Swedish capital has the "symptoms" of a global city and is presenting itself to the world using the mentioned concepts. I argue that because of this ambition the street begging debate caught so much the attention of the media and involved politicians. I believe that the increasing informal street activities, somehow specific to a global city, are contradictory to what Stockholm wants to be perceived. This lead to actions like deportations, evictions or banning bagging. What can be easily seen is that none of these actions are aiming to solve the initial problem. This was debated only when the official meetings between the governments of Romania and Sweden took place. Nevertheless, while the signed agreement between the two countries seems to be only formal at the moment, the other "actions" are still applied or considered.

This chapter addresses the first part of the conflict of rationalities referred to in the research questions, shows the state's position on the issue of street begging and presents what the officials see as solutions. But this is only one side of the story. The issues of right to the city, citizenship or livelihoods are too part of this debate and they will be approached in the following chapters. Frist, there will be the Activists, who, I argue, that represent the middle ground in the conflict.

7. The Activists

The previous chapter, The State, presented what I argue it is the Swedish state's perspective on the issue of street begging. I also say that the debate created around this topic and presented in the Context chapter of this thesis represents the conflict between rationalities. If the state is the first part of this conflict, I would say the beggars are the second part of it. Then the activists represent the middle ground, what unites the two perspectives and where the solutions can come from.

In this chapter, following the concepts of conflict of rationalities, critical urban theory, the right to the city and citizenship, I look at how the activists influence the street begging environment in the case of Stockholm.

The chapter presents the cases of two associations dealing directly and indirectly with beggars in Stockholm, Crossroads Stockholm and Föreningen HEM: Hemlösa EU-migranter. The organizations are presented through the interviews I have conducted with their representative and through information received from them and from the Swedish media. Here the discussion can be shifted also to what are the projects through which the activists are empowering those in need and how their work can be seen as in opposition to the state's position.

Finally, the chapter is divided in three subchapters, presenting the analysis of the two organizations studied in Stockholm, first Crossroads, which is still part of the state's apparatus and then HEM, the independent element in this study. The chapter will finish with a short analysis setting the stage for the final chapter before the discussion, the Beggars.

7.1. Crossroads

The information regarding Crossroads in Stockholm is provided by the extensive interview I have conducted with Mircea Budulean, EU Advisor, in the spring of 2015 and by the method book of the organization (Crossroads 2014).

The organization

Crossroads Stockholm (referred also as simply *Crossroads* too) opened on 1st of March 2011. Before this date the organization existed for about one year as a project called EU Citizen. The organization was created by the Stockholm City Mission, the City of Stockholm, the Swedish Public Employment Service and the Salvation Army, being supported by the European Social Found. The main purpose of the organization is to *"provide assistance to EU-citizens and third-country nationals with permanent residence in another EU country, living in poverty, homelessness and/or unemployment in Stockholm"* (Crossroads 2014, p. 8).

Mircea told me that starting with 1st of January 2015 Crossroads became a permanent centre in the Stockholm City Mission, after four years as a project. Nowadays the organization being founded approximately with 3.2 million Swedish crowns from the City of Stockholm and the

rest until approximately 9 million crowns from donations and income from the Stockholm City Mission. Considering this Mircea agreed that this is one of the ways of the government to act, there being various plans to tackle the issue of people in need.

According to Mircea, there are more Crossroads centers following the same methodology as the centre in Stockholm. He told me about centers in Göteborg, Malmö, Uppsala and Linköping. He also points out that there are similar centers in Denmark and Norway. What is worth mentioning here is that each of these "Crossroads" are independent, part of their own City Mission (Stadsmissionen) and are not collaborating directly with one another. All of them are, though, under the control of the humanitarian national network of Stadsmissionen. Mircea says that Stadsmissionen is a big organization and is covering all the social groups, while, as we already saw, Crossroads is dealing with EU-migrants and Third-country Nationals.

Crossroads Stockholm defines as its main idea finding ways to prevent social exclusion. Its method principles are defined as: culture sensitivity, empathy, dynamics, mitigation, participation, empowerment, comprehensive intervention, cross-sectorial cooperation (Crossroads 2014, p. 22).

Mircea argues that Crossroads is covering two major functions. The first function is dealing with the basic needs. This means two free meals per day, showers, laundry, some clothes and a room for resting. Then there is the second function of the organization, namely coordination and support. This is fulfilled through an information desk, where one can get information on issues like Swedish society in general, the job market, the Swedish authorities and so on. And then there are the volunteers helping the visitors with various applications to the authorities, with letters, with creating C.V.s, finding accommodation and so on. Also on this function there is the educational part. There are various courses available at the organization. Examples are: Swedish for beginners or English for the job market.

There are various projects done by Crossroads in cooperation with its partners. One example of this can be the "Winter Night", representing emergency accommodation for EU-migrants who live in acute homelessness (Crossroads 2014, p. 13).

At the moment when the interview was conducted Mircea said that Crossroads has 11-12 people employed and around nine volunteers. But he argued that the number of volunteers is always changing, depending on the ongoing projects. There were times where Crossroads had almost 200 volunteers simultaneously.

Problems

In terms of opposition against their work Mircea mentions that there were cases of vandalism at the location of the centre, but never personal attacks. Besides these, nothing else worth mentioning.

On begging

Mircea acknowledges that Crossroads is dealing with beggars from Romania too. And he gave me some approximate figures for this during our interview. He said that in four years of activity Crossroads received around 100.000 visits. 50% of the visits were made by citizens from EU. And around 25% of these visits were made by Romanian citizens. That means around 12.500 visits to Crossroads in the first four years were made by Romanian citizens. Out of these he approximates that 18-20% were also begging in Stockholm. But he cannot guarantee this number since there is no statistic on ethnic or material criteria, only based on nationality.

Crossroads Stockholm states (Crossroads 2014, p. 9-10) that is always creating statistics and an important part of its activity is to get to know the target group, as Mircea argued too. The statistics at the level of 2013 show what Mircea told me too, that the majority of the visits are done by people coming from Romania. One can also see there that an important group within this group is the Roma. Worth mentioning is that around 90% of the visits are done by men.

Mircea states that Crossroads Stockholm has no position on begging. The organization does not encourage, nor discourage begging, since they do not have a current alternative for it. Crossroads help people with everyday life, the association is not yet in the point where it can say to people to stop begging and come to work tomorrow, says Mircea. He states that Crossroads cannot go on the street to ask the beggars if they want to change something. He said that people need to come to the center and ask for help, if they are interested in changing and then the centre offers all its support to help the citizens.

He also says that when they talk to the people coming to Crossroads about begging they say they see this activity as a job, a way to make a living. He says that at Crossroads there is a great importance on the need of the individual. It is not the organization pointing out the need of the individual. They go on the idea of free will, on the idea that everyone is free to do what he or she wants, what he or she is capable to do.

On the customs of those begging in Stockholm, Mircea says that they are traveling through various countries and that Sweden is not the first, nor the final destination. Because these people are just trying their luck, they try to find a place where they can earn for a better life.

He says that begging is enriching the image of Stockholm. He says that Stockholm is a global city and a global city has beggars. He argues that the beggars give a more natural, human look to the city. The city becomes more real, is not "the city of glass" anymore. Through their existence the situation becomes more important and wakes up the city's consciousness. Mircea argues that now that the problem is here and not somewhere exotic, people are more interested in solving the issues. It is not about cleaning the streets, in this opinion, but about a long term solution.

On banning begging, Mircea says that personally he thinks this would be "too big". He believes that Sweden will never ban begging. He thinks that Sweden is quite engaged in the issue of

street begging and there is significant social commitment to this issue. If it was to ban begging those begging will be joining the criminal world and the connection with the target group would be lost, and then the issue becomes invisible, with no commitment from the political and social environment. More, those begging would have no improvement in their life, maybe only the public opinion will see an improvement in this case of banning begging.

Solutions

As a solution Mircea personally sees the collaboration with Romanian associations and/or authorities for the reintegration of the people who are begging in Stockholm. This is mainly because in his experience most of the people in Stockholm say to him that they want to go home, in Romania, and to be able to make a living there, close to the family. He thinks this is doable, especially after Rovana Plumb, the Romanian minister of Labour, Family, Social Protection and Elders said there are available funds and ongoing projects for the disadvantaged citizens in Romania.

On collaborating with Romania, Mircea says that Crossroads Stockholm is open to work with Romania on the issues of street begging. For the moment, in 2015, there were no ongoing projects or requests from Romanian, but he believes that there will be cooperation in the near future. On the other hand, he says that Crossroads and Stadsmissionen are often consulted by the politicians on these issues, so they are involved indirectly in the talks between Romania and Sweden, for example.

Even it seems that, for example, this target group does not belong to the groups that the City of Stockholm is required to work with, Crossroads and its stakeholders in Stockholm acknowledge that *"no one alone can handle the problems that EU-citizens and third country nationals are facing. This require an active cooperation."* (Crossroads 2014, p. 14). The organization also argues that its *"activities are also based on a long-term perspective and a close cooperation between various actors, who all jointly recognize that teamwork is a prerequisite for dealing with this king of social and economic vulnerability"* (Crossroads 2014, p. 30).

This subchapter showed the position of Crossroads, a state-funded organization, in the issue of street begging in Stockholm. To get a better perspective of the activist environment here I will switch the analysis to HEM, an independent organization dealing with street beggars in Stockholm, before ending the chapter with a short discussion on rights and activists.

7.2. Föreningen HEM: Hemlösa EU-Migranter

The information regarding Föreningen HEM: Hemlösa EU-Migranter (or The Association HEM for Homeless EU-Migrants), from now on referred simply as HEM, are coming from three interviews from 2015 which I did or took part of and through the newspaper articles in which the organization was often featured. All the interviews are with Sven Hovmöller, the vice chairman of the organization and chemistry professor at the Stockholm University.

The organization

In March 2015 Hovmöller told me that the organization was almost one-year-old. He said that the activities done by the organization are changing from one month to another, depending on what is the main focus at the time. He appreciates that in the very beginning the group preceding the association was interesting for those begging in Stockholm and living at Högdalen, close to Cyklopen, because the establishment offered the possibility to charge phones, toilets, some kitchen facilities and even social events like disco night.

Now, HEM offers, besides what was offered in the beginning, language classes. Swedish language for people begging in Stockholm was taught since April 2014 at Cyklopen. This and the general interaction with the beggars is done through the help of 8-9 interpreters, either Swedes married to Romanians or native Romanian speakers. He said that some of the people involved in the association receive even 100 calls a day from the desperate people around Sweden.

Hovmöller said that the organization is often involved in stopping evictions. He said that it happened to have help from law students explaining to those making the evictions once that they are not respecting the law. And in that particular case the eviction stopped. This happened in the autumn of 2014. He recognizes that the evictions stopped after that and he thinks that this is due to the changes required after the Swedish elections. So he says that HEM focused an extensive period on stopping the evictions, offering help in understanding the message coming from the authorities, help with moving, help in terms of understanding he law, organizing demonstrations against evictions or even providing toilets.

In terms of cooperation, Hovmöller said that HEM was contacted by the Red Cross in 2014, but the project did not materialize in the end. He also said that the Civil Defence League or Civilförsvarsförbundet got in touch with HEM during the last couple of months.

Hovmöller talked also about Crossroads in Stockholm. He said that one problem with Crossroads' model is that people are employed there, there are not only volunteers and this can create a problem in terms of power relations.

He also gave an example of a Crossroads volunteer in Uppsala which was not allowed to be involved outside working hours with the people she helped within Crossroads, even if the person in need was a young woman who gave birth in Sweden and soon after went back to living on the street. On this issue he feels that Crossroads is not really on the same side with HEM, which he finds a bit "unhappy".

Problems

Hovmöller said that HEM is not receiving any kind of help from the government, but he appreciates that the government is not putting so much effort in making the life of the

organization even more difficult recently. When asked what he meant by that he said that there are not so many demolitions of the settlements as there used to be in 2014.

On the problems discovered in their work Hovmöller mentions also that many interpreters are "anti-tiganists of various degree", exemplifying with a case in a hospital when an authorized interpreter did not translate for the patient what the doctor was saying but even more, accused and cursed the patient which was supposed to help.

Also, Hovmöller told me about how Neo Nazis in Stockholm made public the place where he lives mentioning that Hovmöller is helping the EU-migrants to put up tents, while he lives in an expensive neighborhood in Sollentuna and any actions against him would be applauded. He also said that other members of the organization were threatened and that Cyklopen, the place where they often met for Swedish classes those begging in Stockholm, was burned in the past.

In an interview for Dagens Nyheter (Spängs 2015) Hovmöller talks about how the banks are refusing the money from the EU-migrants, namely the money going to the Norwegian company printing the magazine sold by the migrants. He also said to SVT Nyheter Stockholm (Andersson 2015a) that there is a lack of empathy coming from the politicians asking people not to give money to those who beg or seeking to ban bagging.

On begging

Hovmöller says that there isn't an exact number of people begging in Stockholm or Sweden and this would make a research project itself. There are some numbers, he says, counting as much as 2.000 beggars. But the numbers are not clear. Is that for Sweden, Stockholm?

Hovmöller argues that the homeless EU-migrants are exclusively engaging in begging (with few cases even involved in prostitution), since the lack of other possibilities. He says that these people end up in Sweden because of the extreme poverty, exclusion, discrimination and lack of other opportunities, deriving from lack of education and non-existent life planning.

He realizes that most of the people come to Stockholm because they heard that here they can make some money. But it happened that they were promised jobs here, even by their own relatives. And when they arrived there were no jobs and were told that they had to pay for the implied free transport to Sweden. And to that amount interest was applied and they *"were basically slaved"*.

In terms of banning begging, Hovmöller says that Norway tried it in some provinces and it was hard to implement and not helping the situation in any way.

Connected to livelihoods Hovmöller from HEM gave an example of a family of 10, which is not that uncommon for those coming to Stockholm. He says the family will have the mother and father and, for example three other persons over 18 years old. Then this makes five family members able to work. Among them the statistics says 80% are unemployed, so statistically 1

in 3 will work. The family income would be, then, around 1.800 Swedish crowns. He thinks that this income would not be enough to avoid starvation, even with the lower prices in Romania. On this he argues if all the five adults come to Sweden, all of them can beg. They could get in 2014 around 150 Swedish crowns (SEK) per day for men and 250 Swedish crowns for women. In the present Hovmöller thinks is more around 75 Swedish crowns per day. 20 days of work would bring 1500 Swedish crowns per person, but can be even 2.000, because they beg more than 20 days per month. So there is 2.000 SEK per person, 10.000 SEK for the whole family. They would pay some things here, transport and food. But maybe they can send home about half of it. Back in Romania the kids take care of each other, or maybe an older aunt. It's very likely that the older girls will get pregnant themselves without adult supervision. And in these conditions, how can they go to school?

Solutions

Hovmöller thinks there is not a simple or clear solution to this issue. He says that this process is similar to the academic research. You start with not knowing an answer, then you have to collect data, make observations first to understand and test a hypothesis. And this is exactly why are you doing this. Because you do not know the answer. Nevertheless, he talked about a vison he has, and he says that in his vision this problem will not be solved by itself, nor by the Romanians in Romania. He thinks that Romania cannot solve this problem because there the people in need are much more than those in Stockholm and because Romania is a poor, anti-tiganistic and a very corrupt country.

He would like these people not to beg. There are other disadvantaged groups who come to Sweden and they are not begging. He thinks they can sell magazines, for example. The magazines offered by HEM with 25 Swedish crowns can be sold with 100 Swedish crowns and the profit of 75 Swedish crowns remains to the seller. The magazine itself costs 25 Swedish crowns only for printing costs, the writers being volunteers.

Hovmöller argues that by switching from begging to selling people get dignity and get in contact with the Swedish society, get to meet people. And this supplemented by Swedish language studies will help them get jobs in the end. In this way they will understand the Swedish society, how it works, without corruption, how you can solve problems without your fists. And maybe when they get all this knowledge they can go back to Romania, with broader views, and try to change their small village. You have now international experience, have lived, worked and interacted with a different culture and have new knowledge to apply in your home country. This would strengthen your self-confidence. To summarize he thinks that education is the key. The situation can be improved for a family if at least one member managed to get a job, instead of begging. And he believes that this is not so utopic, since, for example, one young man can get a job as a driver if he has a bit of experience and knows some languages.

Hovmöller also talked about the possibility of the beggars to be considered refugees, because in his opinion they fulfil all the conditions to be refugees. On the other hand, just general cooperation between Romania and Sweden at the governmental level would be fantastic,

Hovmöller says. He said that Sweden offered in the past to help Romania, but Romanian authorities refused. Also, Romania fails to get all the EU money designated to this issue and he thinks that Swedish know-how would be beneficial.

Hovmöller talked also about the begging experience in Stockholm, material which will be more useful in the following chapter, the Beggars. So before turning to it I will finish this chapter with a short summary.

7.3. Summary

I started this chapter arguing that the activists are in the middle ground between the state and the beggars in what Watson called the conflict of rationalities. I presented the critical urban theory followed by the more precise concept of right to the city and complemented by a short discussion on citizenship and those entitled to these rights.

I argue that the discussion generated by the critical urban theory does apply to the case of Sweden and Stockholm. And I think this is now even more clear, considering the concepts approached by the first chapter. If we call it place branding, imaginary, revanchism, festivalisation, just city, disneyfying or pacification by cappuccino, I believe we refer to the same thing. The same society which critical urban theory is fighting against.

We saw two organizations in Stockholm dealing with street begging, one partly state-funded and one independent. We saw the similar problems brought up by both Crossroads and HEM. What it is the main difference, I would argue, is the non-direct action of Crossroads (of the state), being not present in the street while is offering more of a general support for those in need. And this is the closest the state gets in this issue. While on the other hand, HEM, is directly involved in solving the issue of street begging, taking part on the street life of those begging in Stockholm. On this, Hovmöller from HEM said that he feels that Crossroads is not really on the same side with HEM, which he finds a bit "unhappy".

Nevertheless, what I think is similar and also crucially important is that both organizations are aiming for empowering the poor. Even if they use similar or different methods and if they have similar or different defined target groups. Crossroads and its stakeholders in Stockholm acknowledge that *"no one alone can handle the problems that EU-citizens and third country nationals are facing. This require an active cooperation".* The organization also argues that its *"activities are also based on a long-term perspective and a close cooperation between various actors, who all jointly recognize that teamwork is a prerequisite for dealing with this king of social and economic vulnerability"* (Crossroads 2014, p. 14, 30). So considering the two cases presented I would say this is a common point of the organizations, namely cooperation and education on long term.

This chapter shed some light on the debate of street begging in Stockholm, as it was aimed. Provides new perspectives, helping to answer how the global city vision interacts with informal livelihoods and what are some of the brought up solutions. Also, this ties the discussion with

the state's position presented in the first chapter. The whole debate will be completed with a view at the experience of those directly involved in street begging and placed on the second part of the conflict of rationalities.

With this in mind and before moving to the discussion about the beggars and their experience, I set the scene by mentioning Swanson (2010, p. 110) arguing that the revanchist urban policies are putting the rural-to-urban migrants into a *"more risky international migration"*. Similarly, Van Eijk (2010) pointing out that the international migrants now are seen as *"the others"* in the receiving country and are often accused of creating problems.

8. The Beggars

This chapter continues on the idea that there is a conflict of rationalities between the state and the beggars in the issue of street begging in Stockholm in Sweden. The previous chapters discussed the state's perspective on this problem and the middle man, the activists. The discussion was enriched by an analysis of concepts like the global city, urban revanchism, festivalisation, on one hand and critical urban theory, the right to the city and citizenship, on the other hand.

This is the final chapter before the discussion in this study, where the collected and presented data will be analyzed in relation with the set aim and pursued research questions. This chapter looks into the experience of those begging in a city aiming to be global, as I argued. This analysis completes the debate and offers the final part of the presented conflict of rationalities. This final perspective joins the other two presented in the previous chapters and sets the scene for the final discussion.

The current chapter is divided into six subchapters. Each of them will shed some light on the personal experiences of those Romanian-speaking beggars in the Stockholm area. The information provided here is collected through interviews I conducted with the Association HEM, analyzed in the previous chapter, through informal interviews gathered at meetings with HEM and at the subway stations around the town and through personal observations. Before ending the chapters sums up everything into a short summary and making the transition to the final discussion.

8.1. Background and reasons for moving

I believe that understanding the background of the beggars can provide a useful context to understand proper actions in the future. And in my experience the background and the reasons for moving to Sweden are very often similar.

One of the HEM's interviewees, a young girl, told me that she was married for two years and has a one-year-old child. She's not living with her husband anymore and because of this she's not talking with her family. Her child is in Romania and is being taking care of by a friend, which is pregnant herself now. She came to Stockholm because she wants to provide for her daughter. She argues that she will need a good education and for this she wants to make it possible for her to go to kindergarten and later to school. For the moment she gathers money for to send her food and diapers. She says she can gather maybe 500-700 SEK per month. She thinks she may not be here if was not for her child. She told me that usually one needs to know someone in Sweden before coming here, otherwise it would be very hard to adapt without speaking the language.

A 24-years-old man from the same part of Romania, in Argeş, told me that he is in Sweden mainly because he does not have a job. He and his wife are both here and they have two children who are in Romania with relatives. He came here through his in-laws and if it wasn't for his

children he would not need to come to Sweden, because he and his wife could live in Romania with what they make. They are here to provide a good future for their children. Before coming here, he was in Germany for seven years.

A 19-years-old boy told me he has been in Sweden for nine months. He came here with some friends from Romania, who showed him how to beg. He has it hard here, sometimes he argues with his friends, so he has been back to Romania, but he came back since there is nothing for him there. He is begging in Sweden mainly to have money to sustain himself. He wants to be able to finish school and take his driving license. For the future he would like to build a house, but he cannot find a job in Romania.

Another girl, in her 20's, told me that she is here to provide food for her two children. She says she has to do so, despite being in an unhealthy situation, having had five surgeries and missing a kidney. She says she would not be here if it was not for her children and she has to beg because they need money for school and clothes. She came here with her husband and would love to have the kids with her, but "where shall they sleep"? She argues that in Romania it's the same, she does not have a proper home and this would be her dream, to have a house somewhere, Romania or Sweden, and have her children close to her.

An older man told me that he has been back and forth between Romania and Sweden. Hi was here with his wife and his son too. His son is back to Romania now, because he has a newborn kid. He is here to send them money to pay for the bills and food.

A younger man tells that he came to Sweden because he has no house in Romania. He also cannot get a decent salary there; despite being employed at times. He wanted to finish his technical studies, but couldn't afford it until the end. He is looking for a better life here.

Through other informal interviews similar reasons were confirmed. I have been told in other three times that people are here because they do not have a home in Romania either. To this, the kids are a common reason too. Almost every adult on the street seem to have children at home, from his or her declaration or even from reading their messages on cardboards. Most of them call this pursuit "looking for a better life", because they do not have a home, or they have kids to sustain, or they lack a job. For many begging in Sweden seem to be the result of having "no other option".

8.2. Housing in Stockholm

One of the most visible problems with those begging in Stockholm is their visibility. By being involved in begging almost all of them are automatically sleeping under the starts, some in tens, some in caravans, until they are moved or the caravans confiscated.

One girl in her late teens told me that she lived with a Swedish Roma family for a while, an arrangement done through HEM. But she felt that they were not happy with her living there. So she left the house and went to live in a caravan. She paid the owner 20 SEK per day to live

there, as "one does". This was too much for her and now she lives in a tent by herself in the suburbs.

A young boy explains that he lived in a tent in his first visits to Sweden. Now he lives in a friend's caravan. But he has no possibility for a shower. For some time, he lived at a female Swedish friend which he met in the tram and talked with in Swedish which he learned at the conversational level by attending HEM's classes. But this arrangement for him was only temporary.

Another man tells that he lives in a caravan with his wife. They are soon to be parents. He says the conditions are poor and it's basically "just a celling", but he argues that this is still more than what he has back in Romania.

A 25-years-old girl tells me that she is living with her husband in a tent in the suburbs now. They used to live in a caravan, but the police took it from them. She says in a tent it's very hard, especially in her condition, since she's sick. This is actually why she dropped by HEM's classes in the day of the interview, to ask for a bigger tent, if it would be possible.

It seems that most of the people coming here are either coming with their relatives or do have friends or relatives already here. There are not so many people sleeping on the actual streets in the city, comparing with the total number of beggars. The most basic accommodation they find is a tent or an improvised tent. The luckier ones can buy a caravan, but these are quickly confiscated by the police or moved around, something which not happens with the tents. The luckiest ones are invited by Swedes in their houses. The Romanian media picked up on several cases and on the interviews I have been told twice about such cases. This might not be a common practice, but does exists.

8.3. Daily life

I argue that the daily life of a beggar in Sweden it's a topic rather unexplored. Besides the media editorials, few people actually try to get in touch with those begging, for various reasons, and to understand what it's what they are living.

A girl told me that when she's not begging she sometimes helps the community with translations, since she can understand some English from high school. She says she is here by herself, but know she knows most of the Romanian beggars in her area. She argues that she's often involved in HEM's projects. She does not like this life for her, though. The fact that she lives in misery and alone is not something desirable. She wakes up at 7.00 and travels more than 14 subway stations to go to her begging spot. On Sundays she comes to the Swedish classes or stays at the tent, "relaxing". She says that she shares her stories with other beggars at the tents area and sometimes she avoids saying that she's Romanian, to avoid any troubles, because she can speak English.

Another man tells me that in his free time comes to the Swedish classes at HEM, but he feels that these are not very helpful, since he cannot find a job yet. A day for him is something new every time. He does not have a place for begging, so he goes around town to find PET bottles, asking for money in the public transport or just trying to find some work. Sometimes he finds some work in constructions, some days per week. Maybe he can get 100-200 SEK per day. It happened also that he traveled to other cities for work. If he can send 500-1000 SEK to his kids per month, he's somehow happy.

Another boy tells me that he has been helped a lot by a Swedish girl. Nevertheless, sometimes he does not have enough money for food and he is stressing about it every day. At times he has a nosebleed and he's dizzy. He phoned his parents to tell them about this, they said he should go back to Romania, but he does not afford now the trip home. He tells me that he cries often. His days are filled with trips in the public transport trying to make money for food.

Another young man said that he worked as a machining in Sweden at times. He would like to learn Swedish and he does try on his own. But there is not so much time for this, since he has to look for food and money every day. He said that he has even been promised jobs if he was to speak Swedish.

A young lady tells me that the life in Sweden is hard, besides everything else she misses her children. If she is to make 100 SEK one day, she sends it home. There are days when she eats, days when she doesn't. There are days when she only looks for a place to get a bit warmer. She can do that because she does not have a place to beg, so she goes around the town to collect PET bottles, find food and so on.

I have been told by others that they feel the Swedes are very kindhearted, because of them they can have food some days. In some cases, there are people who befriended the beggars and bring them food daily. One lady told me that she does not remember when was the first time she changed her clothes. Another older man says that he uses the public institutions to go to the bathroom and freshen up a bit.

Many are crying when the family is mentioned and everyone I have been talking to told me that they are ashamed of begging. Some people told me they never begged in their whole life before coming to Sweden. Despite these conditions I have been told that they refuse to steal and that they never did it. They just want to get a better living, without making any problems.

8.4. Begging

Those begging are often criticized because of the risk of organized begging and are accused of working for others and "getting rich" in other countries. In the interviews I conducted none of the interviewees were working for someone else and they came here freely.

A young girl tells me that she begs every day from Monday to Saturday between 7 and 19. Sometimes she gets food on spot from others, sometimes she has to buy something herself. In

the past she has been begging in various spots around the time. She argues that when a beggar goes home to Romania, another beggar might rent his or her place for that period. Sometimes the places are occupied though force by other beggars, but there seem to be an unwritten law that if you find someone on a spot, you cannot just put yourself there.

In her begging days in the winter she was offered blankets. Also, some regular donors give her daily 20 SEK. But this does not happen for everyone. She told me that if she was to miss from her sport for a couple of days, the people from the supermarket where she begs, would get worried, since they care about her.

A man tells me that he, as other people, do not have a spot for begging, so they have to choose between gathering PET bottles or going through the public transport and parks asking for money. He says that he did begged in the subway in the past, but was often kicked out by the security. Now he focuses more on PET bottles.

Another man tells me that he is begging from 8.00 to 20.00. He argues that he can make around 700-800 SEK per month. Besides begging he sometimes sells flowers, hand-made object or the magazine from HEM. He says that after some time people recognize him and are giving him money every day.

A young boy tells me that he feels ashamed to ask strangers for money. He usually goes through the subway and trams. He argues that he's very often kicked out and has to walk alone some stations. He did find a place to beg in the past, but was kicked out from there by other beggars.

As I already said, all questioned said they feel ashamed to beg and do not like to do this. They would love to work, instead. Some lucky ones do it. They work day by day. But those less fortunate have to beg and it's their only option here, as they argue. They learn from relatives and friends where to sit and how to act. There are both people who previously begged in Italy or Spain in the past and people who are begging here for the first time in their life. I believe this to be influenced by their age. The most common amount gathered through begging is 150-200 SEK per day, but I have been told also sums like 60-80 SEK per day to as high as 700 SEK per day, the later one being rather an exception, in my experience.

8.5. Violence

An aspect of the beggars' life in Sweden which is not so much portrayed in the media, at least in the Romanian media, is the violence. Even if I define here violence as random acts of aggression and threats or serious beatings, the Romanian newspapers and the general public seem to rarely consider this part of a beggar's life.

A girl begging in Stockholm told me that her tent was recently destroyed by unknown people. But this was not as dangerous as the time she was threatened and followed 10 stations in the subway by a stranger. She managed to get rid of him by letting the subway security know about what happened. Also, she says that when she sits and begs is often spit on, cursed or told to go

home to Romania. When she was pregnant and begging she was offered to have sex for money or was kicked while sleeping. She said she also has stories of stabbed beggars and even people killed. Considering this she thinks that she is treated here worse than garbage.

More, at "home", in the caravans, it is very common that at night people come and shout, scream, scare the sleeping beggars, kick them and so on. She says that this happens a couple of times per month and the actions are carried out by groups of 10-12 people. Therefore, she feels unsafe everywhere, when begging, on the road and in her tent. She argues that the most dangerous is at night in the wintertime, when it's dark quicker.

She says that usually the aggressors are young Swedish man. But it happens to be threatened by "migrants" or women too. She tells that she never makes complaints to the police, mainly because she feels that this way she would expose herself even more. The most dangerous people are the Swedes who drink and take drugs, because they are out of control. And they are travelling at night in the weekends. No one told her about this face of Sweden.

She told me that she trusts the police and she's not afraid of them. She says they do their checks, but she feels that they would rather help her in need.

Another beggar tells me that he thinks everyone is racist here, in the subway, the police, the Swedes. He's often spited on and cursed and he's thrown out on spot by the subway security, without being asked any questions.

He also has a story of people coming and attacking the caravans with Molotov cocktails. He also knows Romanians which were hardly beat by drunk Swedes. He argues that Fridays and Saturdays are the most dangerous days because these are "the drinking days" and people are taking drugs too, these being the most dangerous kind.

Sometimes he argues with other Roma coming from Romania, but from the other part of the country. He argues that the other group is too aggressive when begging and are making a bad image for everyone. Also, that they are stealing begging spots from the others. They often argue when they meet in the town, but only verbally, though. He points out that people are living on the same caravans or set of tents depending on where they are coming from in Romania, and this is how the groups are made.

He feels that the police would help him and he respects them, because he does not have to fear them since he's not stealing or doing anything wrong. Comparing to his days in Germany, he thinks the German police is tougher and he told me that they take all his money when he meets them. Nevertheless, he feels that the general Swedes are more aggressive than the Germans.

A boy begging in the tram says that he is kicked around in the transport system by other Romanian Roam. They argue with him and he told other Swedes to back him up, but no one did. He even called the police, but he could not explain what happen so he gave up. He told me that people in the metro are bullying him, he is cursed and spitted on. Mostly these are drunks,

men and women. He heard of people being attacked at the caravans, but it did not happen to him, though. He says that he does not fear the police and that they would help him if he could talk to them. He is mostly afraid of other Romanian Roma and drunk and high Swedes.

Finally, on this, a young lady begging told me that she is being spitted on and cursed especially by drunk Swedes. Mostly men. One even pulled her hair in public once, but the other people looked away. She does not have any troubles with the police, though. The subway security scares her, though. The week before the interview one of them shacked her hard and kicked her out. She tells that at least three times a week someone attacks her during the day. And this happens especially during Saturdays. Therefore, she avoids bars and going out at night.

She was in Germany before coming to Sweden and she says that the German society is not so aggressive towards them as the Swedish society. Nevertheless, the police are more tough and she even went to jail for a couple of weeks for not having valid tickets on the train.

8.6. Hopes and future

I asked some of the interviewees about their hopes and the future. And one could easily see here the connection with the background and the reasons for moving.

One girl told me that she would leave Sweden tomorrow, but she is forced to stay here since she cannot get a job and does not have a house in Romania. If she was to have all the money she needed she would like to stay in Romania with her daughter. She would see no logic in coming to Sweden at all.

A man tells me that he and his wife would make 100-200 SEK per day in Romania and would maybe eat 40-60 SEK by themselves. The rest would be enough for them maybe, but this is not enough to offer a living to their children. He says that if he would get a job in Romania, if he was lucky, he would get maybe 1500 SEK per month. And even if he was to find a place to stay in Romania, these moneys would not be enough to make sure his kids go to school. He tells me if he would have a job and a house in Sweden, being here with his family, he would never go back to Romania, "for what?".

Another woman tells me that she would stay both in Romania and Sweden, it does not matter to her where as long as she would have the children with her. She would choose the place which would offer her a home and a job. She would prefer Romania only for the language.

8.7. Summary

Before moving to the discussion part of this thesis I would like to provide a short summary for this chapter, gathering here the main points from each subchapter.

First of all, the interviews were selected in such a way in which would bring out people from different environments. The interviews conducted with HEM were used, both also my own

informal interviews and interviews to which I participated as translator. Nevertheless, all of those encountered by me in the interviews were part of the Roma minority, with only one exception, a young man who said he was an orphan and was living with the "gypsies" as long as he remembers.

The reasons for which people come here to beg seem to be similar. Many of them beg in order to provide money for their family and are doing it so here because they have no jobs in Romania. This can be from the lack of education, the lack of experience or just generalized corruption. Also, they are here to be able to build a house, which many seem to lack even in Romania. For most of them Sweden seem to be their only solution.

The most common accommodation one can get in Stockholm is the tent. This usually does not bother the police if it's not placed on the actual streets. It is not the case with the caravans, which provide a little more comfort, but are quickly confiscated by the police, even if the beggars have paid for them. There were cases when some people were welcomed in their house by Swedes, but this is not an option or something to be searched, but rather an accident.

The daily life of a beggar in Stockholm is tough. Those who do have a place of begging are somehow lucky. They sit on the same spot for 12 hours a day, excepting the Saturdays or Sundays when they take a break. Those who do not have such a spot, they have to travel the town for PET bottles, a day job, or just begging in the public transport system. There are many days without food and possibilities to take a shower or change your clothes.

The begging spots are not owned by anyone, but there is an unwritten rule that if you see a person on a certain spot, you cannot just take his or her place when he or she is not there. The begging can provide around 150-200 SEK per day, but there are usually worse days and rather these than better ones. Some people begging are combining the begging with selling magazines, but are never giving up on the first action.

The violent acts are fully existent in a beggar's life in Stockholm. All of those asked told me about violent acts directed at them. Spiting and cursing are quite common. Some got kicked by random people or by the security at the metro. There are cases of people coming to the caravans and trying to set them on fire. The most afraid type of person seems to be the drunk Swede. Both male and female. There is at time verbal arguing with other Romanian Roma from different part of the country. What is most surprising for me here is that all of those interviewed said that they do not fear the police and that would rather trust them to help when needed.

The hopes and the future are strongly connected to the family, house and financial stability. Being in the situation to choose, many would not really care if they are in Sweden or Romania, they would just love to have a house together with their family and a stable job. I do believe that this chapter brings a lot to the research and allows me to move now the focus to the discussion and results, the last chapter of this thesis before the conclusions.

9. Discussion and Results

I have started this research project with the idea of bringing to light issues from the street begging debate developing in Stockholm. I believed it to be interesting, because at a first look it brings together different cultures on one hand, and the state and the individual, on another. I said that the main motivation behind this study was driven by the lack of academic research on the precise subject of street beggars originating from Romania on the streets of Stockholm. I saw the novelty in this subject in general, not only in academia, but in the whole Swedish society altogether.

This discussion chapter is structured I three parts, through which I am interested to look at three main points which can be made with this study. The findings are correlated with the theoretical framework, in order to be able to draw conclusions in the last chapter. First, I look at how the conflicting rationalities are meeting in Stockholm, then I move the focus to the beggars' experience in the new Stockholm informality and lastly, I try to find arguments from the critical urban theory applicable to the Swedish capital.

9.1. Conflict of rationalities in Stockholm

One of the main point of the thesis is represented by the idea of conflict of rationalities, coined by Watson (2009a). She talks about it as being a conflict between the logic of governing and the logic of survival. In other words, a conflict between those in power and those looking to get by. In the case of Stockholm, I argued that the branded global city image is set up by the local and national authorities is on conflict with the new and informal migrants, who are altering it. I studied this conflict on three pillars, looking at the state, the activists and the beggars through semi-structured interviews, informal interviews, observations, literature review and analysis of national media from Romania and Sweden.

The first research question was already looking into the idea of conflict of rationalities: *How does street begging as a livelihood interacts with the global city imaginary in Stockholm?*

The conflict clearly exists in the case of Stockholm. I argue that this happened because of the branding of the city. The local authorities' vision sends to the world an image of a vibrant Stockholm, open for business, a magnet for tourists and migrants. This attracts, nevertheless, a new type of migrant – the begging migrant.

This new piece in the Swedish society alters the constructed image. And this is maybe one of the most visible results of this interaction between rationalities, namely the large public debate on the issue of street begging. The coming of the beggars woke up past Swedish discussions on topics like ethnicity and belonging. But it also challenged the idea of a welfare state and who is entitled to it. The growing right-wing party in mid-2010s represented the voice of those skeptical regarding "the others", while the activists argue for an inclusive society transcending nationality.

The interaction between the two rationalities is a challenge for the authorities and for the whole concept of welfare state in general. It is also a challenge for the European Union and its right of free movement on one hand, and a challenge for its idea of unity in diversity on another. Begging migrants are not a totally new social layer in Europe, but the clash developed in Stockholm presents a new perspective, a perspective in which informality is coming back to a place which rather got used to strive for global recognition in properness.

Acknowledging the conflict, I can move the focus to follow up question, namely: *How do the government authorities, non-governmental organizations and the beggars themselves view begging and what solutions do they consider?*

Considering the branded image of the city and country, in general, the government authorities, even if not necessary a homogenous group, are clearly representing the logic of governing in Watson's conflict. That means they look into cleaning the developing improper image of the streets. This was tried in the last couple of years through evictions and even deportations, regardless that legally the beggars are not doing anything wrong in Sweden. Another "solution" developed by the authorities was considering banning begging. The proposed law did not pass. Finally, official discussions between the Romanian and the Swedish state were kicked off. But even here the focus is to repatriate those who moved to Sweden for begging. So, in none of these instances the Swedish authorities approached the idea of integrating into its society the newcomers.

While this is happening, non-governmental organizations, like HEM in Stockholm, look into finding ways to better the situations of those already begging in Sweden. Their solutions for integrations start with free Swedish lessons for beggars and continue with legal counseling and everyday help and translations. More than that, their initiative to transform the newcomers from beggars into magazine sellers or craftsmen, offers a new perspective for some, and for many it may represent the only alternative to begging in the Swedish capital. Nevertheless, both HEM and the partly state-founded Crossroads see as a future solution a governmental cooperation between the two countries with an accent on sustainable education and exchange of know-how in terms of social services. And this is acknowledged to be a long-term process which would require input from all the affected stakeholders.

Subsequently, the beggars see in begging their only option to provide for themselves and their families. I would argue that they would rather not see any conflict in ration here if there were not for the common attacks on them by common people or the continuous evictions, some Stockholm realities which are seen rather as just hate towards them. So, they are not so often asked about their status or views on the subject. For most of them a solution for their situation would be having a house and/or a steady job. They are not necessary interested into adapting to the Swedish society, seeing it rather as the place where they can make a living, but would be willing to move for good here if this would mean having their family without worries under the same roof.

Finally, getting back to Vanessa Watson, the conflict of rationalities emerged when the modern city met with unwanted migrants. The logic of governing an aspiring global city is clashing here with the logic of survival of international migrants. In this, both sides think they are not doing anything wrong, while following their world view. Even so, the social pressure developed a whole national debate on the issue. As we saw, varied solutions were proposed by different stakeholders, most of them not involving integration, but rather getting rid of the low-skilled newcomers. Nevertheless, governmental cooperation is considered after some years without solutions and even if this started late and it moves slowly, seem to be the only proposal for this conflict which would benefit more than one side.

9.2. Migrating for an informal livelihood in Stockholm

The migratory dimension of street begging is one novelty brought up by the case of Stockholm. Samers (2010, p. 16-17) touched upon the idea that many migrants get to work in the informal sector in the receiving country. And also acknowledged that the low-skilled migrants are usually seen as undesired by the governments of rich countries. But in the case of Stockholm those begging came here knowing they will be doing this activity and more than that, many did beg in other countries before coming to Scandinavia. In this sense they could be even called *professional beggars*.

So, even if informality and migration are not a new mix, begging itself, rather than informality, and migration would be considered something quite unique. Because one would assume begging means the very last option in terms of livelihood strategy, which would imply the lack of resources to migrate, nevertheless to see this activity as a job. But this is what a combination of social exclusion, poverty and the option of free movement created in Europe.

These people coming from Romania are, almost all of them, part of the marginalized Roma community. They encounter serious troubles in obtaining jobs in Romania and assuring a decent standard of living. They used to beg on the Romanian streets, but since Romania joined the European Union in 2007, they took advantage of the free movement right. Many of those begging in Stockholm have been previously begging in Italy or Spain, where the first wave of migrating beggars went. The economic crisis and the exclusion from these countries forced them to find another place "for work". So one can see the intriguing situation in which these people live. And this is why I pursued the second research questions, looking into their experience in Stockholm, namely being curious about: *How do beggars originating from Romania experience begging as a livelihood in Stockholm? What are their aspirations?*

Those begging on the streets of Stockholm and coming from Romania shared rather similar experiences in the Swedish capital. The analysis of their life in Sweden was structured on several layers, to better grasp what one deals with in what various Romanian press institutions called *the heaven of the beggars*.

First of all, confirming the idea of migratory begging as a livelihood strategy, nearly all the interviewees said they came to Sweden not by accident, but through a planned trip for a better

life. So all of them consciously decided to be involved in informality once they reached Sweden. The money gathered here are mostly obtained through begging, on a particular spot or through the transport system, or by collecting PET bottles. All of them argued that what they earn here is sent home to their family, this being the only income. They see Swedes as being more kindhearted than Romanians, even if they are often attacked on the streets or at the caravans and they still live in misery here, as they do at home. And this is rather unique, the fact that they migrated does not really change their accommodation or the consumption patterns, it only provides more capital for reaching the basic needs of the family in the home country.

In terms of living conditions, they all say they have it very bad. If they live in caravans, they risk to be evacuated and get the caravans confiscated. Many of them live in tents and some really luck got hosted, even if only shortly, by Swedish families. Nevertheless, all the interviewees suffered from violence: verbal of physical. Those drinking are providing the most dangerous situations for people begging in Stockholm. The attackers are not only men, but women too. Old and young. What I have found surprising is that the police are seen as an ally here, even if they are those enforcing the evictions. The beggars seem to see the police as a help in a situation of need, because they are not doing anything illegal, so there is no reason to fear the police.

The aspirations seem to be similar among the Romanian-speaking beggars in Stockholm. Most of them dream to have a house and the family close to them. This is the most common aspect of a desired future. Then it comes a steady job, so they can provide for their loved ones. None of them told me they want material things, besides a house. With few exceptions, based on age, I would say, all of them are here for their family's future. Children are central here. Many would like to go back to Romania and not return to Sweden. Even so, there were cases of people telling that they would stay in Sweden if this is the place which will offer them a house or a steady job.

As was showed in other places (Antena 3 2015), in Stockholm the beggars seem to group based on the county of origin in Romania. They do not really get in contact with the others and sometimes, if they are from a different group within the Roma community, they tend to argue when it comes to begging spots. An interesting study on the difference between migrations habits within the Roma community in Romania is conducted by Pantea (2013), showing that Roma migration is better understood at the community level with a focus on the social ties. Similarly, Mihalache et. al (2013) looks at begging and points out that it is a common practice in Romania, almost exclusively in the Roma community. So, the ethnic dimension must be considered in this issue. Other relevant and current research on the issue of Roma in Romania and Europe exists (see for example Bermann and Marinaro 2014, Fekete 2014, Marinaro 2014, Mădroane 2012, Mäkinen 2013, Roman 2014, Sigona 2015 and Woodcock 2007). A similar study was conducted by Swanson (2010) by looking at the indigenous beggars of Ecuador activating in the capital Quito.

Looking at the beggars' experience in Stockholm brings up a tough life and still improper conditions to live in. But maybe less visible, it brings up a way to get by, to secure a livelihood, which is daily approached with random acts of violence. If a beggar's living conditions are not changed much through migration, the Swedish informality does offer new perspectives for the family left at home. It does offer a chance to provide food for the children, a chance to attend school and a dream of building a house. It does not offer, though, a steady income or a plannable future towards which one can go.

Even if they would get enough money in time for a house in Romania, they do acknowledge that they would still have it hard when it comes to employment. Therefore, the last part of the interviews, approaching the future, was rather a confusing sad perspective for most of the interviewees. So, in these conditions, begging in Sweden is for many their only current solution to survive, despite all the problems involved around such activity.

9.3. Critical urban theory and street beggars in Stockholm

Finally, looking back at the critical urban theory and how it was defined, as a *"critique of power, inequality, injustice and exploitation, at once within and among cities"*, one has to look at how are beggars and their rights respected in Stockholm. On this aspect, what I personally find important to mention here is that the beggars seem not to ask for help from anyone. They do not reach out to institutions or NGOs, they just sit and beg. This is why, for example, I believe that Crossroads' creed of not approaching people on the street to offer help, does not do much for the beggars.

In this case, I argue that besides governmental cooperation, the activity of an organization like HEM is vital. Those begging on the streets of Stockholm are easily excluded in this new and modern type of society, clean, which attracts the global capital. But as Brenner, Marcuse and Margit (2009) argue, we should at least consider the cities as being for people, not for profit. The concept of the right to the city is clearly focusing on this. It fights for the citizens' right to create and inhabit the city. To be part of it, to live it, despite of their nationality, sex, race, religion. It's *the cry and the demand* for basic rights for those who live in a city, without any other questions regarding nationality. In this perspective evicting and deporting Romanian citizens from the Swedish partner state, it's just wrong. Even by the rules of a renewed city (Lefebvre 1996, p. 85). Stockholm can be a progressive and global city by including the right to the city in its views. There is nothing [morally] leading and futuristic in letting revanchist perspectives criminalize the everyday life of those placed at the margins of the current structure of the society.

Before moving to the conclusions, I argue that this situation can be solved only through cooperation, only with a focus on education and greater understanding, only with an open mind from all sides. I believe that cooperation between the Romanian and the Swedish state is vital, but if it's not joined by organizations which handle these people in both Romania and Sweden, and not joined by the beggars themselves, then it's just another imposed governmental-only world view.

10. Conclusions

As the previous section showed, I believed that the current thesis managed to provide answers to the pursued research questions and the aim of the paper, considering the theoretical framework and the designed methodology.

I argued that Stockholm finds itself in a conflict of rationalities when it comes to the issue of street begging. Those governing the city are trying to brush it up and one can see the global city development and aspirations here, while this attacks, inevitably I would say, the informal migrants who are begging on its streets as part of their livelihood strategy. I think that this is the main contribution of the current research – putting the issue of street begging in Stockholm in this frame of a conflict between two different rationalities, the branded and local one, respectively the informal and foreign one. I believe that this situation in Stockholm is quite unique, considering the previously examples of foreign beggars in Italy or Spain. This conflict puts extra pressure on an already sensitive topic. Nevertheless, having people, be them from other countries, begging on the streets and sleeping in the woods it is a situation unworthy of the so well-known Swedish Welfare State, as Emma Berglund (2014) puts it. Then the welfare system is transformed into offering welfare related only to nationalism, as Therese Börjesson (2014) says.

I believe that the current situation can be bettered only through communication and education. People leaving from Romania are doing it because of their limited chances at home. Banning begging in Sweden will not change their life in a better way. It will only "clean" Sweden, as Ecuador tried. I believe Romania needs help in dealing its poor population and I think Sweden can help with know-how in the social environment. One can see, as I also presented, that such talks started between Romania and Sweden, but they seem to move slowly. This is an issue which needs time and change in lifestyles, aspirations and customs. But talking about it represents a starting point. And I also believe that studies like this one, and especially studies at a higher level, like the one conducted by Djuve, Friberg, Tyldum and Huafeng (2015), offer new perspectives on sensitive issues, aspects which can be missed out by the public eye in a public and often misleading debate.

Finally, I strongly believe that a discussion between government officials has to start from the real experiences of those begging, not only from the why in which a city looks and how begging affects its image. I think this subject needs more research, especially on the experiences of those begging, because this kind of data brings to light the real problems. A deeper look at the recently migrating Roma's condition in Romania or at how Sweden deals with informality, would also benefit the issue.

I finish this thesis by telling one short confession that impressed me during the interviews. A young lady told me that when she goes back to Romania she sometimes sees people begging on the streets of her village, people who could not or do not dare to go abroad to beg, and some days she gives them money, because she can understand what they are living. For some begging it's truly the only option and their job, whatever that makes them.

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12. Appendix

Example of interview schedule used for the interviews with the beggars under HEM's project.

1. Opening
- Ask if the person speaks Romanian and introduce myself and my research.
- Ask if is fine to answer a couple of questions regarding his or her situation and talk about ensuring anonymity.
- Ask for permission to record the interview and mention that we can stop if it gets to tiring.

2. Interview questions
1. Tell me a bit about yourself how old are you and where are you from?

2. Are you married? Tell me about your family.

3. Did your family members come to Sweden with you?
   - Someone of the family living here?
   - Children to beg for?
   - Do they have a social network in Sweden?
   - How did you travel to Sweden?

4. Tell me about your life in Sweden?
   - Do you enjoy it?

5. What did you do in the last 24hrs?
   - How do you prepare for a normal day?
   - How do you travel?
   - How do you choose your spot in the city?
   - Do you ever change your location?

6. Do you ever feel unsafe & insecure? (Where is safe and comfortable you?)
   - At home?
   - Where you sit and beg?
   - Other spaces (Travelling)?
     a) ▪ In what ways is it unsafe (forms violence takes)
     b) ▪ Who is it that makes it unsafe
     c) ▪ Is there a particular example you have?

        d) ■ How did you/people react?

        e) ■ Did you talk to someone about it

        f) ■ Ask anyone for help? Police why/why not?

        g) ■ How often is this?

7. Which place do you feel most unsafe?
   - Why is that?
   - Who makes them unsafe?
   - Late at night?
   - Home/public?

8. Which people are you most afraid of?
   - Police/drunks/Swedish/roma
   - Why is that?

9. Are the spaces/ times you are avoiding?
   - Why is that?
   - Is that a personal experience or did someone tell you about it?
   - Are the places you would go to as a group but not by yourself?
   - Do you experience of violence more often as a group or being by yourself?

10. Comparing your life in Sweden with where you lived before (other countries) do you experience more or less violence in Sweden?
    - Is it better than before?
    - Is it unsafe in different ways? (different forms of violence, times
    - people)

11. Is there anything that would make you leave Sweden?
    - Get an idea of why they wanted to come?

12. Is this different to what you had heard about Sweden before?

13. What would be the best scenario for your life in the near future?

14. Is there anything you would like to add?

Note: During the interviews the questions are adapted. Mainly all the questions have as purpose to provide insights for answering the research questions of this thesis and of HEM's project. In this case the questions deal with the beggar's experience in Stockholm, with a focus on violence.