

WORKSHOP 3 - THE STRUGGLE OF UNDOCUMENTED/HOMELESS PEOPLE



This workshop aimed to highlight the struggles of groups organising against multiple discrimination.

The struggles of racialised or socially excluded people are omnipresent in the EAC and are linked to other struggles for equal rights, for the regularisation of so-called undocumented people, against structural (and social) racism, classism and beyond, often in addition to various forms of gender discrimination, against war and more generally against neo-colonial relations on a global scale. We had to admit that once again, at this meeting, we were mostly 'white' people who were not directly affected by these discriminations.

Due to the different contexts of our fields of action, some collectives are more or less confronted with police violence and state repression. Sometimes, language issues can complicate collective organisation as well as a lack of space to organise.

In the course of the exchange, we learned that homeless people have managed to squat in countries where the occupation of empty buildings seemed impossible over the last two decades. In other cases, we were reminded that private individuals or solidarity organisations can make accommodation available and thus take it off the market. Public space is also taken over by occupations or interventions. The support and organisation of legally or informally occupied spaces continues.

We talked about different ways of collective organisation and solidarity. Homeless people explained that they had created a union in which they could organise and carry out political actions. Undocumented persons explained the principle of "sponsorship", where public figures and ordinary citizens express their support for undocumented migrants. It was recalled that it is important not to fall into patterns of victimisation of undocumented or homeless people and to avoid charity. It was also recalled that alliances with other struggles, such as the struggle for the regularisation of undocumented persons, are essential.

The members of the Neutral Zone Collective - Occupation KBC who participated in the workshop strongly influenced the discussion. The planned (and finally realised) collective action on Sunday 20 February in support of the collective was also discussed and the idea of a wider solidarity campaign emerged during this workshop.

