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Normalising welfare boundaries: A feminist analysis of Swedish municipalities' handling of vulnerable EU citizens

The so-called freedom of movement granted to EU citizens has made it easier for economically deprived EU citizens to seek their livelihood beyond the borders of their homelands and this has created one of our time's most socially excluded groups. In Sweden, over the recent years they have come to be known as vulnerable EU citizens. This article analyses what happens when there are no unified regulations as to how Swedish municipalities should prevent social exclusion among those who are not Swedish citizens. Our purpose is to study how officials and politicians normalize certain beliefs with regard to the (im)possibility of providing support to socially-excluded EU citizens residing in their municipalities. The material used in the study is interviews with officials and politicians in Västernorrland, a region of northern Sweden. The study shows that in the absence of common guidelines the normalization of Swedish citizenship has taken place as the basis of the rights to welfare. It is Swedish citizenship that provides you with access to the community; at the same time, it is this community which must be guarded. Prohibition of EU citizens is commonly legitimized by a concern for the municipality's citizens as if the closing down of the settlements makes social exclusion seize to exist or at least seize to be a problem for the municipalities. This narrative illustrates that it is the settlements and their flaws, rather than the inhabitants' social exclusion in a broader context that are perceived as problematic.

Introduction

One of our time's most socially excluded groups, at least among those we see in the Swedish society, consists of those that have come to be known over recent years as *EU migrants* or *vulnerable EU citizens*. The so-called freedom of movement granted to EU citizens has made it easier for economically deprived EU citizens to seek their livelihood beyond the borders of their homelands — including here in Sweden. Many of them come from Bulgaria or Rumania and live as homeless in the public spaces of Swedish cities. A problem arises in that there are no unified regulations as to how Swedish

municipalities should prevent this social exclusion among those who are not Swedish citizens. The division of responsibility with regard to providing support to these people is a matter of debate. Generally, in Sweden the State acts as the distributor of social support and it is normally perceived that the welfare state does not extend beyond its borders. In order to describe which group we refer to using the term vulnerable EU citizen[1]. We use the same definition as that was defined in the Swedish Government Official Report (SOU 2016:6) in which they are defined as "individuals who are citizens of another EU country and do not have a Swedish residence permit". We choose to use the term vulnerable EU citizen despite the fact that the group is popularly perceived as consisting solely of Roma. Although a large proportion of those who belong to the group vulnerable EU citizens are indeed Roma, this is not universally the case. However, in order to understand the situation, it is not possible to ignore the fact those persons who are categorized as vulnerable EU citizens are also in most cases categorized as Roma and that the category therefore accommodates (and partially conceals) a long history of antiziganism, persecution and discrimination (Steward 2012, Troc 2005).

The purpose of this chapter is to study how officials and politicians normalize certain beliefs with regard to the (im)possibility of providing support to socially-excluded EU citizens residing in their municipalities. The material used in the study is based on interviews with officials and politicians in Västernorrland, a region of northern Sweden consisting of seven municipalities (Ek et al. 2017). One of the most prominent images presented by the material is that there is very little room for solidarity and humanitarian efforts in the context of municipal administration and that the simplest solution from the point of view of these municipalities would be if there were no vulnerable EU citizens. Thus far, we can certainly all agree — it would indeed be wonderful if nobody was required to live under such trying circumstances. Unfortunately, such is not the case and, even if vulnerable EU citizens were to leave the Swedish municipalities, their situation would not necessarily take a turn for the better.

Socially vulnerable EU citizens in Sweden

With the advent of freedom of movement within the European Union, the Swedish interpretation of the EU regulations is that EU citizens have the right to reside in Sweden for up to three months without a residence

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[1] We have chosen to consequently use the term *vulnerable EU citizen* throughout this report, although a number of different designations are used to refer to the target group, both colloquially and in policy documents, newspaper articles and interview material.

permit (SOU 2016:6). If, as an EU citizen, one wishes to remain longer and obtain a residence permit, it is necessary to either have work, to be a registered job-seeker, a student or to have adequate funds to support oneself or to have full health insurance (www.europa.eu). Unfortunately, very few vulnerable EU citizens meet these requirements and consequently they do not have the right to remain in Sweden for longer than three months.

It is difficult to estimate how many vulnerable EU citizens are resident in Sweden at any given time but according to the official governmental report (SOU 2016:6) it is said that during the spring of 2014, there were approximately 2,100 vulnerable EU citizens in Sweden, rising to 4,700 during autumn 2015 before declining during 2016. That the presence of vulnerable EU citizens on the streets of almost all Swedish towns and cities has declined has many explanations but, simply because beggars are no longer such a common sight outside Sweden's shops and public buildings, it does not mean that the number of vulnerable citizens has decreased. They are merely elsewhere; either within or outside Sweden. One common explanation often cited as to why vulnerable EU citizens have become less of a fixture of our urban landscape is that there has been "a hardening of the social climate". This means that municipalities increasingly choose to evict EU citizens and prosecute them for setting up illegal camps, as well as the recommendation of the Swedish Government Official Report (Valfridsson 2016) that people should stop giving money to beggars and instead give financial support to organizations working for Roma rights in Bulgaria and Romania. The social democratic party decided on the congress in April 2017 that there is a need for a larger responsibility from the EU regarding this issue and that it is "unworthy" to be forced to make a living as a beggar. They also decided that there is a need for regulations that makes it easier to evict settlements and that is should be illegal to earn money on someone else begging (www.socialdemokraterna.se). EU citizens themselves testify that they now receive less money and are exposed to physical and psychological harassment and assault (Sydsvenskan newspaper 01.10.2016). Added to this is the situation arising from the refugee situation of autumn 2015, after which the Swedish Government chose to impose a stricter interpretation of the right to asylum, with the subsequent imposition of border controls. This has made it more difficult for all refugees to enter the country, including vulnerable EU citizens. Swedish authorities have also taken a harder line, with the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR)[2] contending that EU citizens have no right to enjoy the Swedish safety net. This means, among other things, that they have no right to social security payments and that

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[2] The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions is an employer and interest organization for all of Sweden's municipalities, county councils and regions.

Swedish municipalities are not obliged to offer school to vulnerable EU citizens that are children. However, social services are permitted to take the children of EU citizens into care where they are at acute risk of suffering harm; a situation in which the municipality in which the child resides has a specific responsibility (Swedish Social Services Act 2001:453). SALAR also states that municipalities are at liberty to use their right to establish bylaws in order to prohibit begging (Agnevik & Danielsson 2014).

The issue with vulnerable EU citizens is involving a number of national and local authorities but the issue is often referred to as belonging to the social services, at the national or local level. The social service in the municipalities is regulated by the National Board of Health and Welfare but is free to make local interpretations as to how to implement the regulations. Therefore the National Board of Health and Welfare's is one example of how Swedish authorities interpret their scope for action with regard to EU citizens. They state that it does not lie within the remit of municipal social services to meet the physical needs of EU citizens. Certain exception may arise with regard to emergencies and, in certain cases, contributions to travelling back to their homeland. From the perspective of the welfare state's responsibility and room for manoeuvre, it is therefore of interest to study how the Västernorrland municipalities view the presence of vulnerable EU citizens, how they have chosen to deal with the issue and their reasoning with regard to social exclusion and the responsibility of municipalities[3]. This says something about the contingent dilemma facing the welfare state and the manner in which officials navigate in such a context.

As vulnerable EU citizens fall outside of the necessary criteria used to access the right of citizens, they have no right to receive financial assistance or social welfare — leaving them entirely outside of the Swedish welfare state. SALAR makes the interpretation that according to the Social Services Act, a municipality has a responsibility as the place of domicile of those staying in the municipality but who are not Swedish citizens. According to the Act, as the place of domicile, a municipality only has responsibility for responding to acute situations and for the provision of emergency assistance, meaning that an individual who is not a permanent resident of the municipality does not have any right to income support (Agnevik & Danielsson 2014). The Act also

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[3] In a Swedish context, the responsibility of municipalities is of particular importance as Sweden, despite being a unitary state, has both a strong central state apparatus and extensive municipal self-government. Sweden's municipalities, county councils and regions are part of a multilevel system in as much as Sweden is a member of the EU. As Sweden has delegated certain powers to the EU, municipalities are embedded in various ways in a system in which what a municipality may or may not do is also formed by EU institutions, something which also applies to socio-political areas in which the EU has no unified social policy

states that where it is possible for the embassy of the person's homeland to assist its citizens, the place of domicile shall assist with funds to travel to the embassy/consulate in Sweden, although in specific cases the place of domicile may provide funds for a journey to the homeland itself.

Normalisation, privilege and exclusion — a theoretical setting

In our analysis, we have chosen to use the term normalisation as a central concept in investigating and, at the same time, challenging those processes that in a Swedish welfare-state context have come to define what is considered "normal" (Fahlgren et al. 2011; 2016). Such processes of normalisation covertly create both inclusion and privileged positions (e.g. white, man, Swedish, middle class) while at the same time producing inequality, discrimination and oppression based on the power structures inherent in categories such as gender, race/ethnicity and class (Giritli Nygren et al. 2015). Taking previous studies on normalisation and exclusion as a point of departure, this provides some form of setting for the perspective taken in analysing the results obtained. By facilitating an analysis of what is taken for granted and naturalised in the discourse — in this case on vulnerable EU citizens — normalisation becomes a useful term for investigating how inequality and oppression is created and maintained in organisations and society as a whole.

When Foucault describes how "the normal" as a discursive construction has become a new power structure, joining the ranks of previously established societal power structures, he points to how, during the nineteenth century, the terms norm and normality bring something new to our way of thinking about ourselves and how we relate to one another. He shows how phenomena such as norms and normality are not a given and that it is possible to uncover how they emerge within those relationships of power that arrange our world (Foucault 2008). This also makes the study of these phenomena part of this arrangement, as it becomes involved in issues relating to the nature of politics and ethics, both with regard to how they are formed and how they might be transformed. The terms norm and normality are thus central to an understanding of processes of normalization in as much as they combine scientific, technical and political notions of what constitutes the individual and the community and how these work. It is therefore of interest to discover which preconceptions exist regarding vulnerable EU citizens and how these should be understood.

In his groundbreaking study of norms and the normal, Canguilhem (1989) points out that the Latin word norma means a carpenter's square, thus a straight and true angle which does not deviate in any direction. Already, in

this general formulation, it is clear how the concept of the normal easily glides between, or rather unites, an ideal and something actually existing and how elusive and fluid the meaning of "the normal" therefore is. This means that normativity does not express the soul of a people and cannot be seen as an inner essence contained within a population, nor even as a social construction that a population can rightfully see as its own (Fahlgren et al. 2016). In order to ensure society's continued existence, the population — along with its reproductivity, mortality, health, hygiene, etc. — is controlled and moulded through various forms of normalizing power techniques. Many societal institutions have important normalizing functions, for example the family, school, healthcare, the police and social services. In this way, "the normal" is shaped in specific contexts and thereby creates both opportunities and restrictions with regard to people's actions, identities and ideas, both in the form of privilege and obvious positions of power and in the form of repression and discrimination.

Modern states equate citizenship with nationality, thus normalizing nationality as a part of the essence of citizenship. Here, it is possible to draw a parallel with Balibar's (2008) discussion of the relationship between nation and citizenship, in which the nation-state does not necessarily in itself constitute a community but should instead be viewed as a structure making it possible for certain communities to arise. In his essay, "Citizenship without community", Balibar (2004) discussed that the universal meaning of human rights is contaminated by the fact that real rights are still connected to citizenship and the national state. Today's immigrant-politics show, according to Balibar, how the universalism of the national state is in conflict with itself, and how the community of citizens actually is grounded in discrimination (Balibar 2004, 64). In this sense it is possible to claim that Balibar takes the step into opening the black box of community asking what "the speculative concept of community means" (Balibar 2004, 65). Asking questions about the generic notion of the common is, we would say, to ask questions about what is actually normalised under the heading of citizenship communities is also a questioning of community grounded in an "inside" and an "outside". Balibar thinks that community could be thought differently, and not in the simple dichotomy of including/excluding arguing that it is not exclusion that forms the deepest level of alienation but, in a certain way, inclusion itself insofar as it goes hand in hand with a normative fetishization (förtingligande) of being-in-common (Balibar 2004, 69). In the context studied here, there are two such structures orbiting one another; one Sweden the nation-state, with its Swedish citizenry, and the other the European Union with its EU citizens. Balibar also points out the paradox inherent in the nation-state in that, on the one hand, it played a key role in creating and facilitating the idea of universal human

rights while, on the other, its very existence makes it possible for us to ignore the universality of those rights (Balibar 1994). When human rights, as is so often the case in the context of the welfare state, are linked to civil rights, those who do not belong to the citizenry are also excluded from their human rights. Exclusion is thus a fundamental aspect of the nation-state, one which not only creates a divide but demands that this divide be defended. Therefore, it is also important as a researcher to attempt to understand how those working within the framework of such institutions think about and view the various issues. As in the case on which this chapter is based, where we approach local government officials and politicians in order to investigate how they describe their own and their municipality's work on the issue of vulnerable EU citizens.

Approach and analysis

One approach that is well-suited to reviewing and revealing normalization processes in relation to how politicians and officials discuss their municipality's treatment of vulnerable EU citizens is Bacchi's (2009) critical policy analysis. This means that we see policy creation or the lack of policy on certain issues, as an important instrument of control that therefore requires analysis and discussion, instead of something taken for granted or viewed as "neutral". Bacchi identifies three interconnected and overlapping kinds of effects. Firstly, there are the discursive effects which follow from the limits imposed on what can be said and who can say it, when and where and with what authority and what is left silent. Thus "the problem representations and the discourses that frame them make it difficult to think differently" (Bacchi 2009, 16) closing off and leaving alternative ways unexplored. Secondly, there are the subjectification effects i.e. the ways in which subjects and subjectivities are constituted in discourse. Discourses make certain subject positions available — stigmatizing some and "exonerating others and keeping change within limits" (Bacchi 2009, 42). Bacchi draws attention to dividing practices, for example, unemployed versus employed or Swedish citizens versus EU citizens and how these can create members of the targeted groups as responsible for the problem. This may work to disempower those targeted, drawing attention away from the gendered, racialized and disabling structures which shape the possibilities of their lives and reinforce the existing power relations. Thirdly, there are what Bacchi calls the lived effects i.e. the material impact of problem representations. Policy representations of problems are also materially affecting our lives (Bacchi 2009, 18). This deals with focusing on what is represented as "the problem" in a specific issue; on the common assumptions behind this specific representation of the problem. It is also a

matter of analysing what remains unproblematized and whether it is possible to approach "the problem" in some other way. At the same time, it is an analysis that clearly focuses on the lived effects created by the representation of the problem and on how this representation of the problem is produced, disseminated and defended. This means that we as researchers not only analyse those solutions that the policies, politicians and officials state that they wish to achieve but that we also critically search for the assumptions on which the formulation of the problem is based. Such an approach helps to identify how identity categories and target groups are constituted. Bacchi (2009) contends that the state, through its policy procedures and actions, is an active participant in the creation of constructs, stereotypes and subject positions; the construction of the problem having consequences for those individuals a policy is aimed at.

The material in this chapter is based on 15 qualitative interviews with 9 officials and 6 politicians where selection was made based on the two principles of snowball sampling, the interview subjects position and nomination (Faraquharson 2005). One municipality in Västernorrland declined to participate in the study on the grounds that the issue of vulnerable EU citizens was an issue seen as not currently affecting the municipality (Ek et al. 2017). All respondents were contacted via email or telephone and asked if they would be willing to participate in the study. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The interviews have been open discussions touching on, among other things: the relevance of the issue in the municipality; whether it was something that in the interview subject's experience was on the political agenda; and the initiatives underway for the group — with the emphasis on the respondent's reflections and thoughts regarding the municipality's handling of vulnerable EU citizens.

In order to study how problems are represented, we gave no precise definition during the interviews of what "problem" or "issue" the municipalities should/could/must address, rather this was allowed to develop through the respondents' own stories and was thereby defined by them. The quotes presented in the text should be viewed as illustrations of those tendencies we found in the interview material.

Categorization, problem representation and solutions

Based on the analysis we carried out, it appears that the category EU citizen, and specifically vulnerable EU citizen, is not yet normalized. Those we interviewed searched for their own comparisons and other categories and explicitly called attention to the absence of established ways of understanding the current situation. Many wished that somebody, perhaps SALAR, would

produce a national regulatory framework that defines their room for manoeuvre and how they should go about doing the "right" thing. They are currently left to reach their own judgements on how to interpret legislation and regulations and to define what is and is not their responsibility, all without any praxis to fall back on. They are looking for order and attempting to legitimize the actions of their municipalities through whatever discourses they have to hand. In the search for "order" they use categories such as vulnerable EU citizen versus Swedish citizens in order to interpret the legislative regulations regarding rights and this becomes a dividing practice (Bacchi 2009) that upholds and reinforces stigmatisation and differences.

In the process of attempting to understand and interpret the situation, the respondents normalize and reproduce certain discourses. It is for example clear that, in the day-to-day life of officials and politicians, national and Swedish citizenship takes precedence and this is continually normalized in the limitations imposed on European citizenship. If, for example, we attempt to see which communities the two orbiting citizenships give rise to, we can see that it is the Swedish citizenship that forms the basis for the invocation of any human rights, rather than the European. The community that European citizenship gives rise to is linked to categories such as guest workers or tourists. Equating the group of vulnerable EU citizens to guest workers is done for a variety of purposes, both to declare the importance of freedom of movement in relation to work and in order to prove the impossibility of understanding the group through any of the existing and available categories. One of the respondents problematized this point of view:

> […] these are of course people that we here in Sweden treat in much the same way as a 19-year-old girl or guy working as a bartender on Cos; behave yourself or pay for your own journey home, or ring your mum. Which is of course one way to handle it but do we have a greater problem in as much as they have no parents to call who can send a ticket, or money for a ticket. (Official 2)

To emphasize the importance of work shows how the normalization process produces a morality associated with economic rationality, and similarly with the idea that work is the only basis for inclusion; something which in turn creates exclusion and inequality. Discussion regarding EU citizens and their relationship to other reference categories is characterized by the difficulty respondents have in understanding the category *vulnerable EU citizens* and how they search for ways to deal with this. In their search for methods of understanding the category, normalization becomes increasingly transparent as reference categories such as *tourist* and *guest worker* are used to meet an almost exaggerated need to state the importance of the normal as

opposed to the abnormal. This is also true of the need to invoke the individual's freedom of choice with regard to their stay in the municipality.

Depending on how the categorization or construct creation of the group was carried out, the officials and politicians we interviewed often sought support in other categories in order to legitimize their attitude to the group. In situations where their vulnerability was foregrounded, reference was often made to the dealing with other vulnerable groups, such as homeless Swedish citizens or asylum seekers. When on the other hand the emphasis was on the municipality's areas of responsibility and "vulnerability", other categories were referenced, such as tourists and guest workers. The problem representation with the focus on the categorisation where citizenship becomes important puts the issue with vulnerability in the background and rights associated with citizenship becomes more prominent.

A few municipalities in Västernorrland have implemented initiatives in the form of shelters during the winter months. Several respondents expressed the wish to have a shelter but refer to the difficulty in justifying this as, if a shelter is to exist in the municipality, it would have to be open to both homeless Swedish citizens, including substance abusers, and to the vulnerable group of EU citizens.

> If the problem increases and we need to take action such as opening a shelter, in my opinion at least, we should not prioritize EU citizens but rather it must be aimed at everyone who finds themselves in a bad situation. (Official 4)

The result of the comparisons and similarities used by respondents when speaking about vulnerable EU citizens also leads to different groups being pitted against one another, where the problem representation (Bacchi 2009) makes impossible to separate one group from another, as done in the quote above. This can also be understood with the help of the nation-state paradox pointed out by Balibar (2009), in which human rights become a question of civil rights that are vouchsafed to some but not to others.

In our study, we have seen a marked tendency toward this attitude, with vulnerable EU citizens often being placed outside of the established society, and that this power relationship between the "normal" (Swedish citizens) and the "other" (vulnerable EU citizens) can to a certain extent be maintained through approach the adopted by the State and municipalities. Some of the more obvious examples of this deal with how legislation, for example, sustains categorizations and indeed reinforces them by pointing out something (or someone) as an "unreasonable burden to the social assistance system" (Swedish Aliens Act 2005:716), or where behaviour associated with certain groups is characterized as illegal or troubling. In as much as

institutional stakeholders, in this case local government politicians and officials, exercise some kind of control over the population, they also participate in the creation of both opportunities and limitations for how a municipality may act on the issue of EU migrants. In any such process, the exclusion of vulnerable EU citizens becomes entrenched as, in some sense, they become differentiated from groups with a natural affiliation to society and risk remaining outside of that society due to this systematic exclusion.

Municipal officials and their action space

As we have previously mentioned, what also emerges in the various ways of understanding EU citizens and their position as presented above, is the experience of politicians and officials regarding legislation and their perceived freedom of action, particularly in view of the lack of existing and coherent guidelines. One of the few policy documents that the various municipal representatives feel that they can fall back on is national coordinator Martin Valfridsson's report (SOU 2016:6) which refers to a interpretation of the situation with a focus on the legal perspective, what must the municipalities do instead of posing the question what can the municipalities do. The following quote is typical of how municipalities' representatives report their use of the document to both support the legitimacy of the initiatives they have implemented and to motivate why they have decided to not take any action.

> […] at an individual level, we must of course make a judgment on those who make their way here precisely as we would anyone else and yes, if they require acute assistance, and of course only that is dealt with in this [Valfridsson's report], acute assistance, possibly a shelter and then only in an emergency but not to build up any organization which is of course what's written here, that's certainly not what he [Valfridsson] recommends. (Official 1)

When ambiguous or indeed no guidelines exist, a situation arises in which it is unreasonable to expect officials to exercise authority. An official can only act based on their given assignment and, without any clear guidelines as to how a situation is to be dealt with, reaching a decision is problematic. At the same time, we would like to stress that there was also an ambivalence in the interviews. In a number of interviews the respondents take the position that, while they accept the vulnerable position in which the EU citizens find themselves, they cannot see any room for manoeuvre on their own part with regard to doing anything about it. In the few instances where it was expressed that there was some leeway for a more humanitarian attitude, this was in

relation to precarious accommodation situations, primarily involving children. Respondents then often spoke of the harsh northern winters in which it was not sustainable for vulnerable EU citizens to sleep in either cars or tents.

> We had a fairly lively discussion for a period due to the fact that more and more EU citizens were coming here and it got extremely cold and when they began to arrive they primarily lived in cars that stood parked here and there. I suppose the feeling was that we didn't want anyone freezing to death in our municipality. (Politician 3)

In the respondent's opinion, this feeling of reluctance to see anyone freeze to death is given as one of the driving forces behind the municipality's decision to establish a shelter. Similarly, the matter of what is "best for the children" is *negotiated* whereby the child's best is either about the right to schooling — or lack thereof — or, as in the quote below, how they live and under what conditions they spend their nights.

> […] of course, we wouldn't accept that a Swedish citizen, several of them, turned up with their children and moved into a shelter […], it would be the subject of an inquiry and probably the children would be taken into care. But we allow another group, these people, to do so. (Politician 1)

The solution to the problem as presented in the quote above is that children living in a shelter, or in other insecure living conditions while staying with their parents in Sweden, are living an unsafe existence and must therefore be the subject of an inquiry by the social services in accordance with the Social Services Act. According to the respondents, when it comes to children living under socially vulnerable conditions they have clear freedom of action under the provisions of the Social Services Act and SALAR guidelines. In such cases, the final recourse with regard to the problem of children's unsafe living conditions is that the child be taken into care. What becomes clear is that the child's situation within this vulnerable group is given special status and, in some sense, a discursive separation takes place between the child and the group of vulnerable EU citizens. All children must have the same rights and, in this case, all children are equal irrespective of citizenship. What becomes "unproblematized" (Bacchi 2009) is the issue of human rights and their association with citizenship in relation to grown up EU citizens. This problem representation of rights as connected to Swedish citizenship is a dividing practice which produces stigmatisation and precarious living conditions.

The limits of welfare: normalization, exclusion and grievable lives — concluding comments

The study we have conducted shows that, in the absence of common guidelines on how vulnerable EU citizens should be dealt with, a normalization has taken place of Swedish or perhaps "municipal" citizenship as the basis of the right to welfare. The dilemma of this conditional welfare becomes increasingly apparent as the officials tasked with navigating its complex backwaters struggle in the absence of policy guidelines and are instead directed to attempt to "solve" each situation one case at a time. The respondents' descriptions most commonly refer to the delimitative and prohibitive aspects of their work. Thus, it is Swedish citizenship that provides you with access to the community represented by the municipality while, at the same time, it is this community which must be guarded (cf. Balibar 1994). Prohibition is commonly motivated by a concern for the municipality's citizens; that they should be "spared" the sight of social exclusion and/or begging and that, for their sake, public order must be maintained. Based on such assumptions, bylaws against begging are prepared, evictions carried out and other prohibitive measures put in place that set the tone for how municipalities should respond to vulnerable EU citizens as a group. In many municipalities, the spontaneous settlements, caravan and camping sites that sprung up have now been closed down by the local authorities. When the respondents speak about this, they describe the closing down of these camps not only as a relocation of EU citizens but also as if the matter of social exclusion among EU citizens has ceased to be a municipal problem once the settlements has been closed down. This narrative links the problem itself to those non-sanctioned settlements within the municipality's geographical borders. It is the settlements and their flaws, rather than the inhabitants' social exclusion in a broader context, that are seen as problematic and become in themselves the problem.

Significant to the material on which this chapter is based is a question we asked during the interviews regarding dreams or visions concerning the group of vulnerable EU citizens and the situation they find themselves in. Here, the respondents were given the chance to respond to how they would wish the situation to look a number of years down the line, without in any real way needing to consider economic or other structural and political factors. This might seem like a trivial question but the answers received show where the responsibility for social exclusion, according to the respondents, should lie. The visions presented proved to be of a wish for change to take place in the "homelands", i.e. Romania and Bulgaria, and that initiatives such as access to education and jobs, along with a reduction in discrimination, will occur

there. These visions also often contained a desire for the European Union to play a greater role in the issue of social exclusion. The visions indicate all too clearly a desire that our responsibility and room for manoeuvre regarding social exclusion can and should reside elsewhere than within the framework of Sweden's municipal organizations. In the municipal context, it is local government officials and politicians who set the meaning and limitations of what EU citizenship implies. The conditions for different EU citizens thus becomes a fundamental aspect of the nation-state that not only creates divides but also demands that these divides be defended (Balibar 2001).

One may ask a question about what will be better and for who if the vulnerable EU citizens leave the municipalities of Västernorrland, the answer according to the people we interviewed appears to be that it will be better for the municipality, for citizens of the municipality — who will be spared the sight of beggars — it will decrease the risk of "nationalist opinion" and, for some of the municipalities, it will reduce public spending. However, what remains unsaid or silenced by the discourse (cf. Bacchi 2009) is that it will not reduce these people's social exclusion but rather simply move it elsewhere, that it will reinforce nationalist discourses on the enforcement of borders and that there is a difference between people. Through these norms of inclusion or exclusion, people are constituted through dividing practices (Bacchi 2009) as those who has 'the right to have rights' and those who has not (cf. Arendt 1968). Something which unsought leads us to a question raised by Butler (2010), namely — when is life grievable? According to Butler, throughout history different categories of people, and their lives, have been separated and ranked; rendering certain human lives less human, less important and thereby harder or even impossible to grieve. In order to delineate grievable lives from non-grievable, borders must be drawn between individuals. These borders create space for understanding but at the same time they create and maintain norms. This in turn leads to differing reactions to attacks aimed at different ethnic groups or individuals (Butler 2010). These norms, according to Butler's reasoning, lead us to the conclusion that certain lives can be considered worthier of preservation, protection and grief. As also pointed out in the introduction to this study, in the interviews it is for example common to associate the group of vulnerable EU citizens with being of Roma heritage. This also leads to the group being described using a number of stereotyped characteristics that are often applied to Roma. This normalizes a stigmatisation of the group which, as it were, confines them to a way of life with ethnically and culturally related occupations and to remain in social exclusion. We also know that Roma have been persecuted for many hundreds of years and that this continues to this day. Butler speaks of the displaced, those whose lives are not perceived as grievable or valuable, those who are

not viewed as adequate victims, those who are forced to bear the burden of vulnerability, disenfranchisement and the loss of human worth (Butler 2010).

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